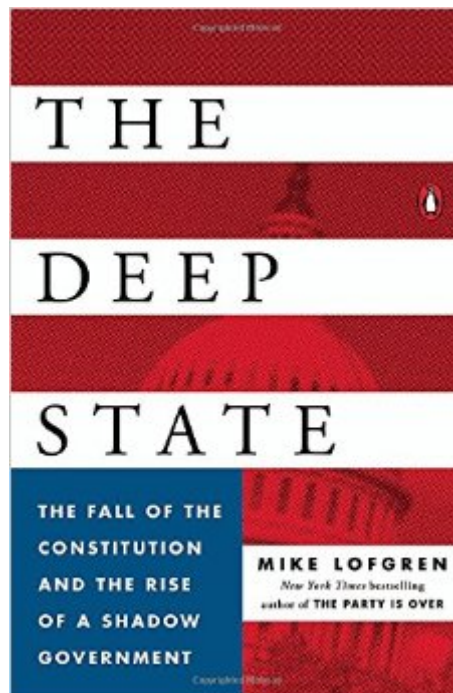


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The Deep State: The Fall Of The Constitution And The Rise Of A Shadow Government



Synopsis

The New York Times bestselling author of *The Party Is Over* delivers a no-holds-barred exposé of who really wields power in Washington. Every Four years, tempers are tested and marriages fray as Americans head to the polls to cast their votes. But does anyone really care what we think? Has our vaunted political system become one big, expensive, painfully scripted reality TV show? In this cringe-inducing expose of the sins and excesses of Beltwayland, a longtime Republican party insider argues that we have become an oligarchy in form if not in name. Hooked on war, genuflecting to big donors, in thrall to discredited economic theories and utterly bereft of a moral compass, America's governing classes are selling their souls to entrenched interest while our bridges collapse, wages stagnate, and our water is increasingly undrinkable. Drawing on insights gleaned over three decades on Capitol Hill, much of it on the Budget Committee, Lofgren paints a gripping portrait of the dismal swamp on the Potomac and the revolution it will take to reclaim our government and set us back on course. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Penguin Books; Reprint edition (September 13, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0143109936

ISBN-13: 978-0143109938

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.7 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars. See all reviews (72 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #35,278 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Elections & Political Process > General #63 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Security #127 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > United States > National

Customer Reviews

I was a bit surprised by this book. It is perhaps most notable for who the author is, rather than any novelty of content. It is, however, a well written and sometimes witty polemic. The author was a long-time, and apparently widely respected, Congressional staff person. Lofgren entered public life as a staff for then Rep. John Kasich and worked for other Republicans in Congress. Apparently disillusioned by events during the Bush administration, he retired a few years ago and published a

widely read essay, followed by a similar book, denouncing the Republican Party. The Democratic Party and Democratic administrations came in for quite a bit of criticism as well, though on different grounds. Lofgren takes them to task largely for abandoning their Liberal ideals. In these writings, the former Republican comes across as a thoughtful and civil version of numerous leftist critics who attack our political system for forsaking the legacy of New Deal and post-WWII Liberalism. In this book, Lofgren tries to identify some of the structural features underlying the sorry state of our political system. The Deep State is a term from modern Turkish history used to describe the military, security apparatus, political, and business elite that ran the authoritarian Turkish state for much of the last century. Lofgren's American version of the Deep State is the nexus of powerful corporations, lobbyists, politicians, and the Defense and Security bureaucracies that dominate American political life. In common with many others, he points to the powerful effect of plutocratic interests, notably Wall Street, on American political life. He describes the Deep State as sustained by 2 major phenomena. One is the revolving door between Congress, the Executive Branch, corporations, and DC think tanks.

This is a book worth your time, written by a retired career Congressional staff insider. Author Mike Lofgren has unique and critical insight into the workings of both the Republican Party and the Congress. And his take on both are depressing, bordering on frightening. He takes no prisoners with harsh judgement of the GOP, the Democrats, and corporate America. According to him, the Republicans are essentially shills for big business and the Democrats are just plain hapless. In a nutshell, the Deep State as Lofgren describes it is a combination of elected and appointed members of the legislative and executive branches; and corporate insiders, especially the military-industrial complex, Wall Street, and Silicon Valley. Together, fueled by enormous amounts of money, they effectively control the country, regardless of which party is in power or the wishes of the electorate. Lofgren believes the 'Deep State' in its current form began with the Manhattan Project during WW II. He describes the country's situation in detail with specific examples. He points out the main dangers the country faces due to the Deep State, and finally, he lays out specific corrections he believes the country must take to save itself. Readers will have widely different views about Lofgren's thesis based on their perspective. I have a few observations. First, I think he's mostly right. But I wonder why he played the game for so long and only vents his concerns after retirement. He could be viewed as quite hypocritical. At times, his rhetoric is quite shrill (over the top). Also, although the 'Deep State' might be reaching new heights of control and manipulation, I do not think this is a very new phenomenon. Think about the Railroad Barons of the 19th century and many

other examples.

Just about everyone knows something is dangerously wrong with our nation's political system. There is a growing awareness that the United States is drifting blindly into a state of greater inequality, stagnation, oligarchy, and perpetual war, with a ruling establishment that neither responds to the will of the people nor to the problems our nation faces. If you want evidence of this pervasive sense of unease, look no further than the 2016 presidential election, where a bombastic celebrity billionaire and a cantankerous grandfatherly democratic socialist are claiming the political system is rigged and are driving the scions of the status quo into the rubber room -- at least for now. In his most recent book, *The Deep State*, Mike Lofgren has written a timely exegesis of that status quo and its staying power. He has made it easier for any concerned citizen to understand the realities of the political and constitutional crises now facing the United States -- and perhaps even improve the reader's sense for the madness that now characterizes presidential politics. Before reading further, be advised, I am biased: the author Mike Lofgren is a long time colleague and close friend. Lofgren worked on Capitol Hill while I worked in the Pentagon, and over the years, beginning in the late 1980s, we discussed and tried to understand the many hidden connections that had evolved insensibly over time to disconnect the money siphoning operations of the Military - Industrial - Congressional Complex from the system of checks and balances designed by the Framers of the Constitution. This book goes much further. It grew out of a stunning essay -- *Anatomy of the Deep State* (Feb 2014) -- that Lofgren produced at the request of journalist Bill Moyers.

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