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I'd like to speak the obvious necessary things about the Republican Party, the most central of which is that this is not an organization that is participating in democracy.

Rather, they are cynically utilizing our democracy's vulnerabilities.



Analysis

### Senators representing less than half the U.S. are about to confirm a nominee opposed by most Americans

Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh was nominated by a president who lost the popular vote and has majority disapproval.

The last two Republican Presidents to enter the White House did so without the popular vote.

The last Republican President to enter the White House with the popular vote did so in 1989.

Yet, when they win, they behave as though they have the mandate that comes with a landslide.

For example, they upend the healthcare program.

They give out trillions in corporate welfare.

They start torture programs.

They start surveillance programs.

They lie us into wars.

They gerrymander at every level they can. They deliberately disenfranchise. They make our elections so imbalanced they can get less votes than Democrats but win 60% of the seats.

They are not interested in democracy. They are not participating in a democracy.

When a Democrat actually does win the popular vote—by a lot—they behave as if they are a majority opposition.

They stall. They filibuster. They delay. They engage in deliberate sabotage to gain political advantage.

They are not participating in our democracy.

The reason the Russia thing matters isn't that Russia is taking us over.

Russia didn't capture the Republican Party. Russia just wants to upend Western Democracy, which happens to be exactly what Republicans also want.

So they were happy for the help, but they didn't need it.

Mostly, Russia doesn't even matter. They're mostly just a warning light, showing how hostile the GOP has become to our democracy, that they would become such natural allies.

Russia's basically just somebody paid to make a distraction while the heist team hits the bank.

Russia isn't taking over. \*Republicans\* are taking over.

It just so happens they both have pretty much the same mission with the same method: Destroy American democracy by exploiting its weaknesses.

So, what are those weaknesses?

Some of the weaknesses are structural, and designed to do what they're doing, which is to help wealthy landed white guys keep outsized representation against the 'threat' of demographic shifts.

The electoral college is one of these. The way the Senate is allocated is another.

I don't think we can do much about these structural weaknesses until we get supermajorities back.

But there are other weaknesses we can do something about now.

These are 'weaknesses' that in healthier times are strengths, that have been leveraged against us.

What are these 'weaknesses?' Here's a partial list:

- \* An appetite for compromise
- \* A mutual trust in the opposition's good intentions
- \* A desire to be fair
- \* An interest in keeping an open mind to other perspectives
- \* A desire to find common ground

These are all good things.

It cannot be overstated the extent to which the Republican Party has proved—PROVED—it has nothing but contempt for all of those things.

They prove that contempt by constantly and cynically using our desire for them to make us play by rules they have no intention of playing by.

They do not care about politeness—at all.

They don't care about finding common ground.

They don't care about what the people want.

They don't care about standards.

To name only the most glaringly obvious of all available tells, I'll refer you to the president they elected.

We have to recognize that they are not playing by the rules we love.

We HAVE to recognize that they are not playing by those rules.

And, since they are in power, that means those aren't the rules.

I think what we need to do is remember WHY we love those rules so much.

We love them because all these things—compromise, politeness, common ground, mutual belief in good intentions—are GOOD things, in healthy times.

In healthy times.

We love them because they indicate health.