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## Protecting the Presidency and the President

Many of your readers are undoubtedly familiar with Lord Acton's aphorism: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." They may not know the context in which it appeared.

In a letter to Mandell Creighton, a bishop in the Church of England, on April 5, 1887, Acton said in part . . .

"I cannot accept your canon that we are to judge Pope and King unlike other men, with a favorable presumption that they did no wrong. If there is any presumption it is the other way against holders of power, increasing as the power increases. Historic re-

sponsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad, even when they exercise influence and not authority; still more when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority. There is no worse heresy than that the office sanctifies the holder of it . . ."

Let no one be taken in by the argument that the President is protecting the presidency. How much, then, should the presidency be expected to protect the President?

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