



Don't Let Them Off the Hook

It may seem too early to write about this topic, but, with the midterm elections just five months away and the Biden Administration nearing the 18-month mark, it is time Republicans in Congress think about how best to hold Biden Administration officials accountable for their actions since January 20, 2021. This fact is especially the case given that several Cabinet officials will seek to exit the Biden Administration in the last few months of the year.

Understandably, Senior Officials will want to exit because the job is grueling. I worked at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from March 2004 to May 2006 where I spent the last year running a \$3.5 billion terrorism preparedness office and simultaneously serving as the policy and operational counselor to Deputy Secretary Michael Jackson. By the time I turned in my blackberry and security badge, I was so burned out I needed to take a month off to detox and recharge my batteries.

More importantly, given the expected Republican tidal wave in the midterm elections, Senior Officials in the Biden Administration will seek to leave by year-end to avoid being held accountable for their actions by a Republican Majority Congress in January 2023. Typically, once someone exits government service, Congress leaves them alone and focuses on their replacement. Given the utter debacle of the last eighteen months and the lies told by Senior Officials at hearings, a Republican Congress should refuse to let some of the worst offenders off the hook.

The top three targets should be Attorney General Merrick Garland, federal prosecutors and judges treating 1/6ers and 2020 rioters differently, and DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. Garland's nearly nonstop inability to tell the truth on virtually every issue revealed him as the political hack he is. Thank God Senator Mitch McConnell kept him off the Supreme Court, especially given his shocking statement to defy the Supreme Court's decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* as it shows how little he respects the democratic process.

From the criminalization of speaking at school board meetings to refusing to disclose federal assets present at the Capitol on January 6, 2021, from zealously prosecuting process fouls done by 1/6ers with every power he possesses as he turned a blind eye to the 2020 left-wing rioters who did far more damage, ruined cities, injured and killed law enforcement personnel, and attacked federal buildings, including The White House, to failing to arrest and prosecute left-wing activists who committed clear felonies by protesting at Supreme Court Justices homes and terrorizing pregnancy centers, Garland's DOJ is the most politicized DOJ in American history. His statement on defying the Supreme Court is beyond the pale.

Whether he leaves or remains, Republicans in Congress should haul Garland before them as many times as necessary to get him to admit his lies, pay for his acts and omissions, and be held accountable for his tenure. If he remains, he should be impeached and bankrupted like he has done to countless 1/6ers who merely trespassed.

While they are at it, Republican-led committees should demand the team of career or political appointee prosecutors going after 1/6ers and wrist-slapping 2020 rioters testify on their actions, especially in light of the double standards applied between the 1/6ers and the 2020 rioters. These overly zealous and hyper-partisan lawyers have bankrupted families, imprisoned process crime offenders, made a mockery of courtrooms with their dramatics and extra-legal prosecutions, and ignored federal crimes thereby making many American communities less safe.

The same standard should be applied to the judges who have gone beyond their judicial guardrails to extract far more than due from 1/6ers for merely having unpopular political opinions in DC and for trespassing and those judges treating 2020 rioters too lightly. To be clear, I'm expressly excluded those who vandalized the Capitol or physically injured law enforcement personnel. The majority of 1/6ers being prosecuted did not damage any federal buildings and did not fight with law enforcement personnel. They trespassed – though many of them did so unknowingly as they followed the crowd ahead of them and in some cases had law enforcement personnel hold the door for them. These men and women should have had their cases plead out as misdemeanors over a year ago and been able to move on with their lives. DOJ prosecutors and the judges going beyond how 2020 rioters are being treated must be held accountable by a Republican Majority Congress.

As for Mayorkas, he has done more to damage the already-damaged credibility of DHS with his attack on Customs and Border Protection officers, his lies about the Ministry of Truth, his scaremongering about right-wing violence being America's top threat as he ignores far more serious left-wing violence, and intentional actions to open the border to allow migrants, drug cartels, human traffickers, and terrorists into America. Mayorkas implicitly gives Republican committee members the middle finger every time he testifies. He has told countless bald-faced lies on Nina Janckowicz and her Ministry of Truth—from how she was hired to the mission of the office and more. Mayorkas failures and overt actions to make America's southern border as open and porous as possible alone should result in impeachment actions against him if he hasn't resigned by January 2023.

Unless Republicans in Congress hold these individuals accountable when they take control, they will escape being held responsible for their actions that weaken America, make our cities less safe, politicize agencies that must remain neutral, and target Americas for exercising free speech. A Republican Congress simply must not let them off the hook or the wave that brings to power will snapback on them.