

Talking Turkey: GOP Control of Either House in 2023 Will Be a Sh*t Show

By JIM SMITH

It's a good thing that the likelihood of Republicans gaining majority control of the House of Representatives or Senate is fading. It was looking pretty inevitable until, for starters, the U.S. Supreme Court repealed Roe v. Wade. You've heard the quote, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," and the conservative members of the Supreme Court — one-third of them appointed by President Trump — has triggered that fury in one simple decision.

I'm not saying that maintaining Democratic control of both houses of Congress is a slam dunk, but let's hope that it's now a possibility.

Passing right-wing legislation, such as a national ban on abortion, is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the result of Republican control. Moreover, the right-wing legislation they pass would have to overcome a presidential veto for at least the next two years. The bigger part of that iceberg is what the various committees might do under Republican chairs.

Can you imagine the investigations that they would conduct if, for example, Rep. Jim Jordan becomes chairman of the House Judiciary Committee?

Last week, Jonathan Nicholson of

HuffPost compiled a list of investigations we might expect if Republicans take control of either house. Democrats haven't gone overboard in the way that we can expect their GOP counterparts to go.

Picture, for example, investigations of all their favorite enemies, from Anthony Fauci to Hillary Clinton to the Vice President and President themselves — and their families.

You've probably heard Republicans refer to the "Biden Crime Family." Given Republican control, QAnon and Tucker Carlson might as well be in charge of setting the congressional agenda. That will delight their followers, but what about the rest of us and the future of our country?

How much attention do you think Donald Trump paid to his job between election day and Biden's inauguration? Was he reading the Presidential Daily Brief each morning? (Not that he read it regularly before becoming preoccupied with staging a coup.)

It has been refreshing to have a president who takes his job seriously, who devotes his waking hours to the country's business, not his own.

Ditto for the Democrats in Congress. They have been focused on serving our

country, not on the country serving them. Isn't that a pleasant change? I'd hate to lose that focus after next month's mid-term elections.

A Timely Reminder of Thomas Paine

Last Sunday, Thom Hartmann reprised his 2006 review of *Thomas Paine and the Promise of America* by Harvey J. Kaye. I was not familiar with that book, but it's on my reading list now.

Thomas Paine was best known for his books *Common Sense* and *The Rights of Man*, which were "best sellers" during the time of our country's founding. His undoing, according to Kaye, was a third book, *The Age of Reason*, which Hartmann describes as "a finely tuned attack on organized religion." It's never been a good idea!

Here's an excerpt from Hartmann's review, which I'll post on my blog:

- ◆ It wasn't FDR who first seriously promoted the progressive income tax in the USA: it was Thomas Paine.
- ◆ It wasn't LBJ who invented anti-poverty programs by introducing Medicare, housing assistance, and

food-stamp programs: Thomas Paine proposed versions of all of these.

- ◆ It wasn't Jack Kennedy who first talked seriously about international disarmament: it was Thomas Paine.
- ◆ And Teddy Roosevelt wasn't the first American to talk about the "living wage," or ways that corporate "maximum wage" wink-and-nod agreements could be broken up: it was Thomas Paine.
- ◆ Even Woodrow Wilson's inheritance tax, designed to prevent family empires from taking over our nation, was the idea of Thomas Paine, as was the suggestion for old-age pensions as part of a social safety net known today as Social Security.

Paine thought that the best way to build a strong democracy was to tax the wealthy to give the poor bootstraps by which they could pull themselves up.

And unlike most of our "founding fathers," Paine never owned a slave and in fact railed against the practice. That's another reason he lost favor.

With the mid-terms coming up, I'll be publishing this column again on the last Thursday of October. You can donate at [FundTalkingTurkey.com](https://www.fundtalkingturkey.com).