

United States of Paranoia

Phantom Menaces Populate the Imaginations of Americans Across the Political Spectrum, Not Just Those on the Populist Right. (Trends)

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Introduction

?THE POWER of the apocalyptic has in no way ceased to tease the American thoughts. A look through the international locations beyond reveals a tenacious flirtation with conspiratorial fantasies and one-idea guys. This rage for machinations is all of the more curious considering the many generations that the U.S. Basked within the protection of awesome isolation. Perhaps the shortage of external nemeses coaxed the darker corners of the American creativeness right into a twitchy suspicion of local demons. Not even our textbook heroes have refrained from the paranoiacs gaze. The post-Revolutionary Federalist press massaged Jeffersons personal Deism into a menacing infidelism; the Anti-Masonic Party denounced Andrew Jacksons fraternal ties; John Birch Society founder Robert Welch known as Eisenhower a possible conscios, devoted agent of Communist Conspiracy. Today, the chase to stamp out villainy spins with the velocity of 24/7 information cycles.

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