

Weaponization: Its Social and Political Consequences

Seated Committee: Witnesses testify before the House Judiciary Weaponization of the Federal Government Subcommittee during a hearing about the politicization of the FBI and Department of Justice and attacks on American civil liberties, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Feb. 9, 2023. Evelyn Hockstein/Reuters

by Tarcisio Beal

The Republican Party, dominated by a sorely-divided House majority, is now accusing the democratic government of President Biden of using its constitutional powers as weapons of partisan domination. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the weaponization or the abuse of political and social power was the method and the style of the presidency of Donald Trump during his four years in the White House (2016-2020), culminating with the assault of the Capitol.

The republican political weaponization is apparent in a series of actions and proposals which are often contradictory, but that always spell out an agenda that associates political power with the reactionary and conservative ideology spelled out at Trump's political rallies by the slogan **MAGA** (Make American Great Again). Now **MAGA** has become a synonymous with the constant republican lie that the United States has been greatly weakened by the democrats when the opposite is true. In fact, a number of current republican legislative proposals are antidemocratic and contradict the U. S. Constitution. For example, the attempt to empower the state legislatures to gain control of elections by all sorts of maneuvers, including redistricting the electorate so as to guarantee the party's victory. Also, to place in the courts judges who are totally partisan or even incompetent, or justices of the Supreme Court who share the party's ideology, as on the issues of the rights of gays, lesbians, and transgenders and of abortion. Trump's success in creating a conservative majority in the Court led to the abrogation of **Roe vs. Wade**. Now we have a Supreme Court that even declared that the federal government has no right to get involved in controlling the corporations that are disastrously harming the land and the environment.

As we know, the Trump era of misinformation and distortion started with the attempt to convince Americans that his 2020 attempt to be re-elected was illegally thwarted by the democrats. Actually, his ego-maniac actions and statements started right after his election and were strengthened by support-

ers who viewed his 2016 presidential victory as "*willed by God.*" This, for example, was what Alaska's Representative **Sarah Palin** said publicly. Now she is even considering a run for the White House. The Trump-led attempt to nullify President Biden's election continues through the weapons of indoctrination by lies, distortions, and misinformation of every sort which are easily multiplied and transmitted through the new and the ever-improving mass information technology of the Internet. **Mitch McConnell**, who as leader of the Republican majority in the Senate was mostly responsible for allowing Trump to escape impeachment, falsely blamed runaway inflation, surging crime, open borders, and failing schools on the democrats. Republican propaganda has even convinced Florida's and Arizona's retirees to support the party's incoming attempt to eliminate Medicare and Social Security programs. The true meaning of freedom is being distorted by the manipulation of the Second Amendment, thus allowing the multiplication of guns, while never taking responsibility for the rise of mass and terrorist killings. More than 600 cases of mass killings have taken place in the United States during 2021 and 2002, and 2023 is looking even worse.

A major goal of the present GOP is to shape a government which will leave alone or even enhance the economic and political supremacy of the wealthiest Americans. But if you think that the current behavior and the political strategies of the GOP are only an innovation brought about by Trumpism, take a **look at the republican past since the early 20th century**. After forcing Theodore Roosevelt out of its ranks in 1908 and attacking his "New Nationalism" program, which called for welfare policies that would always take precedence over individual and corporate profit, the **GOP**, in control of the Presidency, ruined the lives of millions of Americans during what is known as the "**Great Depression**" (1920s & 1930s). Conditions

began to improve for the majority only after the democrats, under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, introduced the policies of the **New Deal**. During the Great Depression, the poor and the homeless were told that their condition was caused by their own laziness and that they should stay away from church on Sundays because of their sins.

Furthermore, some of the present policies of the GOP remind us of the **Ronald Reagan** presidency (1980-1988) which as been glorified by some history books that overlook the facts and turned **RR** into some sort of "perfect republican." In fact, however, his role in the **Iran-Contra Af-**



Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, talks with a person before the start of a House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on what Republicans say is the politicization of the FBI and Justice Department and attacks on American civil liberties, on Capitol Hill, Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023, in Washington. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

fair;” which was much worse than George Bush’s involvement in the Watergate Scandal, should have led to his impeachment. He was a “**hands-off**” president: lazy, disconnected, disinterested, spending most of his time watching movies on TV; he approved the disastrous policies of his notorious Secretary of State **Henry Kissinger**, who directed the CIA to side with and finance the Central American bloody dictators and their para-military gangs that led to the flood of refugees who are still today seeking asylum in the United States. His “**Reagonomics**” (10% tax cuts across the border), which I call “**Lazarus Economics**,” gave millions to the wealthiest while leaving only crumbs and scraps for the majority of Americans.

No caring American could have imagined the kind of illegal, law-breaking actions and behavior, including their spread of the “Big Lie” and cooperation in what turned into the assault on the Capitol. Incredibly enough, many of those who set the stage for the Capitol invasion, including republican congressmen, have been getting away with their crimes. During the National Gun Violence Survivors Week (February 1-7), some GOP members of Congress displayed their AR-15 lapel pins that hail their opposition to arms control. The pins remind me of the MAGA slogans and even of the Nazi swastikas. After the terrorist attack on the Capitol, GOP Rep. **Marjorie Taylor Greene** accused President Biden of building walls on the grounds of the Capitol in order to prevent Americans from visiting. Rep **Lauren**



Representative Jim Jordan, Republican of Ohio, will lead the Select Committee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government. Credit... Kenny Holston/The New York Times

Boebert even came up with the following tirade against the defenders of women’s rights to abortion: “The Satanic Temple is now opening abortion clinics that will perform abortion as a satanic ritual.” The hypocrisy of the GOP was also displayed on January 5, when House republicans issued a condemnation of Socialism (which they wrongfully equate with Marxist totalitarianism) while fully benefiting from all kinds of federal stimuli and other subsidies.

Finally, the behavior of the republican congressmen and congresswomen during President Biden’s February 7 “**State of the Union Address**” once more revealed the destructive mindset of many republican leaders who still cannot accept his election. Perhaps the most revealing presidential address of all time about the improvements of American life and economy and about how the central government must care for the rights of the majority of citizens and for the democratic ideals, it was received with little applause by the republicans and even by uncivilized yelling by some of them, especially by Marjorie Taylor Greene. Incredibly enough, the GOP chose none else than **Sarah Huckabee Sanders**, Governor of Arkansas, to give the response to Biden’s address. Here you have a GOP governor who has been friendly with none else than the leader of the **Proud Boys** that played a central role in the terrorist attack on the Capitol. Her address was a disaster. She denied practically all that President Biden presented as achievements of his Administration,

even though some of his remarks received the applause of the House Majority leader **Kevin McCarthy**, especially when Biden spoke of the need for political dialogue for the best of America’s present and future. Hopefully, the **MAGA** gang which, at the moment keeps the republican-controlled Chamber utterly divided, will be defeated in the next elections and American democracy will again continue to be the best example of the world. It is more than time, however, that Trump and all his supporters, who broke the law over and over and have manipulated the legal system to the hilt, be brought to justice and that the courts, especially the Supreme Court, regain their role as upholders of the Constitution.

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December 24, 1946-February 13, 2023

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