

# A Decade of Conspiracists?

By Victor Davis Hanson

Who has most peddled conspiracy allegations the last nine years—all of them false and nearly all of them influencing national elections and public policies?



Once a target is constructed as Hitlerian, almost any means necessary to quash that perceived existential threat become justified. And we have seen a lot of them in the last nine years.

Russian collusion did not work. Christopher Steele was a fraud. Robert Mueller came up empty.

The Alfa Bank ping caper was a myth.

The Russian laptop disinformation was a lie and ruined the reputations of the “51 former intelligence authorities” who sanctioned it.

The first Trump impeachment was a strictly partisan vote, activated when Trump lost the House and Mueller had come up empty.

Only ten Republicans impeached Trump a second time; the Senate again acquitted then-private citizen Trump.

January 6 was a buffoonish riot. In magnitude and lethality, it marked only a fraction of the destruction in lives and property of the green-lit Antifa-BLM-organized 120-day “summer of love” of rioting, violence, and arson of 2020.

The post facto militarization of Washington into an armed camp, the presence of FBI informants on Capitol grounds, the decision not to beef up security forces, the weird effort to suppress videos of the riot and congressional testimonies and evidence, the promotion and canonization of the reckless officer Byrd who lethally shot an unarmed Ashli Babbitt, and the use of solitary confinement for the arrested, long detentions without trials, and inordinately harsh prison sentences (in comparison to the nearly 14,000 arrested in 2020 who were mostly released) will remain controversial until freedom of information suits release the full story of the day’s events and aftermath.

Sixteen states, in an unprecedented move, tried in vain to remove Trump from the 2024 ballot. All failed. If they had succeeded, elections as we know them would have ceased to exist.

Four prosecutorial teams, local, state, and federal, sought to bankrupt, jail, or render Trump inert during the 2023-2024 campaign cycle. All will likely fail—but risk opening a new chapter of tit-for-tat lawfare in lieu of relying on the voters to choose their own president.

The entire meme of Trump, the fascist who will institute a dictatorship, has likewise boomeranged.

Democracy is dying in darkness, given the current Democrat insider machinations of removing by diktat President Joe Biden. He won the most delegates in the Democratic “primaries”—but now apparently must be dropped either because he is behind in the polls or mentally unfit to remain a candidate or both. Stealth donors and covert politicians in the

shadows—not transparent primaries and elected delegates—run the party that “defends democracy.”

But note those on the left would allow Biden to remain our president for the next six months in his debilitated state, but not to continue as their (losing) candidate. The quest for progressive power always trumps the collective interest of the nation: he’s not fit for me but fit enough for thee.

The recent assassination attempts to kill Trump likewise failed. The eerie laxity of the Secret Service and the Biden administration’s long stonewalling to prevent adequate protection for candidates Trump and Robert Kennedy, Jr., will be long examined.

No one has ever apologized for any of the above, although all were unprecedented efforts to use the courts, the administrative state, and the media to do what they feared the people might not through voting.

Earlier, a number of celebrities, columnists, and rich elites had suggested that the only way to rid the country of Trump was to kill or injure him. They are now outraged by any suggestion that their assassination porn might have influenced the unhinged to believe they could become heroic by taking out the supposed Trump threat to civilization.

But note the Trump vitriol has not diminished. And the combination of signaling to the crazies that Trump really is Hitler while the Secret Service has demonstrated it cannot protect the ex-president and leading current presidential candidate from 20-year-old boys with overt drones, range-finders, and AR-15s will only encourage other evil would-be assassins to continue where the Crooks demon left off.

In this regard, recently, the cover of *The New Republic* transposed an old German pro-Hitler poster to portray Donald Trump. He stares out with a Hitlerian moustache, amid a supposedly scary black background. Beneath Hitler-Trump,

German archaic fraktur fonts blare out in red “American Fascism,” followed by the subtitle “What it would look like”—in turn listing left-wing professors and pundits as the issue’s essayists on Trump the fascist.

Aside from the reality that the FBI, CIA, DOJ, and Director of National Intelligence were not weaponized during the Trump administration, as they were under both Obama and Biden, why should we take such essayists seriously?

For example, one contributor, Rosa Brooks, warns us about what Trump might do in a second term to warp democracy.

But this is the same legal expert who, just 11 days after Trump was inaugurated in 2017, published a *Foreign Policy* essay titled “[3 Ways to Get Rid of President Trump Before 2020.](#)”

What followed was a manual on the various ways of how to remove the just-inaugurated president—listing three alternatives to the then-distant 2020 election: impeachment and conviction, 25th-Amerndment removal, and, barring all that, a military coup:

“The fourth possibility is one that until recently, I would have said was unthinkable in the United States of America: a military coup, or at least a refusal by military leaders to obey certain orders.”

Ironically, Brooks’ paradigms are now more apt for the creepy ways in which the left just deposed President Joe Biden, winner of the Democrat primaries and nearly all the delegates.

Brooks’ 2017 essay also proved eerily prescient in retrospect, given that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark Milley later chose to violate the chain of command and purportedly ordered theater commanders in the field to report directly to him, despite his strictly advisory role, in times of existential national crises to circumvent the commander-in-chief.

Milley also stealthily contacted his communist Chinese military counterpart to assure the head of the People's Liberation Army that he would warn him first should Dr. Milley, on his own, diagnose his own president as unhinged and thus any supposedly dangerously warlike presidential order as invalid. Think of the Milley precedent: are the Joint Chiefs in the future to diagnose the stability of their presidents to adjudicate when they can contact their communist Chinese counterparts to warn them of their own commanders-in-chief?

Note as well that in August 2020, retired Lieutenant Colonels John Nagl and Paul Yingling co-wrote an op-ed addressed to Milley, warning him that he should use the military to remove Trump, should the military, in its infinite and vast political wisdom, assume that Trump would not accept the verdict of the impending election.

Moreover, throughout 2020, some imaginative retired generals and admirals, repeatedly and with absolute impunity, clearly violated the Uniform Code of Military Justice by endlessly and publicly smearing their Commander-in-Chief as a liar, similar to Mussolini, Nazi-like, worthy of being removed "the sooner the better," and employing policies similar to those used at Auschwitz.

Had any non-commissioned officer leveled the same invective publicly against then President Barack Obama, those same four-stars would likely have recommended his court martial.

In sum, never in the history of the republic have the FBI, CIA, DOJ, and Pentagon so vastly exceeded their constitutional and legal parameters or violated the careful guardrails between civilian and military.

Finally, note that Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer reacted in outrage over Florida federal Judge Cannon's dismissal of much of the special counsel Jack Smith's indictment of Donald Trump and called for her dismissal from

the case:

This breathtakingly misguided ruling flies in the face of long-accepted practice and repetitive judicial precedence. It is wrong on the law and must be appealed immediately. This is further evidence that Judge Cannon cannot handle this case impartially and must be reassigned.

A federal judge is to be dropped because she disagrees with Chuck Schumer?

But if Judge Cannon is to be taken off the Trump case and reassigned because Schumer disagrees with her verdict—one which will be reexamined by various appellate judiciaries—what should we think of Schumer's own record of judicial "activism"?

After all, in March 2020, at the head of a wild pro-abortion crowd at the doors of the Supreme Court, Senator Schumer all but threatened two Supreme Court justices by name:

"I want to tell you, Gorsuch, I want to tell you, Kavanaugh, you have released the whirlwind, and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions."

"Hit you?"

In what sense, Senator Schumer?

His threats were later absorbed by the left as criticism against the right-wing drift of the Bush-Trump court.

And presto, by 2022-2023 mobs were appearing outside the private residences of Justices Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Thomas—with complete impunity.

Apparently, a vindictive Attorney General, Merrick Garland (a former Supreme Court failed nominee), saw nothing wrong with such intimidation—although it is arguably a felony to parade

or picket a Supreme Court Justice's environs with the intent to influence impending rulings.

Certainly, the purpose of these pro-abortion protestors picketing justices' homes was precisely the same as Schumer's own earlier intimidation—to make the justices, and now their families as well, aware that there would be a “whirlwind” to follow their decisions.

Donald Trump was impeached for “inciting” a violent protest by instructing his supporters to “peacefully and patriotically” demonstrate at the Capitol, which was followed by a riot. Schumer was praised for threatening justices by name.

It was perhaps no surprise that in such a climate, Nicholas Roske was later indicted on charges of attempted murder after he was arrested near Justice Kavanaugh's home—armed and apparently on a mission to assassinate the justice, at least until he had second thoughts.

For some nine years, we have been bombarded with hysterical warnings that Donald Trump is a Hitlerian figure who is a fascist who would destroy democracy to justify calls for extremist action. Yet in his four years, he certainly did not weaponize the government against his enemies in the same fashion as in past administrations. Lois Lerner, James Comey, Andrew McCabe, John Brennan, James Clapper, and a host of others either lied under oath, feigned amnesia under oath, or took the Fifth Amendment any time scrutiny arose over their politicized and extra-legal behavior.

Substitute the name Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton for Trump during any of the last decade's rhetorical and administrative venom, and we can only imagine what would have happened to the perpetrators.

So, can we at last cease the tiresome charge of Trump the fascist since it has not only been proven false but has revealed far more about the authoritarian and conspiratorial

nature of the accusers than their target?

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