

MIKE LOFGREN

AUTHOR OF "THE PARTY IS OVER"
New York Times Best Seller



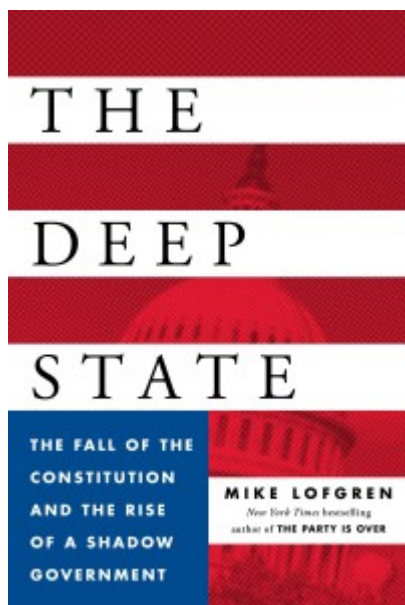
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The Deep State

An excerpt from the introduction:



(<http://www.mikelofgren.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/THE-DEEP-STATE-HC-HIGH-RES.jpg>) Anyone who has spent time on Capitol Hill will occasionally get the feeling when watching debates in the House or Senate chambers that he or she is seeing a kind of marionette theater, with members of Congress reading carefully vetted talking points about prefabricated issues. This impression was particularly strong both in the run-up to the Iraq war and later, during the mock deliberations over funding that ongoing debacle. While the public is now aware of the disproportionate influence of powerful corporations over Washington, best exemplified by the judicial travesty known as the *Citizens United* decision,

few fully appreciate that the United States has in the last several decades gradually undergone a process first identified by Aristotle and later championed by Machiavelli that the journalist Lawrence Peter Garrett described in the 1930s as a "revolution within the form." Our venerable institutions of government have outwardly remained

the same, but they have grown more and more resistant to the popular will as they have become hardwired into a corporate and private influence network with almost unlimited cash to enforce its will.

Even as commentators decry a broken government that cannot marshal the money, the will, or the competence to repair our roads and bridges, heal our war veterans, or even roll out a health care website, there is always enough money and will, and maybe just enough competence, to overthrow foreign governments, fight the longest war in U.S. history, and conduct dragnet surveillance over the entire surface of the planet.

This paradox of penury and dysfunction on the one hand and unlimited wealth and seeming omnipotence on the other is replicated outside of government as well. By every international metric of health and living standards, the rural countries of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky qualify as third world. So do large areas of Detroit, Cleveland, Camden, Gary, and many other American cities. At the same time, wealth beyond computation, almost beyond imagining, piles up in the money center of New York and the technology hub of Palo Alto. It piles up long enough to purchase a \$95,000 truffle, a \$38 million vintage Ferrari GTO, or a \$179 million Picasso before the balance finds its way to an offshore hiding place.

These paradoxes, both within the government and within the ostensibly private economy, are related. They are symptoms of a shadow government ruling the United States that pays little heed to the plain words of the Constitution. Its governing philosophy profoundly influences foreign and national security policy and such domestic matters as spending priorities, trade, investment, income inequality, privatization of government services, media presentation of news, and the whole meaning and worth of citizens' participation in their government.

I have come to call this shadow government the Deep State. The term was actually coined in Turkey, and is said to be a system composed of high-level elements within the intelligence services, military, security, judiciary, and organized crime. In John le Carré's recent novel, *A Delicate Truth*, a character in the book describes the Deep State as "the ever-expanding circle of non-governmental insiders from banking, industry and commerce who were cleared for highly classified information denied to large swathes of Whitehall and Westminster." I use the term to mean a hybrid association of key elements of government and parts of top-level finance and industry that is effectively able to govern the United States with only limited reference to the consent of the governed as normally expressed through elections.

The Deep State is the big story of our time. It is the red thread that runs through the war on terrorism and the militarization of foreign policy, the financialization and deindustrialization of the American economy, the rise of a plutocratic social structure

that has given us the most unequal society in almost a century, and the political dysfunction that has paralyzed day-to-day governance.

Edward Snowden's June 2013 exposure of the pervasiveness of the National Security Agency's surveillance has partially awakened a Congress that was asleep at the switch and ignited a national debate about who is really in charge of our government. At the same time, a few politicians, most notably Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, are beginning to argue that the American economy is rigged. But these isolated cases have not provided a framework for understanding the extent of the shadow government, how it arose, the interactions of its various parts, and the extent to which it influences and controls the leaders whom we think we choose in elections. This book, based in large part on my experiences and observations while in public service, aims to provide that framework.

My reflection on our shadow system of government has come only after my retirement in 2011 and my physical withdrawal from Washington, D.C. proper and the institutions located there. Unlike the vast majority of Capitol Hill strivers who leave the place for greener pastures, I had no desire to join a lobbying shop, trade association, think tank, or consultancy. But I did have a need to see the events I had witnessed in perspective, and I came to realize that the nation's capital, where I lived and worked for more than half my lifetime, has its own peculiar ecology.

To look upon Washington once again with fresh eyes, I sometimes feel as Darwin must have when he first set foot on the Galapagos Islands. From the Pentagon to K Street, and from the contractor cube farms in Crystal City to the public policy foundations along Massachusetts Avenue, the terrain and its people are exotic and well worth examining in a scientific manner. The official United States government has its capital there, and so does our state within a state. To describe them in the language of physics, they coexist in the same way it is possible for two subatomic particles to coexist in an entangled quantum state. The characteristics of each particle, or each governmental structure, cannot fully be described independently; instead, we must find a way to describe the system as a whole.



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