

“I’m More Fearful of the Radical Left Than I Am of Donald Trump.”

The above quote really sums up the attitude of those who say they will be voting for Trump in November. That’s my conclusion from reading the large number of emails I’ve received in response to this column — and it’s a direct quote from one of them.

Virtually every Trump supporter admits that the president is seriously flawed, citing the same characteristics which the rest of us cite as reasons to vote against him. “It’s a terrible choice we have this year, but I’ll accept Trump for his flaws rather than let socialists, communists and Marxists take over,” to paraphrase the common theme I am hearing from them.

Democrats are portrayed as tolerating the violence and destruction “in Democratic controlled cities” like Portland, and Fox News is happy to feature that violence on every broadcast. Trump is clever to send in federal agents, knowing that doing so will further escalate the violence, furthering a narrative that is central to his campaign.

“Defunding police” is an unfortunate term that is portrayed by Trump and Fox as abolishing law enforcement completely — another reason (if it were true) to fear a Democratic win in November. Even when acknowledging that Biden himself opposes defunding the police and is not a socialist or communist, the pitch is that he is senile and will be a

Talking Turkey



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puppet for his communist followers represented by AOC and “the squad.” These women of color “hate America” and, according to Trump, should “go back to the shithole countries they came from” — although, of course, they are all Americans. It’s a dog whistle to the unspoken (and sometimes spoken) racism of his core supporters.

What is it about AOC’s and Bernie Sanders’ “democratic socialism” that is so scary to Trump supporters? The right has come to support Social Security and Medicare, government programs attacked as socialistic when they were created.

And what is communist or Marxist about the Green New Deal? It’s about marshaling the resources of free enterprise and government to stem the warming of our planet which is causing increasing worldwide disruption and destruction. Free enterprise is already on board, fortunately, with solar and other green industries booming.

There has been talk recently, fueled by the president himself, that Trump might not accept the results of the November election if he loses. A bigger fear is that his well-armed militia supporters won’t accept it — especially if a Democratic win is considered a Marxist takeover — and we’ll have armed conflict instead of a peaceful transition of power. We can only pray that this doesn’t happen, but the signs are

there and the justification for it is being planted daily by the president.

You can find an excellent 5-minute summary of this thesis by Fareed Zakaria by searching for “CNN Trump conspiracies.” In his hour-long documentary, viewable on CNNgo, there’s an excellent and frightening explanation of the Qanon movement focusing on a “deep state” conspiracy against the president, which underlies the right’s readiness to dismiss the growing number of former Trump administration officials, generals and advisors who have written books and op-ed articles saying a second Trump term could destroy America. Also check out Frontline’s “United States of Conspiracy,” which aired this Tuesday but which you can Google and watch online.

As a former journalist myself, I am most disturbed by the attacks on the media and the dismissal of solid reporting unfavorable to Trump as “fake news.” This is a core strategy of authoritarians, to have their followers get all their news from “official” sources and to dismiss anything said by others. What makes it so effective, of course, is that there’s a TV network or two (Fox and OANN) to give credence to the “company line.” I honor the broadcast networks and CNN for soldiering on and reporting in the face of the verbal attacks, arrests and even death threats.

These columns are posted at JimSmithBlog.com and PDFs of these ads are at TalkingTurkey.online.