

Kevin McCarthy Meets Orwell's 1984

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On January 6, as rioters were breaking into his office, Kevin McCarthy phoned Trump and urged him to call off his mob. At Trump's impeachment trial, he said "The president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters."

But Kevin wanted to be Speaker. So, when Liz Cheney said that Trump "provoked a violent attack on this Capitol in an effort to steal the election", she had to become an Unperson. Her statement that "The Department of Justice in his administration investigated the former president's claims of widespread fraud and found no evidence to support them", and her call for Republicans to "steer away from the dangerous and anti-democratic Trump cult of personality" were Thoughtcrimes that had to disappear down the Memory Hole.

It could be done. Trump had shown how. He had already called Cheney "a warmongering fool." John McCain? "Loser." Romney? "A stone-cold loser." The previous two Republican presidents? "No more Bushes!" Trump had even questioned whether Reagan had "anything beneath that smile". His cancellation of Republican nominees since 1980 was nearly complete, and the base loved him for it.

But Kevin was conflicted. It would take a degree of Doublethink he had never attempted before. He was there. Cheney was right. She was saying what he had said. Nevertheless, he had to claim that Cheney could not "carry out the message" of Republicans, while denying that the message is the Big Lie and that Cheney was being cancelled for speaking the truth.

On Tuesday, Trump again claimed the election was "rigged and stolen". On Wednesday, Cheney was removed, and Kevin said, without hesitation, "I don't think anybody is questioning the legitimacy of the presidential election".

The struggle was finished. Kevin had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother.

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