

The Washington Post Counts Trump's Lies. Who's Keeping a Body Count?

A female insurrectionist was shot and killed on Wednesday at the U.S. Capitol building. It is indisputable that if President Trump hadn't urged his followers to storm the Capitol that she would not have died. Four others are now reported to have died during the event, including one Capitol Police officer.

In the 2017 "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, a woman was killed by an Alt-Right member in a demonstration that was inspired by a president who had emboldened those "deplorables."

A 17-year-old man with an AR-15 rifle, inspired by Donald Trump, went to Kenosha and killed two people.

Over 1/3 million Americans so far have died from Covid-19, including people who showed up at mass spreader events — campaign rallies — held for no other purpose than to feed president Donald Trump's ego.

These are only a few — very few — of the many, many people who have died as a direct result of our president's tweets and rally speeches. Is anyone keeping a body count of the people who have died as a direct result of Donald Trump's actions and pronouncements? I hope so.

This week's insurrection was the direct result of Donald Trump's speech to the crowd of MAGA types assembled on the Ellipse outside the White House. He could well be indicted for inciting a riot later this month, after Joe Biden takes the White House from him — or from President Pence, if Trump resigns or is expelled by his cabinet pursuant to the 25th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, or by the Senate through impeachment.

The continued espousal of a stolen election by millions of Americans only exists because the President promotes it. If he had conceded after the election, that movement would have evaporated and

many lives would have been saved.

I repeat: ***It is only because of Donald Trump's insistence that the election was stolen through fraud that there is large-scale distrust in our electoral system and in the 2020 election results.***

A lot has been written about how the Capitol Police were ill-prepared for the insurrection, but lesser coverage of members of that force opening the barricades and taking selfies with the Trumpsters. In a previous column, I pointed out that, with 30% of the population being part of Trump's base, it only makes sense that 30% of law enforcement personnel would be supporters of Trump and believers in his conspiracy theories.

Given that, one should ask whether chiefs of police do what other employers do, which is to study the social media of their employees. If a police officer is a follower, for example, of QAnon, is he or she the right person to protect the Capitol building or any of us from such rioters?

It is primarily through social media that the alt-right and QAnon types become infected and spread that infection to others, so studying a police officer's social media accounts would quickly reveal if they support insurrectionists — clearly a disqualifying characteristic for law enforcement personnel, don't you think? I support the idea that anyone employed in law enforcement must reveal their social media accounts when they join such forces, and the internal affairs divisions of those forces should scan those social media accounts to see whether they subscribe to conspiracy theories that support insurrection.

Many Trumpsters followed my column when it was published in the Denver Post and asked to receive my column by email after the election. They kept emailing me

Talking Turkey



By Jim Smith

after each column, defending the president. After a while, it got so annoying to read their repetitive emails that I chose to block some of their email addresses, but they still included my address in emails to their friends, so I would occasionally see their emails anyway when their friends would "Reply All" to them.

I was surprised and somewhat gratified this week when I discovered the following email from a die-hard Trumpster. If "the tide has turned" against Trump, the following email forwarded by that Trumpster is a good example of it:

President Donald Trump cost the Republican Party dearly during his time in office, culminating in Democrats sweeping the Georgia runoffs to regain control of the Senate.

For the first time since 2008, Democrats control both chambers of Congress along with the White House.

"Trump f---ed the party," a paid Trump adviser told a Bloomberg reporter.

"He f---ed the party with his conspiracy theories and pushing females and independents away from the party. The bleeding needs to stop. He needs to go."

Despite all of the recommendations of an RNC "autopsy" following the 2012 election, Trump did the exact opposite during his time in office and left the GOP at square one.

With the Georgia runoffs in the books and Democrats regaining control of the Senate by sweeping both races, the cost of Donald Trump's presidency to the Republican Party is in full view.

Since Trump took office in 2017, the GOP lost its House majority in the 2018 midterms, saw once reliable red states like Georgia and Arizona become competitive for Democrats, and now the Senate majority is gone too.

Trump's pursuit of revenge against state election officials by calling the legit-

imacy of the vote into question and forcing the issue of \$2,000 checks on GOP senators contributed to the Democratic sweep.

Will the cabinet and Vice President Mike Pence have the courage — and allegiance to the Constitution — to invoke the 25th Amendment? Let's hope so. On the other hand, if the House of Representatives impeaches the president, and the Senate convicts him in a "snap impeachment," as I have heard is possible, there is the additional advantage that Trump will be disqualified from seeking the presidency in 2024, which will make numerous ambitious Republicans happy, since they won't have to run against him. That, I think, makes the conviction more possible now than it was last year over the Ukraine episode.

I'm pleased that president-elect Biden joined those who have drawn attention to the disparity in how local and federal law enforcement prepared for the Black Lives Matter protest at the Lincoln Memorial with how the Capitol Police failed to prepare for the Trump demonstrators. Were they afraid that Black protestors would desecrate the monument to Abraham Lincoln, yet not worried that right-wing extremists would try to confront members of Congress voting to ratify Joe Biden's election? If there's any example of systemic racism in America, isn't that an example?

Lastly, if this was a watershed event for Donald Trump, it should also be a watershed event for Rupert Murdoch and his network, Fox News Channel, that has been nothing less than an echo chamber for Donald Trump's conspiracy theories that led to this week's insurrection. Time will tell.

Talking Turkey columns are posted at JimSmithBlog.com, where I'm able to add other content & links. Columns are archived at TalkingTurkey.online.