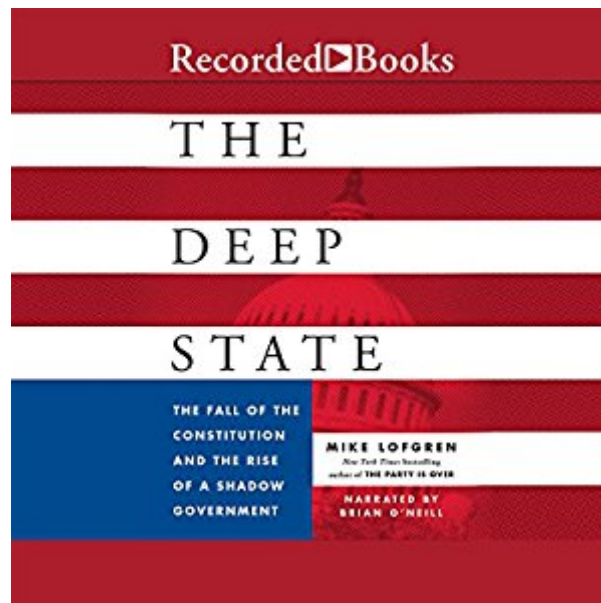




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The Deep State: The Fall Of The Constitution And The Rise Of A Shadow Government



Synopsis

The New York Times best-selling author of *The Party Is Over* delivers a no-holds-barred, House of Cards-style exposé of who really wields power in Washington. Mike Lofgren is back with a book perfectly pitched for the frenzied circus of the primaries. His argument this time is that for all of the backstabbing and money grubbing of the campaign season, the politicians we elect have as little ability to shift policy as Communist party apparatchiks. Welcome to Mike Lofgren's Washington, DC - a This Town where the political theater that is endlessly tweeted and blogged about has nothing to do with actual decision making. The real work gets done behind the scenes by invisible bureaucrats working for the vast web of agencies that actually dictate our foreign policy, defense posture, and security decisions. Have you ever wondered why Obama's policies look so much like Bush's? Seek no further: Hillary versus Jeb is just window dressing. Actual power lies in the Deep State, Washington's shadowy power elite, in the pockets of corporate interests and dependent on the moguls of Silicon Valley, whose data-collecting systems enable the US government to spy on our every move, swipe, and click. Drawing on insider knowledge gleaned in his three decades on the Hill, Lofgren offers a provocative wake-up call to Americans and urges them to fight to reinstate the basic premise of the Constitution.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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. People with vast resources have always wielded great power for possible mischief. That's not to say we should not heed Lofgren's warning and strive to retake our democracy. Mike Lofgren says the worst and most vexing problem we face is money in politics and the ills exacerbated by the "Citizens United" Supreme Court decision. He's exactly right. His suggested solutions, while mostly right on target, are daunting. In the current state, it's difficult to see how we get there. This is a book that should cause people to think and act. I highly recommend it.

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. The other is the quite remarkable depth of political corruption, recently extended and legitimized by the Supreme Court. Lofgren is very clear that this is a bipartisan phenomenon, indeed, one of his major points is that the Deep State is considerably more important than our party system. This book contains some of the best critiques of the Obama administration, particularly its foreign and national security policies, that I've read. Lofgren is a very good, and often mordantly witty, writer. His use of anecdote and broader information to make his points concisely is excellent. Some of his capsule descriptions of important (and unimportant) political figures, such as former Secretary of Defense Gates and Chief Justice Roberts, are models of polite invective. Many, perhaps all, of Lofgren's points have been made earlier, though when a former employee of John Kasich sounds like Prof. Chomsky, we should pay attention. His conceptualization of the Deep State is hardly new. This concept maps well onto an older term used by a number of historians and political scientists to describe changes engendered by the Cold War, the National Security State. There are some points where Lofgren's critique is incomplete. One is his failure to mention a major structural feature of American political life. The federal nature of our politics, and the divided structure of the Federal government, make it relatively easy to obstruct reform. Another substantial component of the Deep State is the conventional mass media, whose willful incompetence is yet another aspect of the corruption engendered by plutocratic control. Lofgren laments the way in which what should be objectively considered foreign policy decisions are part of domestic politics (our support of Israel is the best example) and leaves the impression that there is something relatively novel about this phenomenon. This was, however, a major feature of politics during the Cold War. Lofgren spent much of his career apparently focused on national security issues and not surprisingly, these feature frequently in this book. An important omission is any discussion of what is arguably the most important issue facing our society, climate change, and

the criminally negligent response of our political system to this problem. Lofgren concludes this book with a set of recommendations for reform. This former Republican puts forward a list of proposals that could easily have been drafted by one of Senator Sanders' staff.

An indispensable guide and expose of the harsh reality of the corrupted American political system. The author surveys the history, dynamics, and increasing lunacy of a system that has drifted into distortion and dysfunction. The portrait is a sobering indictment of a national decline, and an international menace. I would point to one limit in the analysis: the failure to consider that the 9/11 terror attack had deep sources in another version of the 'deep state', that pointed to in such thinkers as Peter Dale Scott. But all in all this book from an insider x-rays the core malfunction of a republic/democracy that has become an oligarchic plutocracy.

If you're really interested in finding out how Washington really works in today's time frame, it is highly recommended that you read Deep State and then look around and see what is currently going on in today's USA. I do not agree with all of his opinions, but the documented facts coincide with our surrounding current cultures. It is worth your time to read in this all important election year in order to be able to help further understand the powers behind the actions of the elite, that have driven this country ever since the days of Harry Truman. DonC

This book really gets into what is actually happening in Washington and who really has power. It also very clearly explains why nothing gets done. In fact, it is the desire of the elites, career politicians, lobbyists and their corporate masters to make sure nothing gets reformed in any substantial way. It is must reading if you want to see what is actually going vs the endless fake debates that are mostly for theater.

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