

## The Paranoia Paradox

By Thomas R. Cuba, Ph.D. August 6th, 2014

There is an old saying that “You’re not really paranoid if they really are out to get you.”

It’s cute, but incomplete. Let’s explore this by allegory. Consider the deer and the cougar. The cougar is actually out to eat the deer. The deer doesn’t know for certain that there is a cougar. It only suspects that there is a cougar. Still, the deer modifies its behaviour to make it less likely to be eaten by the cougar. The cougar moves on to other deer. Was the deer paranoid? Since it was not eaten, the other deer have no way to tell if there ever was a cougar or if the cougar was hungry. Or, was the cougar both there and hungry but the deer evaded it through countermeasures?

The fact that the deer was not eaten does not prove there was no cougar.

In our current situation we have learned that our government is going to spin off into oligarchical totalitarianism if we are not constantly on the watch. Yet, when we do watch, the government tends to behave. Witness the emergence of hard line conservatives from amongst the ranks of the already elected population of those who were only recently out of control.

So our catch 22 is the same as the deer. If we watch, all is well. If we lose our concentration for only a moment, we are eaten.

There is but one solution: To elect men of character and not men of means, resumes, and connections.