

The Winter Of Our Discontent - Evidence Mounts up Exposing a Real Coup to Keep Trump in Power
(by Bill Woods for StreetVibes)9

"Now is the winter of our discontent." This famous line from Shakespeare's play, "Richard III," certainly captures the mood of many people in this country in February, 2022. For those of us concerned about the future of democracy in the U.S., this discontent when coupled with deep anxiety create moments when we feel that any actions on our part are quite useless.

Some grim new facts buttress this mood. The evidence mounts up that the violent attack on the Capitol last January 6th was far more than an isolated event brought on by then President Trump's rhetoric to his supporters to march down to the Capitol to raise hell about the imminent vote by Congress to approve the Electoral College Votes. January 6th now appears as just one major horror connected to a comprehensive plan designed to prevent the traditional transfer of power in order to keep Trump in the White House. In other words, we are learning about a coup that would have temporarily if not permanently cast aside representative democracy in this country.

Besides the effort to convince Vice President Mike Pence that he had the power when chairing the Senate to put a halt to the ceremonial vote of that body to approve the Electoral Votes of the states, new evidence shows that Trump's team worked with certain Republicans in key states to print up pro-Trump Electoral College Vote slates that were available at the Capitol on January 6th to replace the legitimate state slates. Producing these fraudulent slates was a complex process that involved many people, and the January 6th Congressional Committee is in the process of interviewing a number of these folks. The White House documents that were finally turned over to this Committee are also helping to shed light on these behind the scenes movements to prevent Joe Biden from becoming President.



For instance, these documents turned up a written proposal circulated in the White House that would have had the Department of Defense seize voting machines from various states. The justification for this step would be the need to examine these machines as producers of fraudulent votes. Related to this proposal was an idea for invoking a state of emergency in order to review how other countries had employed illegal technological methods to throw the election to Biden.

Then we have the words of the former President himself. On tape, we have Trump trying to persuade Georgia's Secretary of State to find 11,780 votes to make him instead of Biden the winner of that state. Currently, an investigation moves forward in Georgia looking into the illegal activities undertaken by Trump and his allies to change the results in that state.

Over a year later, Trump's words at a rally reveal his total commitment to "the big lie" and the actions aimed at keeping him at the White House. Declaring that the rioters of January 6th were

being treated unfairly, he promised to pardon them if he is reelected President in 2024. As one legal scholar viewed it, Trump's promise could be viewed as a way to keep those indicted for their participation the insurrection from giving testimony about the planners of this event.

Besides Trump's inaction to take any steps to stop the violence at the Capitol on January 6th, a clear picture of his activities and conversations on that afternoon have not yet emerged. Nevertheless, the January 6th Committee is thoroughly investigating this aspect of that day. Who did the ex-President speak to during those hours?

Any one of the activities just described amounts to an illegal action designed to undermine the



Constitutional process of the peaceful transfer of power. Collectively, they clearly add up to a plot to keep a would-be autocrat in power after he lost a fair election. Although these discoveries make this author fearful about the future of representative democracy in this country, an optimist might counter: "Hold on! The system held together. Biden became the President, and legitimate government carries on!"

This optimism might make sense if everyone was horrified by this attempted coup and committed to preventing it from happening again. However, this is not the case. The current Republican Party seems not only to embrace "the big lie," but it seems to accept these coup activities as part of the new normal in U.S. politics. A few days ago, the Republican National Committee censured Representatives Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger for serving on the Committee investigating the events of January 6th. In its written statement, the RNC described the violent storming of the Capitol as "legitimate political discourse." With one of the two major parties promoting those views and ready to nominate the twice impeached ex-President in 2024, the rest of us cannot afford to let our guards down.

What will be the results of all this evidence gathering? The January 6th Congressional Committee will hold public hearings as early as this Spring, and it will certainly publish a final report compiling this evidence and its recommendations for preventing further assaults on our representative democracy. Since it is not a judicial body, criminal activities found in its investigation will have to be pursued by the Justice Department.

These facts must get out to the general public! Even though we live in a moment when political polarization and the creation of alternative realities on social media often get in the way of real facts, it is critical that a majority of Americans absorb this information about this plot to prevent the traditional transfer of power after a fair and well administered Presidential election. Not only must the news media focus on this evidence, but we as citizens need to emphasize these facts to our friends and neighbors.

If these facts are accepted by a large enough majority of Americans, we might just be able to stop this slide toward autocracy. Meanwhile, at the local and state levels, citizen activists need to keep fighting voter suppression laws and gerrymandering, while they propose reforms for

improving the health of representative democracy. For instance, the anti-gerrymandering campaign (with assistance from the Ohio Supreme Court) has a chance to succeed in this state. Thus, if we stay active and focused, we just might be able to overcome "our winter of discontent."