

House Republicans single out NPR and PBS in anticommunist witch-hunt

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On Wednesday, House Republicans organized an anticommunist provocation against the public news media in a hearing titled “Anti-American Airwaves: Holding the Heads of NPR and PBS Accountable.” The meeting was led by the chairperson of the new “House Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency,” fascist Georgia Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene, who was elevated to lead the subcommittee in January.

Greene only began receiving subcommittee assignments in 2023 after being shut out during her previous term. She took over the new position thanks to her slavish loyalty to the Trump administration’s wrecking operation of social programs and those government agencies not related to the military or the suppression of the population.

The hearing, an insult to the public’s intelligence, summoned executives of both National Public Radio (NPR) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) to be subjected to far-right lies and conspiracy theories.

Opening the hearing, Greene made numerous ridiculous claims, arguing that “NPR and PBS have increasingly become radical, Left-wing echo chambers” pushing “the most radical Left positions.” Greene falsely claimed PBS invited a “drag queen” onto a show targeting children and accused the broadcaster of being “one of the founders of the trans child abuse industry” and both of “sexualizing and grooming children” in their media content.

She defended the honor of right-wing billionaire and head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Elon Musk by accusing PBS of blowing the latter’s infamous “Sieg Heil” Nazi salute out of proportion and “not once” reporting “on the numerous accounts of Democrats making the same gesture.”

Grilling NPR CEO Katherine Maher and PBS CEO

Paula Kerger, other Republicans sought to administer political loyalty tests among newsroom staff as a basis for the stations receiving government funding. Ohio Republican Jim Jordan claimed the Washington D.C. area’s NPR editorial staff consisted of “87 registered Democrats, 0 Republicans,” as he prodded Maher. She replied that her company does not “track voter registration” of its news staff.

Rep. Tim Burchett (Republican-Tennessee) asked Maher about tweets written before she joined the public broadcaster in which she termed Donald Trump a fascist and a racist. Maher responded with the spinelessness that largely animates the PBS and NPR boardrooms.

“I regret those tweets,” she said. “I would not tweet them again today. They represented a time where I was reflecting on something that I believe that the President had said rather than who he is. I don’t presume that anyone is a racist.”

NPR and PBS are private, non-profit media organizations. NPR’s funding comes from dues and fees paid by member stations, support from corporate sponsors and yearly grants from the publicly funded Corporation for Public Broadcasting. PBS receives support from a variety of sources, including the CPB, member station dues, pledge drives, donations from private foundations and individuals and corporate sponsorships.

In the case of NPR, less than 1 percent of its funds are directly obtained from the federal government, while PBS receives 15 percent of its funding through similar means.

The two organizations are thoroughly establishment in their views, with management terrified above all of being accused of radicalism. It is an indication of the intensely degraded, crisis-ridden state of American

political life that these two respectable institutions are now accused of “leftism” and “communism.”

The CPB was founded in 1967, part of Lyndon B. Johnson’s “Great Society” program during the last significant period of American social reformism.

The stated purpose of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 was to “encourage the growth and development of public radio and television broadcasting, including the use of such media for instructional, educational, and cultural purposes.” The funding it provides to broadcasters often flows to stations serving local populations who would not receive dedicated media reporting otherwise.

On Wednesday, Greene made no secret of the fact that she intended to cut funding to the CPB, calling it “communist,” along with NPR and PBS.

The attack on the public news media is part of the Trump administration’s attempt to destroy all barriers to the financial oligarchy’s ability to extort and exploit in pursuit of maximizing profits. This includes ideological barriers. Any semi-objective analysis or criticism of the oligarchy’s criminal activities at home or abroad, past or present, is considered a criminal and dangerous activity by reactionary imbeciles like Greene and company.

The Trump administration has also attempted, with considerable success, to intimidate the for-profit news corporations.

Trump has removed the ability of “liberal” news outlets to attend White House briefings, replacing them with more right-wing alternatives. Various outlets, seeking to appease the would-be Führer, have themselves engaged in their own suppression of criticism of the new administration.

The five Democratic Party members of the subcommittee offered no serious opposition to the witch-hunting operation on Wednesday. They sought to mock the proceeding, even as the Trump administration has shown its intentions to be deadly serious.

Moreover, even here the Democrats could not pass up the possibility of attacking Trump and his gang of fascists from the right.

Massachusetts Democrat Stephen F. Lynch asserted that the “Trump administration is engaged in an actual disinformation campaign to minimize the catastrophic national security breach that was revealed earlier this week,” i.e., the scandal involving the leak of a Signal

chat thread discussing the US bombing of Houthi-controlled targets in Yemen.

As the WSWS has indicated, Democratic politicians like Lynch this week

howled and shook their fists, not over the savagery of the Trump administration, but because Trump’s top national security aides were insufficiently careful in the preparation of the bombing of Yemen—an act of mass murder that the Democrats enthusiastically support.



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