

THE WORSHIP OF POWER & THE FATE OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

By Tarcisio Beal

At the recent celebration of Memorial Day, the 80th anniversary of the battle of Normandy, the decisive victory of World War II which cost hundreds of thousands of American soldiers' lives, but saved the world from the spread of the horrors of Hitler's Reich, President Joe Biden, pointed out that "Democracy is the Soul of America." On the other hand, on another occasion, right after President Biden visited the Washington cemetery to honor the heroism of America's soldiers, ex-President Donald J. Trump has implied that Americans who died in war were "suckers and losers;" he even added that President Biden runs a "Gestapo Administration" which will lead the US into World War III while he, if reelected, will turn the USA into a "Unified Reich." Talk about the display of self-glorification and of total ignorance of history, including of its standard terminology!

The United States has been not only the founder of the world's first continuous democracy, but it also has set many of the standards of a republic of and for the people. Specifically, American democracy has survived and set the pattern for the entire Western world even if when its main ideals have been sometimes compromised, especially in the early 1920s and the first decades of the 21st century. However, since the 2016 election of Trump and the control of the House by the GOP, democratic ideals have been often set aside because of Trump's abusive and autocratic leadership centered on his egomaniacal personality. The absence of two-party dialogue, the manipulation, even weaponization, of the judicial system, the denial of basic human rights to women and transgender people across the States, the banning and removal of books from K-12 schools and public libraries all are targets of Republican-controlled states. In Texas, the GOP is even proposing legislation to protect monuments erected by the KKK.

Anyone who doubts the Trump-GOP plot to turn the USA into a disguised autocracy or institutionalized "Trumpism," ought to take a look at the archconservative Heritage Foundation's "Project 2025" plans that include these goals:

- (1) to give the Executive total control of all federal agencies;
- (2) to grant larger tax exemptions for the big corporations and the extremely wealthy;
- (3) to reduce government regulations and increase support of

rightwing organizations like the Federalist Society; and

(4) to modify the Executive branch, the Justice and Education Departments, Housing, Health Care, climate rules, immigration, and Foreign Relations (cf. "The Plot Against America" in *The Nation*, June 2024, pp. 25-44, 54-56).

Also, the MAGA/GOP Project is the creation of an all-white

Christian Nationalist Party that would have control of the government, which sounds like a plot to increase the support of the Southern evangelicals who view Trump as "chosen by God" and who call for a "New Apostolic Reformation." On June 11, 2024, Marjorie Taylor Green, the extreme rightwing congresswoman who has managed to turn the present House into chaos, compared Trump with Jesus, saying that "Jesus was also a convicted felon." Ya?!? Well, Trump, like Pontius Pilate, also wants to "crucify" his critics and opponents!



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James D. Vance, Trump's choice for Vice-President, accused President Joe Biden of running a "Fascist State." Ironically, Trump is the one who praises Hitler and promises, if reelected, to create a Fascist government. He has even refused to condemn the Neo-Nazis who carried out the infamous "Charlottesville Vigil." Actually some Neo-Nazis, whose Florida's numbers spiked 50% upward during 2022 and 2023, have joined the administration of Florida's Republican governor Ron de Santis. Centered in the city of Orlando, 165 groups have held more than 143 demonstrations of their "Christian Nationalism" and "Aryanism." The term "Aryan" spells out the concept of a society that should be under the total control of white folks. Right now, in Northern Maine, paramilitary Aryans have built a compound and make plans to turn the State of Maine into an all-white State (cf. *Southern Poverty Law Center's Magazine*-2023 & 2024).

Furthermore, a major threat hangs over American democracy because the Supreme Court's majority appointed by Trump, has often strayed away from the true meaning of democracy and has made a number of pro-Trump and anti-people decisions. Its canceling of "Roe v. Wade" has multiplied the abuses against women and LGBTQ citizens, facilitating the legislation of some 20 GOP-controlled states that have imposed a total banning of transgender rights. Also, quite scandalous, is the unethical behavior of Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito. They have been taking

expensive vacations paid for by billionaires with whom they consort. Plus, Alito's wife has been flying the national flag upside down (called "Appeal to Heaven") at their home, which was used during the 2020 GOP rallies against President Biden. Meanwhile, Justice Thomas' wife, Ginni, has been traveling around to convince the public that Trump had nothing to do with the January 6th attack on Capitol Hill. Then, SCOTUS' (the Supreme Court of the U.S.) latest and most startling decision was making ex-President Trump practically untouchable by "Presidential Immunity." Minority dissenter Justice Sonya Sotomayor's comment said it all: "The President is now a king above the law."

Republican and Trump's ignorance and manipulation of history are often displayed publicly. Seeking greater support from black voters, he claimed to be, after Abraham Lincoln, the best American President ever for American blacks. Fact is that no GOP President ever made a priority to care for the economic and civil rights of black Americans.

It was the Democratic Party (do not confuse the Southern Democratic Party which dominated the Confederacy after the Civil War!) which produced the three greatest American Presidents: (1) Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1932-1940) with his New Deal of federal programs to reduce homelessness and extreme poverty, to stop the destruction of the national forests, and to promote flood control and land reclamation. Between 1932 and 1939, the nation suffered no less than 50 major storms, including the ecological disaster of the "Dust Bowl" (May 11, 1932) that hit North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, and piled up 300 million pounds of top soil, turning day into night, causing widespread pneumonia, and killing thousands. FDR's action prompt action was to create the Tennessee Valley Authority to take care of the Southern land and its people; Then Presidents (#2 and #3) were John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson who made America the best democracy with their "Great Society initiatives": the Peace Corps, the Civil Rights Act, the Wilderness Preservation Act, the Air Quality Act, the Elementary Education Act, the Voting Rights Act, and Medicare.

The recent Republican National Convention of mid-July held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, illustrated the odd mixing of religion with partisan politics: Catholic churches, including Milwaukee's cathedral, were kept open for the attendants of the convention, with Milwaukee's Archbishop Jerome Listekci giving the opening prayer of July 15 while the heads of various religious denominations presided over invocations and benedictions. Groups of Catholics, Lutherans, Evangelicals led by the evangelicals' "Christian Coalition" and activists of the Jewish Coalition, now energized by the Israel-Hamas bloody conflict, and even representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church, voiced their alliance with Trump and James D. Vance. One demonstrator, who opposes arms control, carried a T-shirt with the slogan: "God (and a good guy

with a gun) saved the USA."

Now, as Biden's Vice-President Kamala Harris has become the Democrats' choice for the 2024 presidential election, their party has become unified and the swelling of support for Harris has been overwhelming. Even the despicable attempt to assassinate Trump



Kamala Harris is now the presidential candidate for the Democratic Party and a new target for former President Trump. Her vice-presidential running mate is Tim Walz.

during the NCR gathering has not resulted in greater popular support for the ex-President who blames the FBI for failing to prevent it. Surely the easiness to acquire guns everywhere, which is supported by the Republicans had something to do with it and the mental instability may have also had something to do with such a damnable action. We have

also heard that Trump's life was saved by God. The implication is that the assassination of President J. F. Kennedy and of his brother, Robert, were allowed by God because they were Democrats.

Trump, who desperately wanted another debate to humiliate President Biden, was initially unwilling to debate Kamala Harris and cancelled the debate set up on ABC. (Now, it is back on.) Meanwhile, Republican vice-presidential nominee, J. D. Vance, resorts to the weirdest, antifemale and racist terminology against Kamala Harris, calling her and the women who choose not to raise children "childless cat ladies". He says that Kamala is "a bum, insecure and mean" when actually he is describing himself. He also blasts middle-aged males for not wanting to have children, trying to connect it all with the antiabortion movement and the 20 state Republican legislators who have banned abortion in all cases, thus endangering women's health and their basic rights. The antiabortion movement, which has so far been turned into legislation in most of the Republican-controlled states, has become part of the Republican agenda. Kristan Hawkins, president of the "Students for Life of America," says that Democrats are responsible for the pro-abortion movement, for this "senseless bloodshed."

So far the judicial process has been overcrowded with many of Trump's illegal maneuvers. It boggles our minds to see that several million Americans can still support Trump's bid for reelection, but there is great hope for the maintenance of authentic democracy. Nine of his former aides have now been convicted and sentenced to prison, several of his congressional supporters have abandoned his cause, and so have 40 of 44 of the aides who helped run his government from 2016 to 2020.

Most of all, the fight for the Presidency now pitches the most controversial candidate ever against Kamala Harris, whose public life and record make her the best hope for the future of true American democracy.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *This article is an opinion piece and not an endorsement.*