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**Virtual Postcard Party #174 May 22, 2020**

**William Barr, the DOJ and the Executive Branch**

The founders of this nation had the intention of balancing the powers inherent in an effective government between three branches, Legislative, Judicial and Executive. This concept was relatively new and a reaction to the shortcomings and burdens of monarchies, dictatorships, warlords and the like that were the norm over the planet. The concept that one branch of government could easily overrule or dominate the actions (or inactions) of the other branches was a genuine concern. The executive was given real but protracted powers in many areas as were the other branches. However, many of the rules were based on intent and a general understanding of the ‘spirit’ of the powers and were not specific but open to honest interpretations. These gray areas are custom-made for those wanting to turn the nation in different directions.

Making the Department of Justice and its head, the Attorney General, an appointment of the Executive branch doesn’t look so good, currently. Combined with a complicit Senate majority our Attorney General, William Barr, has successfully put a wrench in the gears of justice. He is acting solely to please and placate the president. Combined with the Senate’s approval of totally partisan and/or unqualified federal judges we are closing in on a judicial system suited to a third world dictatorship.

Write Republicans in Congress that this is not a scenario that is acceptable in any way, shape or form.

**Support Our Local, State and Federal Candidates**

Despite the current crisis, whatever you can give of your time and money will make a difference to our candidates. This calamity will abate in time. The representation we have for the future is crucial.

**On Socialism**

The current actions by the Federal and State governments to address the financial hardships the contraction of the US economy has had on our society highlight the ridiculous nature of the conservative drum beat of “anti-Socialism” rhetoric, hyperbole, lies and misdirection. As you know, the right has demonized the term Socialism to encompass everything wrong, in their minds, with Washington and government in general. They have turned the minds of their followers upside down, despite money flowing out to support businesses and families who are threatened with ruin. However, we are also seeing many instances where large sums are going to businesses, schools and other entities that don’t need or deserve public money during this health and financial crisis.

Where is “Socialism” now in their vernacular? When state and local governments give tax breaks to big businesses to locate in their area, what is it other than corporate welfare? When government gives the oil industry subsidies what do we call that? Welfare and subsidies are Socialism, right? When it further enriches those who don’t need it, we call it incentives.

Republicans have institutionalized disingenuousness. When big businesses are failing a bailout from the Feds is imminent. Small businesses must stand on their own.

Write Democrats in Congress and our state legislature to defend public spending for what it is: VITAL, now and in the future to defend our democracy. We need to expose the duplicity of the right for Postcard Party demonizing Socialism.

**Dept. of Education, Private and for-profit Schools**

History shows that every crisis presents challenges but also opportunities. Sadly, the Republicans have used these opportunities not to work to find solutions but to further their own goals, unrelated to the predicament at hand. They used 9/11 to enrich their donors and supporters under the guise of protecting the country with wars to expand the already bloated military-industrial complex by spending trillions of dollars and countless lives in wars that have no end.

Currently, our Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, has doled out millions of $$ to private and religious- based schools under the cover of the pandemic. Many of these institutions have no oversight for standards of education, and little need or entitlement to the money. DeVos’ support for the privatization of education has been no secret since trump nominated her, a person with no relevant qualification to fulfill the role, other than being a major donor to the Republican party.

Write Congress to end the “free for all” of public funds to private religious and educational institutions and to have real oversight of who gets these funds. Other people, organizations and small businesses need these dollars to solve real problems and stay intact.

**Unemployment Aid in NC**

Sen. Wiley Nickel, a Wake County Democrat, has sponsored a bill, SB 792, that would dramatically increase our state’s unemployment benefits. North Carolina has among the country’s lowest-paying unemployment benefits. The corona virus pandemic has highlighted the state’s inadequate benefits as well as the fragile, antiquated system that is supposed to serve those in need of benefits.

Write to support this bill. Let’s ‘strike while the iron is hot’ and public attention is on our side.