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Republicans Plotting Against America

“Oh, what men dare do! What men may do.”

– William Shakespeare, “Much Ado About Nothing.”

The Republican Party with Donald Trump as its leader is trying to destroy America as we know it.

It’s becoming clearer as more details emerge that the Jan. 6 Trump-inspired mob uprising against the government appeared to be a planned coup attempt as Congress was certifying Joe Biden as the legitimate president, not a spontaneously-generated riot.

A well-known conservative Republican lawyer, John Eastman, outlined a complicated six-step scenario in a two-page, memo, apparently for Trump, in which Vice President Mike Pence could subvert the election results of the Electoral College by declaring fraud-linked disputes in seven states. If that was not accepted, the election possibly would go to the House. The GOP held a majority of state delegations in the House, 26-24. Each gets one vote.

Trump urged Pence to pursue this plot, telling him, “You can either go down in history as a patriot or you can go down in history as a pussy,” according to *The New York Times*.

It was all moot because Pence didn’t go along with the plan. But what’s significant in all of this is that Trump wasn’t just acting on the spur of the moment but that there was a concrete plan in mind at a time when hundreds of rioters were present to back him up.

Despite the failure of the plot, the coup attempt at the Capitol in which five people died was followed by Trump’s repeated claims that the election was stolen from him, a false accusation that has been accepted by many Republicans, including senior elected officials.

Many have said the siege was conducted by patriots, not thugs.

A recent reported NORC poll by the University of Chicago says 26 percent of Americans believe the election was stolen and 8 percent believe force would be justified to reinstate Trump as president.

More than 650 people have been charged with crimes stemming from the insurrection.

Now is the time for Biden to release hundreds of documents held by the National Archives that are sought by the House committee investigating the activities of Trump and his closest advisers Jan. 6 to help learn the origin of the insurrection.

Trump has said he plans to invoke executive privilege to prevent their release. But it's questionable whether he can do that if he is no longer president.

Biden "has already concluded that it would not be appropriate to assert executive privilege," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said.

House Democrats formed the committee after Republicans killed a bid to create a bipartisan commission to investigate the behind-the-scenes events that led to the siege of the Capitol. I believe the opposition by the Republicans illustrates how afraid they are of disclosures of a possible secret plot to overthrow the government and embarrass Trump.

"This was a coup conducted by the president – against his own vice president and the Congress," Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md.), told Washington Post columnist Greg Sargent. He is a member of the Jan. 6 committee.

"We are actively investigating both the organization of the bloody insurrection and the planning of the coup against American democracy," Raskin said. "Both of them were attacks on the constitutional order."

Trump's insidious manufactured nonsense, believed by millions of his followers, has undermined Biden's legitimacy as president and spurred a widespread coordinated Republican campaign to discredit him and destroy his agenda, particularly his plans for trillions of dollars of social spending.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell launched the latest attack by announcing Republicans will filibuster a House-passed bill to raise the debt ceiling, requiring 60 votes to get it through that chamber. Failure to approve the measure would cause a government shutdown Friday and a default on \$28 trillion in government debt between mid-October and early November.

McConnell has used the tactic before to get the Democrats to cut proposed spending but has relented at the last minute. An unprecedented default would mean sinking the economy into a recession, creating havoc in financial markets worldwide and could mean degrading the U.S. credit rating.

All this to make Biden look bad among the voters even though none of this would be his fault.

The Republicans have twisted things so badly that they publicly have pronounced the outcome of the Arizona recount of the election as a victory even though it found that Biden won by more votes than the earlier official tally showed. It showed the election wasn't stolen.

Trump announced the results as a "big win for democracy and a big win for us." The problem is, people believe this bold lie despite the contradictory evidence.

Some believe Trump will run again in 2024, including the Post's Bob Woodward and Robert Costa. Trump's reason for running, Costa told the PBS NewsHour, is "vengeance." That's a common motive for the vindictive Trump.

"A Trump victory is likely to mean at least the temporary suspension of American democracy as we have known it," Robert Kagan said in a Post opinion piece. He is with Brookings and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Watching Trump and his Republicans in action, sometimes it feels as if our democracy already has been suspended.

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