

# It's Time to Stop Calling Democrats 'Socialists, Communists and Leftists'

I make a practice of watching Fox News to see how that network's news division portrays the day's events. (I consider the network's evening opinion shows — Carlson, Hannity and Ingraham — a waste of time.)

The Fox shows I watch the most are America's Newsroom in the morning, Special Report in the late afternoon, and Fox News Sunday with Chris Wallace on Sunday.

These shows make an effort to be "fair and balanced," but they do include interviews with right-wing commentators who are prone to making outrageous statements that are rarely contradicted as they should be by the anchors, except for Chris Wallace.

I remember in particular listening to one of those weekday programs prior to Nov. 3 on which a guest referred to "the communist wing of the Democratic Party." What, pray tell, constitutes the communist wing of the Democratic Party? The anchor didn't ask, perhaps because "everyone knows"? Is it simply an accepted fact that there is a communist, not just a socialist or leftist, wing of the Democratic Party? Is it "the Squad"?

I'd like to see Fox News Channel define these terms instead of just throwing them around, leaving the interpretation to whatever the audience chooses.

What's ironic about this is that the same party which, under the influence of Donald Trump, no longer treats the communist former Soviet Union as an enemy, applies the communist label to the Democratic Party.

Donald Trump's singular accomplishment as president has been his fulfillment of Vladimir Putin's desire to make Russia great again. How? By diminish-

ing America's role and prestige around the world. One can identify several ways in which Trump has served the interests and goals of Vladimir Putin.

## Talking Turkey



By Jim Smith

First and foremost, Trump has weakened the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization by (1) supporting Brexit, and (2) failing to express support, when asked, of Article 5 of the NATO treaty which says that an attack against one member is to be treated as an attack against all members.

That article has only been invoked once — in response to the 9/11 attack on the United States. It was because of Article 5 that NATO members joined the United States in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Trump's failure to criticize Putin or Russia, first by calling Russia's interference in the 2016 election a "hoax," has been reinforced more recently by his failure to acknowledge or criticize Russia's payment of bounties to Taliban fighters who kill American soldiers in Afghanistan and Russia's current cyber attack on American government and industry computer systems.

Making Russia great again depends largely on making America less great, and that is accomplished by creating dissension and chaos on an unprecedented scale within America. Trump has demonstrated his expertise in that task, dividing America as it has never been divided before.

What has made Trump's work in this regard so effective is that the side he has taken is with the well-armed alt-right racists and white supremacists, who are themselves experts at creating violent encounters with counter protestors, cre-

ating a vicious cycle of extreme divisiveness. Death threats are their stock in trade when they aren't actually killing those who dare to oppose their Supreme Leader. Think, for example, of the Georgia Secretary of State and poll workers in several states who have received death threats for doing their jobs and telling the truth. Think also of Eric Coomer, the security chief at Dominion Voting Systems, who is living in hiding because of threats against his life for allegedly masterminding a feature of his company's voting machines to change Trump votes to Biden votes.

Back now to the claim that leaders of the Democratic Party are communists, socialists and leftists. What is the evidence? Medicare for all? In that case, Canada, the UK, Scandinavia and most European countries are communist, or at least socialist. Are those countries not democratic? Do they lack freedom and liberty?

What those countries have is a more equitable and socially stable country, where taxes are higher but so is the quality of life for the middle class. As for "lower classes" and homeless, those are less of a problem in those countries, where it exists at all. What they don't have are 530,000 families declaring bankruptcy every year due to medical bills they can't pay.

My sister Janet lives with her Swedish husband Staffan north of Stockholm. Last month, Staffan underwent a 5-hour surgery for a defective heart valve. It was a surgery which has been performed several times in America, but it was the first time it had been performed in Sweden. The hospital flew in a cardiologist from Atlanta and experts from other countries to participate in the surgery. The bill to Staffan and Janet

was 500 Swedish krona, equal to 60 American dollars.

In America, someone with that condition might have chosen to live with the symptoms and die earlier rather than face financial ruin for his family. That, unfortunately, is the American way.

And what about the Green New Deal? It is portrayed as socialist, but it is a job-creating program to address the global threat of climate change, which is already resulting in stronger hurricanes and other severe weather, flooding and droughts, record forest fires and rising sea level. (Did you hear about the Antarctic ice shelf the size of Delaware which broke off this year?)

Before the 2016 election, we heard about the issue of "low information voters" who are easily manipulated by politicians. Compound that with organized disinformation of the kind perfected by Russia and magnified by today's social media and right-wing "news" sources such as One America News and Newsmax, as well as by QAnon.

The fact that the majority of Trump voters believe the election was stolen by Joe Biden testifies to the power of disinformation on the part of a trusted leader. The only reason there is a low level of trust in our electoral system is that Donald Trump has not accepted defeat. If he had conceded, it wouldn't exist.

Putting aside what that says about the mental state of our current president, consider what it says about our fellow citizens. As a whole, we seem to be a pretty ignorant and easily conned bunch, don't we?

A final thought: If Trump gets demonstrably crazier, perhaps his cabinet will get together and invoke the 25th Amendment to remove him from the presidency before he does more damage.