



Jim Crow South
blackmail

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DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Ms. Strassel asks, “No one is going to tell you what you can say or how you can say it, right? But what if you thought you’d be audited by the IRS or have your business boycotted or even lose your job... It’s happening to Americans right now... The object of this very real “game” is to make political opponents pay a high price for expressing their opinions.” In what ways do you think that trying to shut down opposing thought is un-American? How do you think that Democrats and progressives can get away with such behavior- such an egregious violation of people’s rights?
- Later, Ms. Strassel lays out the first method of intimidation that Democrats and progressives use- “Tactic number one: Harass. They sic federal and state agencies and bureaucrats on their political enemies.” In addition to being vicious and immoral, do you think that using government assets to harass people based solely on their political opposition is illegal? Should it be?
- Next, Ms. Strassel points out the second method of intimidation that Democrats and progressives use- “Tactic number two: Investigate and prosecute... [Wisconsin Democrat prosecutors] warned the victims of these phony investigations and terrorizing raids that they’d go to jail if they told anyone what was happening to them. It took the state Supreme Court to end this use of the government to suppress political opponents. But, the message was sent by Democrats in Wisconsin: cross us, and you will pay a steep price.” How do you think they are able to do this without being held accountable until the state’s highest court intervenes? Do you think that people in the legal system should be allowed to let their personal politics dictate their use of the system? Why or why not? What could be done to stop them from doing so... before their targets are victimized?
- Then, Ms. Strassel goes on to explain the third method of intimidation that Democrats and progressives use- “Tactic number three: Blackmail... In 2012 left-wing groups... had an idea: Target ALEC’s corporate donors. Threaten to run ads branding them as racists or climate deniers—unless they pull their support. It worked. More than 100 major donors ended their funding.” Why do you think that those companies pulled their funding instead of standing up to the left-wing groups? Why do you think that conservative groups don’t pull the same tactic?
- Towards the end of the video, Ms. Strassel asks, “...how do we stop this intimidation? ... we must fight back. They can only win if we let them. We can’t let them. Our freedom depends on it.” In what ways, specifically, do you think that we can ‘fight back?’ In addition to our freedom, what else is at stake in stopping the progressives from intimidating and attacking Americans?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: Maura Healey

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Attorney General Healey should resign,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Who is Maura Healey, and what is she doing? Who is Harvey Silverglate and what is his position on the circumstances of Ms. Healey’s investigation? According to the article, what should Ms. Healey actually focus her prosecutorial efforts on?
- Do you think that Maura Healey should resign? Why or why not? Do you think that Ms. Healey is a hypocrite for calling herself the ‘People’s Lawyer?’ Why or why not? Do you think that progressives like Ms. Healey are hypocrites when calling for diversity? Why or why not?
- In what ways does this article support what Ms. Strassel asserts in the video? What are some specific examples?



QUIZ

THE DARK ART OF POLITICAL INTIMIDATION

1. What is the object of the “Intimidation Game”?

- a. Maintain close relationships with political opponents.
- b. Boost morale between Democratic senators.
- c. Rid the world of racism.
- d. Make political opponents pay a high price for expressing their opinions

2. How did the IRS harass numerous conservative groups in 2010?

- a. They taxed conservative groups at a higher rate than their democratic counterparts.
- b. They withheld tax refunds that were due to conservative groups.
- c. They systematically denied or delayed non-profit status to more than 400 citizen-activist groups.
- d. The harassment claims ended up being bogus.

3. What message did Democrats in Wisconsin send during a campaign-finance investigation of conservative groups?

- a. We follow standard operating procedures.
- b. We don’t target people based on their political affiliations.
- c. Donate to our cause.
- d. Cross us, and you will pay a steep price.

4. How can the “Intimidation Game” be stopped?

- a. Recognize the Left’s bully tactics.
- b. Be very wary of initiatives to increase financial disclosure.
- c. Fight back.
- d. All of the above.

5. Forced disclosure of political donors is never a good idea.

- a. True
- b. False



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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Attorney General Healey should resign

By [James P. Freeman](#) | June 24, 2016, 8:55 EDT



In this Nov. 4, 2014 photo, Attorney General-elect Maura Healey , D-Mass., celebrates her victory over Republican opponent John Miller in Boston, Massachusetts. (AP photo)

In his dutiful and forceful concession remarks in November 2014, John Miller, the Republican candidate for Massachusetts Attorney General, gave fair warning: “The fight for impartial, fact based justice from a non-partisan attorney general goes on.” Miller, even in defeat, believed – and presumably feared — that the Bay State was still in “desperate need” of an attorney general who would take a “professional, not a political approach” to the office.

His fears are confirmed.

In June of 2016, it is now evident that the winner that November night, Maura Healey, is using her office to punish those whose views of public policy differ from her own. As a consequence, Healey is no longer fit to hold the office of Attorney General.

As reported last week, Healey is now using the power of her office to investigate conservative groups with supposed ties to ExxonMobil. Her subpoena charges that the oil giant lied to shareholders and consumers about the risks of global warming in its communications and shareholder filings.

Healey is seeking 40 years-worth of ExxonMobil documents and communications with right-leaning “think tanks.” Locally, these include the Beacon Hill Institute and Acton Institute. According to The Boston Herald, the basis of the investigation is “deceptive business practices.” The energy company countered by filing a federal lawsuit claiming, rightly, that Healey’s action is no more than a “fishing expedition,” part of a “political agenda,” and the attorney general is “abusing the power of government.” It is a disgracefully overt political maneuver.

Remarkably, both the Left and Right have been critical of state attorneys-general engaged in this scrutiny of ExxonMobil. Harvey Silverglate, former president of the American Civil Liberties Union in Massachusetts, called the investigation “pure harassment.” Added Silverglate, “It’s not the way scientific or factual or even political battles are settled in this country, which last I checked is still a free country.” The Wall Street Journal’s Kimberley Strassel wrote that the attack on ExxonMobil is really a “front,” and that the real target is “a broad array of conservative activist groups.”

So this is what we have come to in Massachusetts: a hyper-partisan attorney general, motivated by political expediency, who believes that ExxonMobil defrauded the public and its shareholders by systematically advancing the idea of “climate denial.” Seriously.

Where is the outrage on Beacon Hill? Where is the outrage from the prestige media in greater Boston?

Perhaps more so than any other Massachusetts elected official – including Senator Elizabeth Warren — Healey is the penultimate programmed progressive. Her core belief-system centers around identity politics and so-called diversity... of everything; except political thought.

On her website, maurahealey.com, Healey calls herself the “People’s Lawyer” (she is, apparently, the lawyer of all of the people, except, that is, conservative people). In a January posting she brags that she is “looking ahead to the challenges around the bend and we’re already pushing hard on our top priorities.” ExxonMobil’s thoughts on so-called climate disruption are a priority for the people of Massachusetts?

Healey’s behavior is reminiscent of the Lois Lerner and IRS scandal from a few years ago. Then, as now, conservative groups were targeted under a legal pretense. If Healey’s actions were based in fact and based on the law, warranting the full force and authority of her office, why hasn’t she called for the complete divestiture of ExxonMobil investments by the state’s pension system (which in 2015 was valued at \$151 million in the Domestic Equity portfolio)?

Among the first official undertakings by Healey in 2015 was a social media “campaign.” It involved the collection of testimonials from same-sex couples for an amicus brief that was filed with the U.S. Supreme Court, supporting national recognition of gay marriage. However laudable, such time and expense amounted to a political lagniappe but not a legal imperative.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, it seems identity politics is a greater priority than identity theft, which should be a priority.

Identity theft – the unauthorized use of personal information to defraud or commit crimes – is the fastest growing crime in America. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security notes that victims spend “between 30-60 hours of their time” and “approximately \$1,000 of their own money clearing up the problem.”

The Boston Globe noted two years ago that 1.2 million people in the Commonwealth had personal information and financial data compromised in 2013. In February 2015, a “data breach” occurred at insurer Anthem, compromising personal information of 78.8 million Americans. One million of those reside in Massachusetts. But don’t tell that to Healey.

On mass.gov/ago, victims are cautioned: “You should be aware that not all identity theft complaints can or will be investigated.” These people, unlike ExxonMobil, will likely not be accorded a vigorous campaign. What is unsettling is that Healey and fellow progressives believe they can effectively combat climate disruption to their satisfaction but not identity theft.

Healey will unlikely resign from office. She also will unlikely be impeached under the articles of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As a last resort, however, she should be recalled. Interestingly, the voter initiative and referendum provisions in the constitution specifically exclude the recall/removal of judges. But the Constitution is silent regarding recall/removal of executive branch officers.

Let the petition begin.



James P. Freeman