

Fascist Republican representative stripped of committee assignments

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5 February 2021

The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives voted Thursday evening to punish Georgia Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene for her advocacy of fascist conspiracy theories and threats of violence by stripping her of her committee assignments. A resolution to discipline Greene, a QAnon adherent, passed the House on a near-party-line vote, 230-199. Only 11 Republicans voted in favor of the resolution.

The measure to remove Greene, House Resolution 72, advanced past the Rules Committee on Wednesday and was taken up by the House on Thursday. The resolution only requires that Greene be taken off the two committees to which she is currently assigned, and does not prohibit her from serving on other committees or bar her from future assignments.

The measure was taken up after House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy refused to remove Greene from her assignments on the Budget Committee and the Education and Labor Committee following recent exposures of Greene's social media accounts, on which she advocated assassinating Democratic politicians, including Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and Nancy Pelosi, and characterized mass school shootings as "false flag" events staged by supporters of gun control.

Facing denunciations from Democratic members as well as some Republicans, Greene, in a speech from the floor of the House on Thursday, attempted to portray herself as a free speech advocate who has been the victim of "cancel culture" and an all-powerful media conspiracy. Unconvincingly claiming to be a "very regular American" Greene parroted such lines as, "You see, school shootings are absolutely real," and, "I also want to tell you, 9/11 absolutely happened." That she had to grit her teeth and spit out such statements only underscored her embrace of the delusional ultra right.

Greene never apologized for "liking" social media

comments advocating the assassination of Democratic politicians, nor did she recant comments in which she claimed that Muslims shouldn't serve in the government, that Jewish bankers started the wildfires in California with space-based lasers or that George Soros (a Jewish billionaire) was funding "migrant caravans."

Attempting to excuse her past support for QAnon, a fascist conspiracy theory that postulates that Donald Trump is the leader of movement that will massacre Satan-worshipping, child sacrificing, cannibalistic Democratic politicians, Greene claimed, "The media ... is just as guilty as QAnon of presenting truth and lies to divide us."

Early Wednesday morning, McCarthy met with House Majority Leader Representative Steny Hoyer to discuss his proposal that Greene give up her seat on the Education and Labor Committee but retain her position on the Budget Committee. Hoyer and the Democrats rejected the proposal, with Hoyer telling reporters on Wednesday that the outcome was not "sufficient ... given her consistent statements before and after her membership in the Congress, which have given great concern for people's individual safety."

"She's placed many members in fear for their welfare," Hoyer said. "We believe she also gave aid and comfort to those who led an insurrection." Why Hoyer did not seek to have Greene arrested and prosecuted, in that case, he did not say.

In 2019, McCarthy stripped Iowa Representative Steve King of his committee assignments after King signaled his support for "white nationalism" and questioned what was offensive about "white supremacy" in an interview with the *New York Times*. But he declined to take the same action against Greene, who has been publicly backed by former president Trump.

During a roughly four-hour-long Republican caucus meeting late Wednesday night Republicans discussed what to do about Greene as well as a possible challenge to the third-ranking member of the leadership, Liz Cheney of Wyoming, daughter of the former vice president. Cheney was one of the 10 House Republicans to join Democrats in voting to impeach Trump, and Trump loyalists have demanded her removal from the leadership.

McCarthy essentially balanced the two cases against each other, rejecting action against either congresswoman. After Greene addressed the caucus, McCarthy declared his opposition to any disciplinary action, and the assembled Republicans reportedly gave the fascist a standing ovation. At the same time, Cheney retained her position, as the caucus voted 145 to 61 to reject a call for her resignation.

Demonstrating the degree to which the Republican party has doubled down and shifted even further to the right in the wake of the January 6 coup attempt, McCarthy put out a statement Wednesday night “condemning” Greene’s comments while praising her for privately denouncing QAnon in the caucus meeting. He argued that the comments were made “before she was ever a member of Congress,” as though that lessened the significance of her call for murdering one of the leaders of that Congress (Pelosi). Removing Greene from her committee assignments would set a “bad precedent,” he said.

Despite Greene’s claims that she had “stopped believing” in QAnon in 2018, she has defended the conspiracy theory on social media as late as December 4, 2020, after her election to Congress from Georgia’s 14th District. The district, in the northwest corner of the state, has a long history of ultra-right and fascist representatives, including Larry McDonald, a member of the John Birch Society.

While the Republicans attempt to paper over the differences between the growing fascist elements within their ranks and the more established wing of the party, represented by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and Representative Cheney, the disciplinary action against Greene will do nothing to stop the growth of fascism in the US and internationally, which arises from the contradictions of the capitalist system which the Democrats defend as much as the Republicans.

Greene, like her hero Trump, is not merely a deranged or repugnant individual. Both are the products of the turn toward fascism and violent repression by an American ruling class that is responding to the decline of the global position of American capitalism and terrified of the growing resistance and militancy in the working class.



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