

SunSentinel

OPINION

Rosemary O'Hara
Editorial Page Editor

Julie Anderson
Editor-in-Chief

ANOTHER VIEWPOINT

William Barr: The imperial attorney general

William Barr, almost two years into his second turn as the attorney general of the United States, again and again reveals his frightening vision of his own imperial perch as the nation's top lawyer. Barr, in a speech in September to a compliant audience at Hillsdale College, disemboweled his own subordinates' professionalism. Barr appropriated C.S. Lewis to label the Justice Department's line lawyers as "omnipotent moral busybodies." He went on to state his approach to leading thousands of the department's lawyers: "Letting the most junior members set the agenda might be a good philosophy for a Montessori preschool, but it's no way to run a federal agency."



By Michael McAuliffe

Since that diatribe, Barr has continued the assault on his own department's ranks straight through the election.

The Department of Justice has a general who hates his soldiers, especially the ones who dare follow the longstanding rules that govern all federal prosecutors' actions and decisions. A comprehensive guide (once called the *U.S. Attorneys' Manual* and now the *Justice Manual*) has specific provisions that prohibit political considerations from infecting the federal criminal investigative and prosecutorial process. These rules are not permissive; they are mandatory. The rules don't go away when a new attorney general takes office. They are designed as an example of self-restraint to the potentially oppressive exercise of prosecutorial power. Justice Department prosecutors are subject to discipline including possible termination if violations of the manual are flagrant or repeated.

Barr's goal is to marginalize the venerable traditions of department and make them quaint vestiges of a bygone era when prosecutors made — or at least were supposed to make — decisions on facts and the applicable law. Barr labels a "permanent bureaucracy" the institutional knowledge amassed over many decades. His own lawyers are a group to be maneuvered around instead of relied upon to pursue justice.

Barr, with a bully's demeanor and a preference to wield political hatchets under the guise of executive power, casts his large, protective shadow onto a president who despises restraint and boundaries. They are a match made in the political chaos of Trumpism. Barr has done us an unintended favor — he has articulated in unequivocal language his vision (and that of his boss) for an omnipotent executive branch that can and will do as it pleases. And it pleases them

to silence opposition through force and disregard the law when inconvenient.

Of course, to be beholden to the chief executive hasn't satisfied Trump, who has an insatiable appetite for blind allegiance. The president has publicly chastised Barr over the department's "failure" to charge former President Barack Obama (yes, you read that correctly)

and others for allegedly spying on Trump's 2016 campaign. Trump's edict is completely disconnected from the actual facts and the applicable law. But he knows that Barr is his man, so he keeps pushing.

This week, Barr — seemingly at Trump's insistence that his cabinet attack the vote he lost — issued a memorandum that prods U.S. attorneys around the country to open election fraud investigations. The memo is confirmation that Barr moves to the political puppeteer of Donald Trump and ignores both long-standing Justice Department policy regarding election-related cases and his own public corruption prosecutors. The lead DOJ attorney for election corruption cases resigned in protest over Barr's memo.

Allow me to return to the *Justice Manual*. Section 9-27001 states, in relevant part: "[O]ur federal prosecutorial system ... must rely ultimately on the character, integrity, sensitivity and competence of those men and women who are selected to represent the public interest in the federal criminal justice process. It is with their help that these principles have been prepared, and it is with their efforts that the purposes of these principles will be achieved."

The passage doesn't refer to the position of the attorney general — it identifies the public interest as the department's soul and the line lawyers as the body that it inhabits. Barr is not the one impeding Trump's personal and vindictive version of prosecutorial power; it is the Justice Department's line lawyers who are willing to stand up as the last, best defense for the rule of law. More than ever, we need career DOJ lawyers to remain ethically committed and engaged. Time is on their side.

Michael McAuliffe is a former federal prosecutor serving both as a trial attorney at the Department of Justice and as a supervisory assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of Florida. He also served as the elected state attorney for Palm Beach County. His novel "No Truth Left To Tell" was published in March 2020.

ANOTHER VIEWPOINT

Promoting Florida's film industry is a major part of economic recovery

Florida's rich history in film traces back to 1908 when Jacksonville was nicknamed "The Winter Film Capital of the World." Jacksonville's Norman Studios is the only known remaining silent film studio left standing in the U.S. and was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 2016. The film industry is a part of the fabric of Florida.



By Stephen Wise

In recent years though, Florida has lost more than 70 major film and television projects that would have spent more than \$1.3 billion in Florida, used 220,000 hotel room nights and provided 110,000 cast and crew jobs for Floridians. Florida is the only state in the southeast without a program to compete for film and television projects, which puts us at a major competitive disadvantage.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our economy has taken a significant hit. The film and television industry can and should be a major part of Florida's economic recovery. Continuing to diversify the state's economy while supporting high-wage, high-tech jobs is vital. When an average feature film or television series films in a location, they spend \$20 million in the local community while hiring 1,500 Floridians. Given the current challenges to our economy, one single production can put \$150,000 per day directly in the pockets of citizens and small businesses. This also generates significant local and state tax revenues.

In addition to the direct jobs, the industry supports indirect jobs and wages for thousands of small businesses, including caterers, dry cleaners, hotels, florists, hardware and lumber suppliers, security guards and off-duty law enforcement officers. The industry has a wide reaching impact on Florida's economy.

Georgia's Republican Governor Brian Kemp recently said his state expects to host more than 75 major film and television projects that will spend more than \$2 billion over the next 18 months. Kemp hailed the projects, saying they will "jump-start the Georgia economy by creating jobs and generating greatly needed investment and

spending in communities across the Peach State."

Similarly, North Carolina's Democratic Governor Roy Cooper recently announced five new productions have been approved for North Carolina Film and Entertainment Grants and started production in October, stating "combined, these productions are projected to generate a direct in-state spend of more than \$107 million."

While other states are competing for projects, I want that same impact from our industry in Florida. Last legislative session, state Sen. Joe Gruters and state Rep. James Buchanan filed bills that would create a modest but effective "targeted rebate program" to entice film, television and digital media companies to bring projects, jobs and money to Florida. The bills received bipartisan support and had the backing of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Florida TaxWatch and Associated Industries of Florida. The legislation was performance-based and designed to produce an excellent return on investment, ensuring the state receives more than \$1 of tax revenues for every \$1 in rebates provided while creating more than \$5 of spending in the state. I encourage our newly elected Legislature to recognize the value and potential of our industry to quickly help aid in our economic recovery.

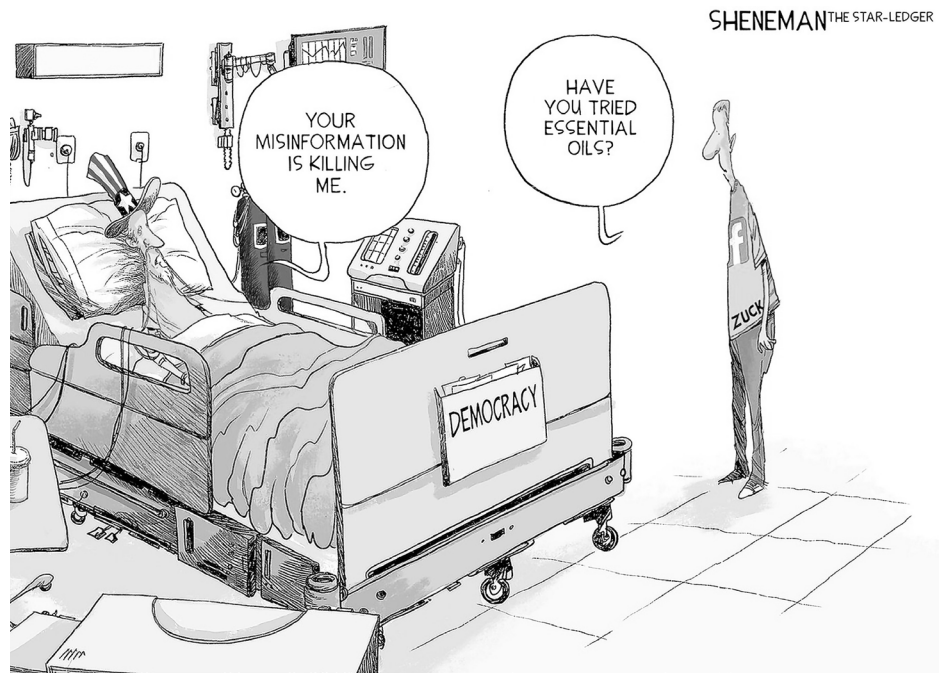
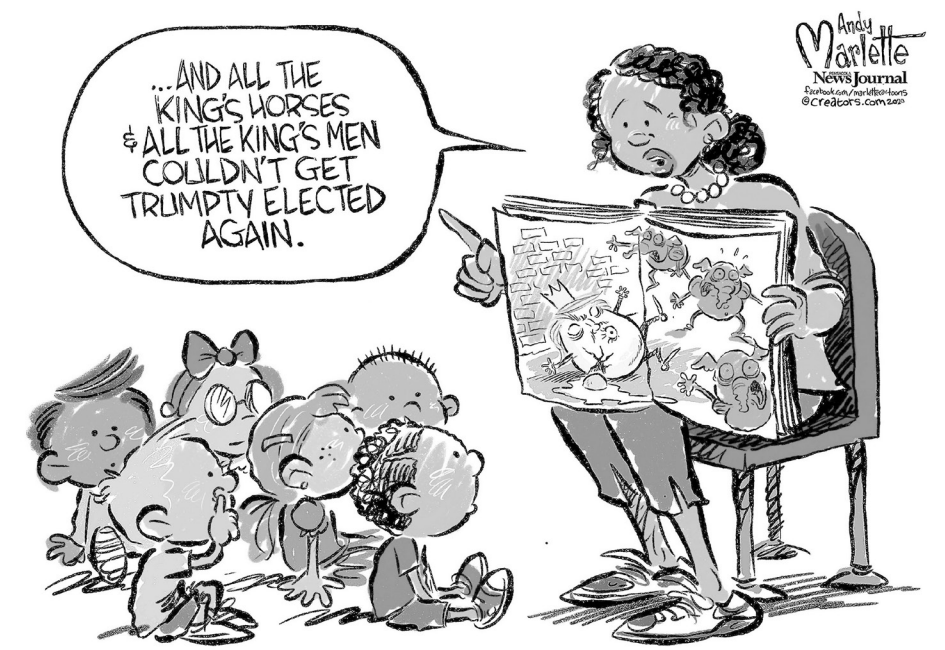
There is more appetite for original content in the marketplace than ever before, which means there has never been more money available to create new content. We believe that content should be made in Florida, creating jobs, pumping new money from outside Florida into our economy and enhancing tourism. The film and television industry that has been helping Florida's economy for 112 years should be leveraged to help our great state lead the national economic recovery.

Stephen Wise is an award-winning screenwriter and filmmaker with Reality Check Entertainment in Northwest Florida.

CARTOON ROUNDUP



YOU'RE A PEOPLE PERSON, BUT YOU DO THINK YOUR MATH SKILLS NEED MORE WORK?



HOME DELIVERY WITH UNLIMITED DIGITAL ACCESS RATES

BY CARRIER	7-day	Wed-Sun	Thur-Sun	Mon-Fri	Fri/Sat	Wed/Sat	Wed/Fri/Sun	Sat/Sun	Wed/Sun	Sunday
Subscription	\$17.50*	\$13.25*	\$11.25*	\$10.75*	\$9.00*	\$7.75*	\$7.00*	\$7.00*	\$7.00*	\$6.00*
Digital Access										

*Plus applicable Florida Sales Tax

E-Newsletters and Digital Access per week

Sunday, Saturday, Sunday, and Friday: Sunday subscriptions will receive the following issues as part of current subscription: 5/20/20, 7/1/20, 7/29/20, 8/5/20, 9/2/20, 11/25/20, 11/26/20, 12/16/20, 12/23/20, 12/30/20. Wed/Fri/Sun, Wed/Sun and Wed/Sat/Sun subscriptions will receive the Thanksgiving Day issues on 11/25/20 as part of the current subscription. Thursday-Sunday subscriptions will receive the following issues as part of the current subscription: 5/20/20, 7/1/20, 7/29/20, 8/5/20, 9/2/20, 11/25/20, 11/26/20, 12/16/20, 12/23/20, 12/30/20. All subscriptions may include up to twelve Premium Issues per year. For each Premium Issue, your account balance will be charged an additional fee up to \$5.99 in the billing period when the section publishes. This will result in shortening the length of your billing period. Premium Issues scheduled to date: 4/26/20, 5/17/20, 6/21/20, 7/19/20, 8/23/20, 9/16/20, 10/18/20, 11/22/20 and 12/27/20. Dates are subject to change without notice. Vacation holds do not extend your expiration date.

Member Alliance for Audited Media

A Tribune Publishing Company, U.S.P.S. 526520 ISSN 0744-8139

Published every morning by Sun-Sentinel Company, LLC, 333 SW 12 Avenue, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442. Periodical postage paid at Fort Lauderdale, FL. Postmaster: Send address changes to Sun Sentinel, 333 SW 12 Avenue, Deerfield Beach, FL 33442. For customer service, call 1-954-375-2018.