

MCCARTHY CAVES IN A GIANT LOSS FOR THE GOP AND AMERICA

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Kevin McCarthy trumpeted a

debt-ceiling deal Sunday, but increasing debt another \$4 trillion with minimal concessions is nothing to boast about.

To be fair, the House speaker has a razor slim majority and Republicans don't control the Senate. But McCarthy's one dealbreaker should have been his promise to defund President Biden's massive \$80 billion to turbocharge an already weaponized IRS.

This was the totemic centerpiece of his pitch to become speaker. It was the most memorable promise of the Republicans' midterm campaign to win back the House.

It struck a chord with voters, wary of funding a new "army" of armed IRS agents to harass middle-class families and small business owners and abuse their powers to target political dissidents, Soviet-style.

"Our very first bill will repeal the funding for 87,000 new IRS agents," McCarthy vowed. "You see, we believe government should be to help you, not go after you."

Sure enough, the House voted 221-210 to repeal the extra IRS funding.

"Promises made," the newly minted speaker said Jan. 9, banging the gavel on the first bill of the Republican-controlled House.

What about promises kept? Fuhgeddaboutit.

In the debt-ceiling deal outlined Sunday and due to be inked later this week, McCarthy has allowed the lion's share of that extra IRS funding to remain unmolested: *preserving \$78.1 billion of the \$80 billion.*

As GOP Rep Dan Bishop put it: “So there will be 85,260 more IRS agents rather than 87,000 to eat you alive. Big win.”

Overpromising and underdelivering is what turns voters off the GOP.

You don’t mount a powerful six-month fear campaign about 87,000 new, armed IRS agents ready to break down people’s doors, and then meekly capitulate at the first sign of resistance.

Even if those fears were exaggerated, your credibility rests on delivering a lot more than 2% of what you promised.

In any case the fears about a weaponized IRS targeting Biden’s opponents are very real.

If anything, the IRS is worse today than it was during the Obama administration, when Lois Lerner presided over the targeted harassment of Tea Party groups and other conservatives.

Not a single IRS employee was held accountable for the scandal. Lerner retired on a full pension without even a slap on the wrist.

This is the same IRS which went after journalist Matt Taibbi last December, three weeks after he started reporting on the so-called “Twitter Files,” which revealed that censorship on the social-media platform had been coordinated by federal government agencies such as the FBI and CIA.

On March 9, when Taibbi was testifying in Congress about, ironically enough, the weaponization of the federal government, IRS agents showed up unannounced at his New Jersey home.

The IRS file on Taibbi was opened the day he posted his ninth and most explosive Twitter file, detailing how agencies including the Pentagon and the State Department had colluded with Twitter to stifle dissent.

It was Christmas Eve, a Saturday, which shows what an unusual priority it was for an agency that normally goes to sleep for two weeks over Christmas and whose standard work week is Monday through Friday.

Under questioning from Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan, the IRS has claimed it had concerns about “identity fraud” with Taibbi’s 2018 and 2021 tax returns, and that he was sent two letters before the home visit. Yet Taibbi says he and his accountant never received any letters.

Even more “unnerving” as Taibbi puts it, was the fact that an IRS case agent had compiled a dossier on him which included personal information such as his voter registration records and whether he had a concealed-weapons permit or a hunting or fishing license.

Unlike Hunter Biden, Taibbi didn’t owe the IRS any taxes and in fact was due a refund.

And yes, this is the same IRS which removed its entire investigative team from the Hunter Biden case on DOJ orders after two senior agents complained about DOJ interference.

Two whistleblowers went public last week with their allegations. IRS Supervisory Special Agent Gary Shapley claimed political interference and “preferential treatment” in the six-year-long investigation by the US attorney

in Delaware into the president's son's business affairs.

The 14-year IRS veteran told CBS News that he saw prosecutors engage in “slow walking” and “deviations from the normal process . . . that seemed to always benefit the subject”, and that it was done “at the direction of the Department of Justice.”

He has contemporaneous notes and other evidence to back his claims. “I don’t want to do any of this,” he said, but he “couldn’t silence my conscience anymore.”

A second IRS whistleblower also complained last week about being removed from the Hunter Biden case and alleged the Justice Department “has been acting inappropriately” by meddling with the IRS investigation.

This is the IRS that is still getting almost \$80 billion of taxpayer money to double down on its malfeasance in the countdown to the 2024 election — with the benign approval of the House Republicans who promised to stop it.

Buckle up.

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