

The Delray Democrat

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Republicans Are the Real Extremists

Michael K. Cantwell

The Republican claim that Democrats are extremists who cannot be trusted is yet another in the endless litany of lies in the Republican arsenal. It is not only palpably false but stands truth on its head—for the Republicans are the real extremists who cannot be trusted to govern.

Republicans claim that “Democrats are coming for your guns,” but there’s nothing extreme about requiring background checks or giving the government 10 days instead of 3 to run the check, as provided by two Democratic bills that passed the House last year. What *is* extreme is *opposing* such sensible legislation, even though it is supported by most Americans.

Equally extreme and dangerous is the Republican approach to healthcare, perhaps best expressed in the meme “*Republicans are coming for your lives.*” Republicans tried but failed to kill Obamacare, which has provided insurance for tens of millions of previously uninsured Americans, saving tens of thousands of lives in the process. Had Republicans succeeded, millions of Americans would have lost their insurance, and insurance companies would have again been allowed to refuse coverage to people with pre-existing conditions. Together this would have caused tens of thousands of premature, preventable deaths.

Fortunately that’s not the only example of Republicans failing to impose their extreme and dangerous agenda. They failed after George W. Bush was reelected and claimed a “mandate” to privatize Social Security. They failed when Americans rejected Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan and their dangerous proposal to turn Medicare into a voucher system. But they have succeeded spectacularly here in Florida.

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Republican Pandering Hurts Students, Parents, Taxpayers, and Education

Jeffrey Kash

It’s time to put Republicans on the defensive about their “Putting Parents First Adjustment.” This “adjustment” is just another bit of pandering to the Republican “base.” Republicans claim is not punishment and won’t cut funding for student activities. It certainly is punishment and certainly will hurt students, their parents, and other taxpayers when staff are cut, educational resources are cut and local real estate taxes are increased.

The “adjustment” proposed by state representative Randy Fine and supported by the Governor will take \$200 million from the twelve public school districts that enforced a student mask policy during the pandemic. Fine says that money should be given as a reward to the districts that didn’t enforce masks. He claims that the \$200 million bonus for the 55

districts would come from the salaries of administrative workers earning more than \$100,000 per year from the 12 districts.

We need to let voters, Democrat and Republican, know that Representative Fine and the Governor are playing politics with education and are playing to the detriment of schools, students and parents. The consequences of the “adjustment” will be to jeopardize student education and put an inordinate burden on parents and other taxpayers.

Setting aside the Republicans’ continued lack of regard for the safety of teachers and students and their families during the pandemic, the proposed “adjustment” is punishment for standing up to the despots that run our state. It punishes districts for

(cont'd from page 1, "Republicans Are the Real Extremists")

In its 2021-22 session, our Republican legislature was again busy passing unpopular, unnecessary, and unconstitutional laws, but for the ninth year in a row it refused to expand Medicaid to cover 800,000 eligible but uninsured Floridians. Because of their failure to expand Medicaid, at virtually no cost to the State, literally thousands of Floridians have died prematurely and unnecessarily.

Defunding Florida

Republicans seek to portray Democrats as extremists who will "defund the police," but police budgets are actually going up, not down, regardless of whether Democrats or Republican control the purse strings.

On the other hand, Ron DeSantis defunded out-of-work Floridians in the middle of a pandemic by terminating their federal unemployment benefits.

Over the past year, Republican lawmakers in 41 states have been trying to advance the goals of the Jan. 6 rioters – not by breaking laws but by making them.

Marco Rubio and Rick Scott sought to "defund Florida" when they voted against both the American Rescue Plan Act and the bipartisan infrastructure bill. They turned down the \$10 billion provided to Florida schools by the former as well as the \$19.1 billion to Florida infrastructure provided by the latter because they work for Donald Trump and not the people of Florida. Fortunately, Democrats—and even some Republicans—chose differently.

Republicans Whitewash Insurrectionists While Banning Constitutionally Protected Speech

Black Lives Matter protests are hornbook examples of constitutionally protected speech. Over 90% of them were peaceful, and claims to the contrary as well as other hysterical Republican messaging have been debunked by the Anti-Defamation League.

Republicans pushed a different, and false narrative, backed by Fox News and its deliberate distortions, digitally altered images, use of old and unrelated footage, and outright lies that were quietly corrected when challenged.

This disinformation blitz almost certainly saved several Republican seats in the U.S. Senate. In Florida, Republicans used it to justify **H.R. 1**, a draconian law that allows the police to arrest and the courts to convict *anyone* taking part in a political

protest where there is violence, *even if they have nothing to do with the violence*. Last September, Chief Judge Mark Walker granted a preliminary injunction barring enforcement of the law on the ground that it is unconstitutionally vague and overbroad.

In stark contrast to those who participated in the overwhelmingly peaceful BLM protests were the thugs who rampaged through our Capitol on January 6, 2021, seeking to overturn an election that Joe Biden had won both fairly and irrefutably.

Even Republicans were horrified when the murderous mob threatened the lives of Republicans as well as Democrats. Kevin McCarthy reportedly called Trump and engaged in an expletive-laced shouting match, begging that Trump call off his thugs. Once the threat had passed, however, his fear of the miscreant responsible for the riot outweighed his commitment to our country and our democracy.

Indeed, with the exception of Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger, there is not a single Republican who has agreed to serve on the House panel investigating the worst attack on the Capitol since the War of 1812.

While Cheney and Kinzinger chose to honor their oaths to "defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic," their fellow Republicans vilified and censured them. Channeling both George Orwell and Lewis Carroll, the Republican Party sought to reframe an attempted putsch as "legitimate political discourse."

Advancing the Goals of the Insurrectionists "Not by Breaking Laws but By Making Them"

But the most extreme actions – and the greatest threat to our democracy and our Constitution – are the steps now being taken in Republican-controlled legislatures throughout the country to ensure that the next time a disappointed despot shouts "fraud," he or she will have compliant political actors at the state level to throw the election to him. As The New York Times succinctly stated, "Over the past year, Republican lawmakers in 41 states have been trying to advance the goals of the Jan. 6 rioters — not by breaking laws but by making them."

Florida Republicans did their part, ramming through **SB 90**, a bill that the Brennan Center for Justice aptly

The culmination of two years of Republican-stoked hysteria about “Critical Race Theory,” which is not even being taught in Florida’s public schools, the law effectively prohibits the teaching of Black History.

dubbed “The Omnibus Voter Suppression Act.” The claim that a law is needed to combat “voter fraud” is the real fraud. It has repeatedly been [demonstrated](#) that voter fraud sufficient to affect elections is nonexistent.

Even the ultra-conservative Heritage Foundation has unwittingly admitted as much. Its online [database](#) trumpets “1,349 proven instances of voter fraud,” but the database covers more than 25 years, which amounts to roughly *one case per year per state*.

Florida SB 90 limits the availability of drop boxes, reduces the number of election cycles for which a Vote-by-Mail request is effective, and imposes new and onerous obligations on third party organizations that register voters. It places an undue burden on the ability of people of color to vote and is opposed by the supervisors of election in all 67 Florida counties. It is yet another example of Republican extremism and contempt for democracy.

The League of Women Voters, the NAACP, and other organizations and individuals are challenging the bill in court. Portions of the law are likely to be ruled unconstitutional, at least by the trial court, but it’s uncertain whether that ruling will occur in time to affect the November elections and, if it does, whether it will be reversed on appeal.

Republicans also passed a bill creating an “election police force,” despite the fact that DeSantis has bragged that “Florida ran perhaps the most transparent and efficient election in the nation in 2020.” The purpose for the law is to intimidate minority voters and depress minority turnout.

Florida Republicans Toss More Red Meat to Their Base with Another Spate of Unnecessary, Extreme, and Unconstitutional Bills

Another solution in search of a problem is the Orwellian “**Act Relating to Individual Freedom**,” which just passed both the Florida House and Senate on party-line votes. The culmination of two years of Republican-stoked hysteria about “Critical Race Theory,” which is not even being taught in Florida’s public schools, the law effectively prohibits the teaching of Black History.

It does so back-handedly by imposing the following proscription on educators: “A person should not be instructed that he or she must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress for actions, in which he or she played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.”

This prohibition *would not prevent students from experiencing “psychological distress,”* even in the unlikely event there were isolated instances of such indoctrination. Such “distress” would result from even the most objective, nonjudgmental, fact-based instruction about the experiences of Black Americans from the time their ancestors were kidnapped and brought here on slave ships.

The only students who would be unaffected are those completely bereft of humanity, and the only way to avoid distress in the remainder of students is to either completely avoid teaching Black History or teach a bowdlerized, “Gone with the Wind” version.

The “**Parental Rights in Education**” bill (a.k.a. the “Don’t Say Gay” bill) is another solution in search of a problem. The bill prohibits “teaching students in kindergarten through third grade about topics involving sexual orientation or gender identity,” *even though that is not occurring and is extremely unlikely ever to occur.* For older grades, the law imposes an unconstitutionally vague requirement that lessons be “age appropriate.”

Perhaps the most odious bill is the one that prohibits abortions after 15 weeks. A substantial majority of Floridians ([57%](#)) oppose the bill, which provides no exceptions for rape or incest. The bill apes the anti-abortion statute passed in Mississippi that’s currently under consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court. The bill is flagrantly unconstitutional under *Roe v. Wade* and its sequelae, but Republicans don’t care because they believe they have the votes to overrule *Roe*.

It boils down to Republicans pandering to the fears and amplifying the ignorance of people who are angry at a world changing too fast for them to adapt. Republicans provide them with a target for their anger, but do nothing to alleviate and more often exacerbate their problems.

(Cont'd from page 1, "Republican Pandering Hurts")

following CDC guidance and acting on a local level in counties that, at the time, had the highest COVID positivity rates to protect teachers, students, and their families.

Contrary to Representative Fine's claims, the "adjustment" will hurt students and will negatively impact parents and not just those that vote Democrat. Republican parents will feel the pain as well. Logic dictates that Palm Beach County students will be hurt if you take \$28 million from Palm Beach County Schools.

County School Boards contract with their administrators. Those contractual obligations must be met or the administrators could sue for breach. For example, the School Board of Palm Beach County entered a written agreement with Michael Burke. That contract provides for a base salary as well as other compensation and has a formula for calculating raises. The school board will have to find the money to meet their contractual obligations or face potential lawsuits as well as the prospect of losing administrators and being unable to replace them.

If the "adjustment" becomes law, school boards will have some options in order to meet their contractual obligations:

They can try to run a school district without administrators while they pay lawyers to defend lawsuits. The consequence would be chaos in management of a district with 197,000 students and 22,426 employees, including more than 13,000 teachers.

They can lay off noncontract or non-administrative employees. Teachers, coaches, counselors, janitors, security guards, bus drivers, and nurses could all be at risk in order to make up for the "adjustment." The likely result of what Republicans claim is "not punishing" Palm Beach County will be exacerbated staff shortages. Staff shortages directly impact students when they can't get to school and when they can't receive all of the services they need when they are at school. When schools can't provide for the students, their parents will feel the impact.

Other budgetary items like textbooks, computers, and other educational technology (like the 24-hour a day virtual tutoring) could be cut to make up the difference. Jeopardizing the tools of education hurts students.

If schools have to cut educational tools, there is no reason to think that school sports would be immune. It is not unreasonable that the football teams' budgets could be cut. Student activities would be at risk.

School boards may be unwilling to cut spending to make up for the funds lost to the "adjustment". Without spending cuts, the remaining option would be raising revenue. Raising revenue means raising taxes. Local revenue for school support is derived almost entirely from property taxes levied by Florida's 67 counties (with a complex formula involving the Department of Education and the Department of Revenue). However, school boards may set discretionary tax levies for things like school buses, equipment, computers and software. The law allows revenue to be raised from property taxes and allows discretionary tax levies. If the shortfall caused by the "adjustment" cannot be remedied by cutting spending, it could result in higher local property taxes.

Article IX, section 1 of the Florida Constitution establishes the State of Florida's commitment to funding kindergarten through grade 12 education, as follows: "The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a **uniform**, efficient, safe, secure and high-quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education..." (Florida Department of Education 2021-2022 Funding For Florida School Districts publication) (emphasis added).

It is the state's job to provide for public education. The above consequences fall squarely on the Governor's shoulders based on his misguided and punitive policies. The voters should hear about it in no uncertain terms.

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How Trump's Criminal Network Set the Stage for Putin's Attack on Ukraine

June Sandra Neal

Vladimir Putin is solely responsible for the horror he has inflicted on Ukraine. But Republicans are responsible for Donald Trump, who aided and abetted Putin for many years to help the dictator in his attempt to seize control of the democratic Ukrainian government.

Long before the Republicans in Congress refused to convict a president who had betrayed his country, Trump had gathered a B-team of criminals with profitable ties to Putin and to pro-Russia officials in Ukraine. If there were an Olympics for governments, Trump's administration would be carrying the Russian flag.

It's not like we didn't know. In 2019, Robert Mueller finalized the investigation we thought would seal the deal against Trump, including his anti-Ukraine mafia. It might have if Mueller hadn't fallen asleep during the Senate hearings.

In 2020, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a 1,000-page tome which exposed Russia's interference in our 2016 elections and the attempts by Trump World and Russian officials *to undermine Ukraine's sovereignty*. Despite the heavy redacting, it is stunningly rich with proof of Trump's mob sleeping with the enemy. Nonetheless, the Republican-controlled Senate just couldn't find any "collusion."

The Art of the Russian Deal

The Trump-Russia connection goes back to at least 1986 when Trump met with Soviet Ambassador Yuri Dubinin to talk about building another monument to himself in Russia called the Moscow Project. It never materialized.

In 1997, back in Russia, Trump was working with Aleksandr Lbed, the former Minister of Defense of the Luhansk People's Republic, *which is part of the Donbas, the area of Ukraine Putin wanted to control*.

Jump ahead to 2014, with talk of Trump running for the presidency. Putin saw a gift that would keep on giving: a stupid, malleable narcissist in the White House who'd stay out of the way when he decided to attack Ukraine. Of course, Putin had already invaded Crimea and Georgia, but the world just clicked to another channel. But Ukraine, a huge country with a

struggling new democracy, a major gas line, a telegenic president and a large diaspora that would react with deep emotion, well, that would have CNN camping out there 24/7.

The Russian irredentist wanted Ukraine. The avaricious Trump wanted Putin's imprimatur for his tower. A partnership made in hell. For Trump, the smart money was on a gang of criminals who had been making millions working for Russian operatives.

Here are five of the gifts President Trump gave to Putin to help prepare Ukraine for the slaughter.

Gift Number One: A Deep Bench of Criminals

Long before Trump took office, many of the "made" men in his mafia were getting rich helping Russia. Paul Manafort, Trump's first campaign manager, had made tens of millions helping to elect a pro-Russia president in Ukraine. As *Time* reported, "A U.S. embassy cable sent from Kiev to Washington in 2006 described Manafort's job as giving an 'extreme makeover' to a presidential hopeful named Viktor Yanukovich, who had the backing of the Kremlin and most of Ukraine's wealthiest tycoons. His Party of Regions, the cable said, was "a haven" for "mobsters and oligarchs."

Then we have Michael Flynn, Rudy Guiliani, Rex Tillerson, Jeff Sessions and more. Kyiv was the true Trump campaign headquarters.

Gift Number Two: Donbas

A keystone of Putin's Ukrainian plan was Donbas. Since 2014, Russia and Ukraine have fought over this area in eastern Ukraine on the Russian border, made up of Luhansk and the Donetsk People's Republics and populated by Russians and pro-Russian separatists.

Ukraine wanted to keep control of the area to protect its territorial integrity and national security. Putin has long wanted the area declared "autonomous" so he can install a puppet ruler who would accede to him. Ukraine viewed it as the camel's nose in the tent. On March 6, *The Kyiv Independent* reported: "Many see it as an attempt to introduce a fully legalized, Russian-controlled Trojan horse into

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Ukraine that would continue draining the country's economic resources and block the country's path to NATO and the European Union. Ukraine might face the presence of a de-facto independent region within its borders fully controlled by the Kremlin, with its armed forces and foreign policy agenda decided by Moscow."

Manafort allied with another operative, Konstantin Kilimnik whom authorities claim, reported NBC, passed "Trump campaign strategy information to Russian intelligence services."

Ilya Marritz explained in *ProPublica*: "After Trump won the election, the Senate [Intelligence Committee] report says, Manafort and Kilimnik worked together on a proposed "plan" for Ukraine that would create an Autonomous Republic of Donbas in separatist-run southeast Ukraine, on the Russian border. The plan would need only a 'wink' from the new U.S. president, Kilimnik wrote to Manafort in an email." Just what Putin wanted.

Gift Number Three: Undermine Democracy in Ukraine—And Ivanka Can Sit in Putin's Private Chair!

Beyond Donbas, Putin was determined to stop any movement toward democracy in Ukraine.

Trump's former lapdog lawyer, Michael Cohen, now a convicted felon, hooked up with Felix Sater. *The New York Times* reported: "Mr. Sater, a Russian immigrant [and barroom brawler], said he had lined up financing for the Trump Tower deal with VTB Bank, a Russian bank that was under American sanctions for involvement in Moscow's efforts to undermine democracy in Ukraine.

The Russian operatives' interference in our 2016 election is sickening. *The New York Times* reprinted a portion of an email Sater sent to Cohen on November 3, 2015, bragging, "Michael I arranged for Ivanka to sit in Putins [sic] private chair at his desk and office in the Kremlin. I will get Putin on this program and we will get Donald elected. Buddy our boy can become President of the USA and we can engineer it..."

Gift Number Four: Block American aid to Ukraine

Manafort collaborated with another "fixer," Konstantin Kilimnik. As *ProPublica* reported, a few months after Manafort became campaign manager

"...the Trump campaign put the kibosh on proposed language in the Republican Party platform that expressed support for arming Ukraine with defensive weapons."

By 2018, Kilimnik was on the FBI's Most Wanted List, accused of a "multi-million dollar lobbying campaign in the United States which was allegedly conducted at the direction of the Ukrainian Government."

In the summer of 2019, Trump decided to withhold defense funds Congress had approved for Ukraine. A great blackmail tool for Trump. Sure enough, on July 25, 2019, when Zelensky asked to buy more Javelins. Trump answered, (paraphrased), "You want your missiles? Well, "do us a favor." Find negative information on Joe Biden's son.

Gift Number Five: Hire a Spy as National Security Advisor!

President Barak Obama had fired Ret. Army Lt. General Michael Flynn as Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency and warned Trump about him. Trump made him National Security Advisor anyway, then was forced to fire him after it was disclosed Flynn lied about his contacts with the Russian government. He later registered as a foreign agent, admitting he'd also been a lobbyist for the Turkish government.

Section C. iii of the Mueller report: Russian Government Outreach and Contacts

On December 29, 2016, Flynn called Sergey Kislyak and asked that Russia should keep its reactions to President Obama's sanctions down before Trump was inaugurated ...didn't want to make a fuss. At first, Flynn lied about the call and others. But he forgot about FBI wiretaps. In 2017, Flynn pleaded guilty. The Dept. of Justice, now under Trump's auspices, dropped the case against him.

And Trump's Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, had to recuse himself from the FBI's probe into Russia—because of his contacts with Kislyak that he "forgot" to disclose.

The highest-ranking link to Russian operatives was Trump. On May 15, 2017, *The Washington Post* reported, "President Trump revealed highly classified information to the Russian foreign minister and ambassador in a White House meeting last week, according to current and former U.S. officials, who said Trump's disclosures jeopardized a critical

source of intelligence on the Islamic State.” The information...was considered so sensitive that details have been withheld from allies and tightly restricted even within the U.S. government, officials said. “Trump revealed more information to the Russian ambassador than we have shared with our own allies.”

Guiliani, Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee— Replace Pro-Ukrainian Officials

Trump hired Rudy Guiliani, now of Four Seasons Landscaping fame, as his personal lawyer. Guiliani made the cut because of his friendship with two wannabes in Moscow, Len Parnas and Igor Fruman. Along with Guiliani’s mission of finding “dirt” on Joe Biden’s son, their goal, as *NPR* reported, “...was

to replace the head of Ukraine's state gas company. Another was to replace the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch. She had a history of fighting corruption in Ukraine.” In 2019, both were arrested on charges of conspiracy and campaign finance violations.

* * * *

On February 21, 2022, Russia seized Donbas. In the early morning hours of February 24, the Ukrainians hear the initial bomb blasts. President Biden is fighting as hard as he can to stop the horror. Now Republicans must decide if they will reelect Donald Trump or his surrogates, none of whom who will ever be able to wash the blood off their hands.

We Must Do More For Ukraine – But What?

Rob Resnick

I watched Putin’s build-up for weeks knowing it was inevitable that he would direct the invasion of Ukraine. There was simply no alternative based on Putin’s world view. He has consistently, openly stated that the dissolution of the Soviet Union was the biggest calamity in Russian history and his policy was to restore a Russian empire. That empire would stand opposed to democracy and freedom, opposed to a unified Europe and NATO, and opposed to the self determination of satellite nations he believes fall within the Russian sphere. Ukraine, historically viewed as a “breadbasket” by the Soviets, with its Slavic history, was always in Putin’s crosshairs. Putin has not gone insane, as some suggest. This has long been his plan. His messianic complex strongly influences his decisions and his brutality guides his actions.

The empire began with Putin’s invasion of neighboring Georgia in 2008, an illegal war of aggression intended by Putin to stop Georgia’s outreach to Europe and move towards democracy. Likewise, his initial invasion of Ukraine in 2014, also wholly illegal, lacking any legitimate basis, was designed to prevent Ukraine’s moves towards democracy, growing separation from Russia, and desire to be part of Europe. In that case, Putin failed, as the result was a stronger commitment by the Ukrainian people towards self-determination, freedom, and partnership with the EU and NATO. Therefore, it was inevitable that Putin’s next move would be another illegal invasion of Ukraine and establishment of an illegitimate puppet government beholden to Russia, opposed to freedom.

Putin’s invasion was never about NATO expansion, but rather his compulsion to establish his new

Russian empire, and for that he needed Ukraine. NATO understood this and reluctantly could not establish stronger military ties to Ukraine, even with the understanding that Putin would inevitably invade and establish a puppet regime. NATO leaders believed that if they had expanded into Ukraine or fought on Ukraine’s behalf, it would likely provoke a new world war and they determined they could not risk this, especially with Russia’s nuclear weapons policy. While it is highly unlikely Putin would not use nuclear weapons generally, there is an argument he would do so when he believed he was protecting what he believes is Russia’s natural sphere of control around its borders and that, unfortunately, clearly involves Ukraine. There are certainly strong arguments supporting NATO’s position, with or without the risk of nuclear weapons.

The more important issue for NATO concerns the newer NATO members that were formerly in the Soviet Bloc and exist along or near Russia’s borders. They lie within Putin’s believed Russia sphere of control and are clearly in his crosshairs. Will NATO’s collective self-defense alliance deter Putin and protect countries such as the Baltic States, Poland, Romania, et al, if he invades or commits other aggression to destabilize them? The answer is that NATO must do so no matter the cost. I believe after witnessing Ukraine that the alliance will invoke Article 5 and come to the defense of any NATO member Putin attacks. Consequently, we can expect Russia to significantly increase its non-military attacks on those countries. This involves Russia’s extensive destabilization campaigns using disinformation, social media, elections, etc. For the record, many of these actions may rightfully be

considered as acts of war, and thus an unjust attack on a sovereign nation that would trigger NATO action of some kind.

Understanding the geopolitical realities, the pressing matter remains as to how to respond to Russia's illegal war and brutality in Ukraine. The key to success is determining an alternative to NATO military involvement that otherwise prevents Putin from establishing a Russian puppet regime to subjugate the Ukrainian people, subvert their will and right to self-determination, oppose NATO and European integration, and support Putin's Russian empire. It is hard to believe Putin would accept success in Ukraine and then abruptly end or drastically reduce his plans for the empire. NATO must find a way to do more to stop Putin's empire, reduce the threat to Europe, and protect the Ukrainian people.

Thus far NATO has pulled together in great form, united against a common, dangerous enemy who threatens the very existence of many members if not the world. Putin's ultimate goal is to eliminate the post-World War II era and liberal democracy, replacing it with overlapping totalitarian regimes that will erode all freedom and self-determination. For many years he has waged this campaign against NATO and the world's democracies through destabilization campaigns. In recent years we have seen levels of success and populist, anti-democratic parties have gained strength, even winning elections. Plainly said, we are already at war, just without military combat. We never choose war; war is forced upon us. Do we defend freedom and democracy or do we ignore decades of ever increasing, more effective attacks by Putin? Shame on us if we lose the war to Putin without ever defending ourselves.

Ukraine is on the verge of falling to Russia. Despite

setbacks, Russia has the power to defeat Ukraine. While it is true that the Ukrainian military and brave citizens have launched a viable resistance, Putin has responded with a wave of brutality and additional war crimes, including the killing of civilians. There is no limit to what Putin would do to Ukraine or even his own people to avoid a **humiliating** loss. The world must hold him accountable and isolate Russia until the aggression ends and Ukraine is reestablished and rebuilt.

The West's unprecedented sanctions regimen has held and been effective, at least for now, inflicting severe damage on Russia's economy. There is no sign, however, that Putin cares how many people get hurt, including Russians.

The West needs to ratchet up the pressure on the oligarchs who enable him. NATO must seize all Russian assets worldwide, especially Putin's and the oligarchs. Every last penny, including property, business, investments, all of it.

Moreover, sanctions must go beyond mere seizure if they are to work. Oligarchs can wait that out. The seized resources must be consolidated by NATO and given to the Ukrainian people to defend their country (or held in trust until Ukrainian freedom is restored). NATO must inform Putin and the oligarchs that for every day Russia continues to attack Ukraine, a percentage of these assets will be given to the Ukrainian people for reparations, in support of the exiled government, and any continuing resistance. That percentage thus cannot ever be returned to Putin and the oligarchs because it will have been spent, gone forever. Only then will the pain be significant enough for the oligarchs to force Putin's hand. We also need to bring pressure on nations that have not joined the sanctions but where the oligarchs have assets.

How You Can Help the Ukrainian People

Char Lane

World Central Kitchen wck.org
They serve meals to Ukrainian families who are fleeing and who are staying in Ukraine.

Doctors Without Borders - doctorswithoutborders.org
They respond to medical and humanitarian needs in Ukraine.

Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) - coreresponse.org/Ukraine-refugee-crisis-relief-poland
They provide immediate needs of people fleeing Ukraine

International Committee of the Red Cross - icrc.org/en/donate/Ukraine
Supporting the Ukraine Red Cross to provide humanitarian needs

International Rescue Committee rescue.org
Providing vital support to Ukraine people forced from their homes by the Russian invasion.

Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County - jewishpb.org
Providing aid to Jewish people in Ukraine

Project Hope projecthope.org
Providing medicines and medical supplies to Ukrainians.

UNICEF - unicef.org/Ukraine/en
Safeguarding kids and providing supplies to Ukrainian families



Yellow Stripes and Armadillos

Michael K. Cantwell

According to the great Texas populist Jim Hightower, “there’s nothing in the middle of the road but yellow stripes and armadillos.” At least there shouldn’t be.

So if you have difficulty differentiating a party that treats climate change as an existential threat from one that calls it a Chinese hoax, here’s a timeline of the 90-year battle between Republican incompetence and racism and Democratic competence and inclusion.

Republicans Cause the Great Depression Democrats Create the Safety Net

1929-1932: Republicans control both Congress and the White House in 1929 as the country careens into the Great Depression. The government does **nothing** to alleviate suffering as unemployment reaches 25% and millions become homeless: “Hoover feared that providing direct aid to people in need would cause them to lose their incentive to work hard.”

1933-1944: FDR announces a “New Deal,” restores the economy, and creates a middle class that is the envy of the world. Democrats fashion a “safety net,” creating Social Security, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, and protection for unions. FDR proposes a [Second Bill of Rights](#) to protect the “right to liberty” in the same way the original Bill of Rights protected “life” and “liberty.” The dream dies with FDR’s death 2 months later.

Democrats Expand the Safety Net Republicans Resort to Red-Baiting and Racism

1964: Democrats pass Medicare and Medicaid. Ronald Reagan warns that if Medicare passes, “you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children, and our children’s children, what it once was like in America when men were free.”

1964-1965: Democrats pass the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. LBJ warns “we have lost the South for a generation.” It is a gross underestimate.

1968: Dick Nixon launches his “Southern Strategy,” using racist dog whistles to capture the presidency.

1980-1992: Reagan begins his campaign touting “States Rights” in the same Mississippi county where the Klan murdered Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney. Dog whistles target “strapping young bucks buying T-bone steaks with Food Stamps” and “welfare queens driving Cadillacs.” The Solid South turns Republican. The Raw Deal replaces the New Deal and the deficit quadruples.

1993: Bill Clinton raises taxes and creates 23 million jobs during his tenure. The annual budget shows a surplus for his last three years in office.

“Government is the Problem, not the Solution” Only When Republicans Hold the Reins

2001-2008: George W. Bush passes two tax cuts and doubles the federal debt. He loses Osama bin Laden in the mountains of Afghanistan and then launches a three-trillion-dollar war based on lies against Iraq.

Reelected, he tries to privatize Social Security but fails when the American people rebel. He bungles the response to Hurricane Katrina. He lets the financial service industry run wild, precipitating the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression and causing 10 million Americans (disproportionately people of color) to lose their homes.

2009-2016: Barack Obama is elected and the economy continues spilling 800,000 jobs monthly. His American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, supported by only 3 Republicans in Congress, averts a second Great Depression and leads to the creation of more than 11 million jobs in his tenure.

Bin Laden is captured and killed. Democrats pass and Obama signs the Affordable Care Act, which Republicans claim will create “Death Panels” and refer to derisively as “Obamacare.” The bill provides insurance for 20 million previously uninsured Americans and saves tens of thousands of lives.

2016-2020: Behold the Beast

Dismissed as a joke by a craven, clueless corporate media, Donald Trump becomes “the most powerful person in the world” and presides over the most ruinous presidency in American history. His single legislative achievement is to add \$1.9 trillion to the deficit with a tax cut that disproportionately benefits plutocrats and multinational corporations.

His incompetent and chaotic response to COVID exacerbates the death toll and plunges the country into a Second Great Depression. He loses 9.3 million jobs in his final year, becoming the first president to preside over a net job loss during his tenure.

2021-22: Fixing Another Republican Mess

Democrats pass the American Recovery Plan with no Republican votes and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Plan with minimal Republican support. The economy adds 7.9 million jobs in 13 months, GDP increases by 5.7%, and unemployment drops to 3.8%, a level not projected to be reached [until after 2030](#). For those without high school diplomas, unemployment falls to 4.3%, the lowest level on record. Over 200 million Americans are vaccinated against COVID. And he masterfully manages the West’s response to Putin.

Ten Ways We Know the Bengals Won the Super Bowl

Rabbi Barry Silver

The Mainstream media continues to promote the lie that the Rams won the Super Bowl.

Here are 10 reasons why the Bengals won the Super Bowl and should be declared the legitimate Super Bowl champions:

1) The Bengals declared before the start of the game that the only way they could lose was if the game was rigged.

2) The Bengals were ahead until the very end of the game. It seemed obvious that they should win. Surely some funny business happened at the end of the game to put the Rams over the top.

3) For the first time at any Super Bowl, rap music led the half time entertainment and African Americans were overrepresented among the players, giving them way too much influence. We must change the rules to limit their participation and not give them water at the game.

4) The Bengal's quarterback kept getting sacked, including on the last play of the game, which almost never happens. If not for this fact, the Bengals would have won.

5) The game was played on the home field of the Rams which has only happened once before. The game should therefore be declared invalid even if 60 Courts were to declare the game legal, proper and valid and declare the Rams the official winner. What do they know?

6) Many Bengal fans have spread the word all over the internet that the game was rigged; they can't all

be wrong.

7) This was the highest temperature that was ever recorded for a Super Bowl. Clearly with such hot temperatures, the referees could not run as fast to be on top of the play action and see up close what was going on and thus made errors in their calls. It was also unfair to require the Bengals to play in such heat. A ram can handle the heat much better than a bengal.

8) FOX News says it was not fair.

9) Many people, including me, were rooting for the Bengals and it is not fair that our team lost.

10) Because of all these irregularities, they should declare the results of Super Bowl 2022 invalid and play the last 10 minutes over again or just give the victory to the Bengals. If not, Bengal fans should hold a massive rally, overrun the Ram's administrative offices, attack any security forces or innocent bystanders in their way even if it results in death and injury, and threaten to h

ang the Ram's Vice President.

We must change all the rules and if necessary use violence to make sure that in next year's Super Bowl, a fair result is achieved, which can only happen if the Bengals, who are the best team in the league, win next year.

Please circulate this across the internet and send lots of money to the Bengals to finance violence and mayhem at next year's game to make sure the Super Bowl victory is not stolen once again.

What We're Reading

[What Americans Really Think About 'Critical Race Theory,'](#) Jamelle Bouie, *The New York Times*: "For Democrats, then, this is a culture war they can win. They just have to fight it."

[Toxic Nostalgia, From Putin to Trump to the Trucker Convoys,](#) Naomi Klein, *The Intercept*, "Because climate change is the Earth telling us that nothing is free; that the age of (white, male) human "dominion" has ended; that there is no such thing as a one-way relationship comprised only of taking; that all actions have reactions. These centuries of digging and spewing are now unleashing forces that make even the sturdiest structures created by industrial societies — coastal cities, highways, oil rigs — look vulnerable and frail. And within the extractivist mindset, that is impossible to accept."

[What We Owe Our Fellow Animals,](#) Martha Nussbaum, *New York Review of Books*: It is important for all of us to try hard to understand what scientists have been discovering. Animals have long been seen as mere property, as "brute beasts." Now a revolution in knowledge is revealing the enormous richness and cognitive complexity of animal lives, which prominently include intricate social groups, emotional responses, and even cultural learning. We share this fragile planet with other sentient animals, whose efforts to live and flourish are thwarted in countless ways by human negligence and obtuseness. This gives us a collective responsibility to do something to make our ubiquitous domination more benign, less brutal—perhaps even more just.

2022 Membership

Char Lane

If you're not a member of the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, please consider joining. If you're already a member of the Club and haven't yet renewed, please renew for 2022.

Membership is on a calendar year basis and your dues help provide funding for operational projects, such as *The Delray Democrat*, our meetings, other working supplies and signage for our sign waving events. Our meetings are on the second Thursday of each month, currently via zoom but we're looking forward to resuming live meetings as soon as it's safe to do so.

Our goal is to educate people as to why they should vote Democratic and use Vote-by-Mail as a critical tool in support of this goal. We'll need your help

with our sign-waving, phone calling, postcard writing, canvassing and participating in other projects. We'll have to work hard to help keep our Democracy intact and protect it from the manifesting lunacy.

We plan to help turn Florida BLUE by electing a Democratic governor (*to replace DeSantis*) and a Democratic U.S. Senator (*to replace Rubio*) in 2022.

Please visit our website at www.demclubofdelray.org, read current and previous issues of our newsletter *The Delray Democrat* at www.thedelraydemocrat.com and join our Facebook Group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/992741928168620>

Worth Noting

[Volodymyr Zelenskyy](#): "We used to say, 'Monday is a hard day. There is a war in the country. So every day is a Monday . . . We are all on the ground. We are all working . . . Doctors, rescuers, transporters, diplomats, journalists . . . We are all at war. We all contribute to our victory, which will definitely be achieved. By force of arms and our army, by force of words and our diplomacy, by force of spirit, which the first, the second, and each of us have.'"

Comment posted by "Ijarvis" in *The New York Times*, "Those who think Putin is a stronger leader than Biden are right; that's because Putin leads in a dictatorship and we live in a democracy. In Putin's world, all those American citizens participating in, 'Normal Political discourse' on Jan 6, 2021, would not have been arrested, they would have been shot."

[Abraham Lincoln](#) on Labor versus Capital: "Labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration."

Bill Walton, in [The Palm Beach Post](#), on his role as an in-demand public speaker: "This is the favorite part of my life -- to be able to interact with people, to be able to interact with the common purpose of what we're trying to do, to create opportunities. ... When you go out there through the world -- and I travel constantly -- it's important to try to find goodness. Evil and bad will find you. Our challenge is to find goodness"

James Baldwin, speaking in [Berkeley](#), in 1979: "Every white person in this country, I do not care what he says or what she says, knows one thing . . . They know they would not like to be Black here. If they know that, they know everything they need to know."

A *New York Times* reporter response to my complaint he and his colleagues had a sacred trust, and that when they betray it, they betray us all: "I find your assertion of the betrayal of a 'sacred trust' is bizarrely over-emotional, hyperbolic and generally perplexing. To put it simply, in the vernacular of my profession: it's just news." He should be selling shoes or hot dogs, not reporting for the Paper of Record.

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Editorial Board: Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Sandra Elaisson, David Kulick, Char Lane, June Neal, and Rob Resnick.

June's Outbox

Our June Neal has already notched two letters in local media this month.

Re: Frank Cerabino's "Tuning out Florida's 'Don't Say Gay' campaign? Sing and make yourself heard": Although Republican legislators claim this bill is intended to protect very young children from a non-age-appropriate subject, it introduces some insidious byproducts. The worst is a clear message to LGBTQ students that they are unwanted and unacceptable. "We don't want to talk about you."

Forcing school personnel to report students' sexual orientation to parents is dangerous and goes against all psychological best practices. Many students fear disclosing to their parents and seek guidance from teachers, counselors or coaches. Such communications have been lifesaving. Allowing lawsuits will put a chilling effect on educators who simply try to respect students' concerns. Parents should provide input for their schools' curricula as they are being developed by professional educators, not with fractional laws driven by hate and fear.

June Neal, March 14, 2022, *Palm Beach Post*

Your superb editorial should be read to the United Nations and NATO. We don't need a Budapest Memorandum or any agreement to acknowledge our sacred duty to help this young democracy fight for its life.

I received a call from a dear friend whose family I had the privilege of helping to settle in Connecticut after they and hundreds more Russian Jews fled their country's antisemitism in the 1980s. My friend cried as she watched an evil megalomaniac destroy places she knew in Kyiv as a child. She cried for the people of Ukraine.

Evil has no self-limiting boundaries. Isolationism kept the U.S. from entering World War II until the attack on Pearl Harbor, when Europe was already awash in untold misery. We must help stop Putin and crush the enemy within.

June Neal, March 6, *Sun-Sentinel*

Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2022 Membership Application and Renewal

Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

Community/Condo Name _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone number _____

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here _____ and we will not share your E-mail address.).

Preferred method of contact: E-mail _____ Phone _____ Text _____

Send newsletter by: E-mail _____ Hand delivery _____

I/we are in South Florida from _____ to _____ each year or are a permanent resident _____.

Payment: Individual \$25 _____ Household \$35 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to P.O. Box 8224, Delray Beach, FL 33484. Thank you and welcome to our Club.

