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Cognitive Infiltration: An Obama Appointee's Plan to Undermine the 9/11 Conspiracy Theory

by Elizabeth Woodworth

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The Principles of Democracy: A Shocking New Low in Official Comprehension

In the annals of democratic evolution, Professor Griffin's masterful analysis is sure to become a classic, for it illustrates the shocking degree to which even high-level American scholars have lost sight of constitutional principles in the wake of 9/11.

The scholars concerned are Cass Sunstein, former University of Chicago and Harvard Law professor, who has been described as "the pre-eminent legal scholar of our time – the most wide-ranging, the most prolific, the most cited, and the most influential," and Adrian Vermeule, a younger Harvard law professor.

Sunstein was appointed Obama's Administrator of the Office of Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget in September, 2009. He and Vermeule had co-authored a paper that appeared in both 2008 and in June 2009 ("Journal of Political Philosophy") entitled "Conspiracy Theories: Causes and Cures", in which the running example "involves conspiracy theories relating to terrorism, especially theories that arise from and post-date the 9/11 attacks."

Prof. Emeritus Dr. David Ray Griffin first distills the ten theses that Sunstein devised in an attempt to conclude that "9/11 conspiracy theorists, being extremists, are likely to

become violent, “with terrifying consequences,” and that because the purveyors are “resistant to correction” the government should “engage in cognitive infiltration of the groups that produce conspiracy theories.” (Henceforth, I shall refer only to Sunstein, the lead author, for brevity.)

Second, Griffin examines Sunstein’s one-sided definition of “conspiracy theory” as pointing only towards powerful people as suspects. He analyses Sunstein’s purpose in choosing this limited definition – and then turns the tables by citing one of Sunstein’s own referenced authors, Charles Pigden, who wrote that “it is a common ploy on the part of politicians to dismiss critical allegations by describing them as conspiracy theories.”

Third, Griffin analyses the ten theses using the riveting and diabolically clever approach of dissecting each thesis through the double lens of an exoteric (surface) meaning, and its opposite esoteric (hidden and intended) meaning, subtly intertwining them in a kaleidoscopic dance of Sunstein’s contradictions that leaves the reader agape with delight.

For example, in a chapter dealing with the Sunstein thesis, “The 9/11 Conspiracy as Demonstrably False”, this dual approach provides Griffin with a rolling opportunity to summarize the vast evidence he has presented against the official story through 8 scholarly books, and then to point to Sunstein’s failure to refute any of this evidence as a means of realizing his deeper intent – to promote the evidence by showing it to be irrefutable.

Another fun part of the book is that Griffin reduces to rubble some of the verbose pseudo-academic contortions of the English language that Sunstein uses to appear either intelligent or unintelligible – whichever is necessary –and they seem to work, judging by his pre-eminence. (They would not work in England or Canada.) For example: “crippled epistemology,” “biased assimilators,” “self-sealing,” and “degenerating research program.” (What have these mouthfuls got to do with disguised and propagandizing illegal government agents?)

But essentially this is a very serious work, because it heads off a dangerous and frightening attempt by a high official of the United States government to promote illegal and even unconstitutional acts on behalf of his government in order to protect it from inconvenient citizen inquiry and investigation.

It should be read by everyone wishing to restore the fragile American democracy to health.