

The Delray Democrat*

December 2020

It's Not Socialism, It's Democracy†

Michael K. Cantwell

Donald Trump won Florida easily because substantial numbers of voters believed the absurd accusation that Joe Biden is a socialist. Republicans are hoping to maintain control of the Senate by spewing similar lies in Georgia, and we can expect Ron DeSantis and Marco Rubio to spout the “S” word ad nauseam in 2022, regardless of their challengers.

And why not? It's a winning strategy so long as voters have no idea what “socialism” is, and more importantly, what it is not.

At its core, socialism involves collective or governmental ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods. Nothing Joe Biden (or even Bernie Sanders) has advocated even remotely approaches such a dramatic reorganization of society.

History teaches that whenever Democrats introduce a program to benefit ordinary Americans, be it under FDR's New Deal or LBJ's Great Society, Republicans have screamed “socialism.” They are more accurately seen as efforts “to promote the general Welfare,” something that is as American as apple pie.

Americans come to depend upon and appreciate these measures, while Republican prophecies of impending doom are soon exposed as hysterical nonsense. Franklin Delano Roosevelt created more jobs than any American president and protected workers from destitution in their “sunset years.”

Yet when Social Security was introduced, Republicans claimed it would “enslave workers” and “prevent business recovery.”

Ronald Reagan warned that if Medicare passed, “you and I are going to spend our sunset years telling our children, and our children's children, what it once was like in America when men were free.” Instead, senior citizens now spend their retirement years less burdened by fears that they will be unable to afford medical coverage.

The Affordable Care Act has helped provide health insurance to 20 million previously uninsured Americans, thus saving tens of thousands of lives. Americans soon learned that it did not create “Death Panels,” as Republicans claimed, but rather saved tens of thousands from premature deaths. The real Death Panelists are the Republican governors (like Rick Scott and Ron DeSantis) who refuse the virtually free federal funds available under the ACA to expand Medicaid to millions more Americans.

Joe Biden will enter the White House during the worst public health crisis in a century and the worst economic collapse in three-quarters of a century. A New York Times poll found overwhelming support for Democratic proposals to address these twin crises: 72% of respondents support a \$2 trillion stimulus package, 67% support a government-run health insurance plan, and 66% support a \$2 trillion plan to increase the use of

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Upcoming Meetings

January 10: Candidates' Night, with candidates for Delray Beach Mayor and City Commission

February 14: Reforming the Criminal Justice System, with panelists State Attorney Dave Aronberg, Public Defender Carey Haughwout, and ACLU of Florida Executive Director Micah Kubic

renewable energy and build an energy-efficient infrastructure.

Will Republicans work with Democrats to promote the general welfare or will they continue to thwart the will of the American public? They can call it socialism, but it's really democracy.

*You don't have to live in Delray to read or write for The Delray Democrat.

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Don't Underestimate the Danger of Trump's Big Lie. Hitler, Mussolini and Franco Told the Same One

June Sandra Neal

No one should underestimate the danger of Trump's continued campaign to declare the 2020 election results invalid. And we'd best not assume that, once Biden is in office, the detritus left by Trump will all be swept away. Lies, especially Big Lies, told frequently enough by people in authority, can come to be accepted as truth, with disastrous results.

Sure, we know Trump's a sociopath, a pathological liar with the morals of a Styrofoam cup.

Yet, 72 million Americans who saw the same depraved man raving on camera that we did remain loyal members of the Trump Cult.

Post-election polls revealed that between 72% and 80% of Republicans believe Trump and doubt the legitimacy of the election. At least they say they do. We know that some poll responders answer with magical thinking, rather than what they know to be true.

Even so, history proves it doesn't take long for that magical thinking to become a deeply rooted myth, a national "civil religion," as described by sociologist Robert Bellah. Until Trump, America's "civil religion" was the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, a belief system that gave hope to the world.

Trump set out to replace all this with his myth, "Make America Great Again," based on authoritarianism, racism, xenophobia and classism. His is not unlike other, sinister myths which have left unspeakable misery and destruction around the world. Indeed, he brought us to the edge of civil war.

In her new book, "War: How Conflict Shaped Us," historian Margaret MacMillan reminds us of the danger of myth creation. Nazi Germany is the most obvious example.

In 1918, with supplies low and allies withdrawing, the Germans were losing WW I. But all this was kept

from the German people. Defeat was near, so General Ludendorff demanded an armistice which was signed on Nov. 11, 1918. But then, Ludendorff did not want to be blamed for the loss. That was the beginning of Germany's Big Myth, a conspiracy theory that the Germans had not really lost the war, and that liberals, socialists and Jews were responsible for the defeat. (Yes, this "Winning but losing" theory is a conundrum.)

That myth was concretized in the German national consciousness until 1939 when the Nazis decided on a solution: The Holocaust. And victory could be achieved only by Adolf Hitler.

For WWII Italy, the enemies were socialism, democracy, liberalism, Bolshevism...even Ethiopia. And victory could be achieved only by Benito Mussolini.

And for Catholic Spain, the scapegoats were Protestants and atheists, those still loyal to the Second Spanish Republic, liberals, homosexuals, Catalan nationals. And victory could be achieved only by Francisco Franco.

Despite even Republican governors and election officials affirming that the election was free and fair, Trump claims he's the winner. In the Trump Myth, the antagonists are the usual suspects: liberals, Democrats, Antifa, Black Lives Matter, Muslims, immigrants (except those from his parents' heritage, Scotland and Germany, or Slovenia, from where Melania's parents made their way), most democratic international leaders, the free press, and any Republican opposition. In fact, any opposition at all.

No matter the nation or the generation, the DNA of the myth is the same. Refuse to accept responsibility. Blame someone else. Demonize your opponents until the populace believes only _____(name your dictator) can rid the country of its enemies and restore national honor. And democracy dies.

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Why Trump Must Be Investigated

David Kulick

I feel an unhealthy nostalgia for George W Bush, a congenial guy who lied us into a war that has had devastating consequences for the world. When Obama took office and said that we were looking forward not backwards, I was outraged that someone lying about the need to go to war and authorizing illegal torture was going to get away with it.

Biden seems to be taking the same path; in fact, the mess he has to deal with is even worse than the one that confronted Obama. However the similarity ends there. Bush didn't fire inspectors general, didn't fill positions without Senate approval, didn't hinder Obama's transition, didn't obstruct justice, didn't refuse congressional subpoenas, didn't commit treason by inviting other countries to interfere in our election, didn't send federal agents to break up legal demonstrations, and didn't shred the constitution. Each day was another outrage and you can find all the horror stories online, some with day-by-day chronology.

We need laws to require presidential candidates to release their tax returns. We need to ensure that Congress has the power to investigate the president, we need to know whether a president can be indicted and by whom. We need to know if a president's investments (at home or abroad) present a conflict of interest. It is clear that the impeachment process is not enough, that political parties, which are never mentioned in the Constitution, make impeachment almost impossible. We need other weapons against a rogue president; we need to make it illegal to pardon family members or administration officials, much less him/herself. And we need to take the infamous DOJ memo that suggested a sitting president could not be indicted and consign it to the dustbin of history. Without that memo, Robert Mueller would have indicted Donald Trump and we might have been rid of him before Amy Coney Barrett was shoved down the collective throats of the American electorate.

I just watched someone on TV explaining that

And we need to take the infamous DOJ memo that suggested a sitting president could not be indicted and consign it to the dustbin of history. Without that memo, Robert Mueller would have indicted Donald Trump and we might have been rid of him before Amy Coney Barrett was shoved down the throats of the American electorate.

We need to know which actions were illegal, and which should be illegal. If we don't investigate, we won't find out. Can the executive branch simply refuse a Congressional subpoena and stonewall for years? Can the president fire inspectors general one after another? Many of our laws were written without considering a completely rogue president. We need to know what he did in order to prevent others from doing the same.

Another big difference between Bush and Trump was that Bush was gone after his defeat. Trump will stay as a malignant actor in our country for a long time if he isn't stopped. For those of us who fear that he is a fascist and wants to be dictator, we need to take serious steps to expose him. If he had won or stolen another term, he would never have left that office.

prosecuting Trump sets a bad precedent, but we're dealing with a President for whom breaking precedent and norms was a daily occurrence, cheered by his adoring fans. There is the more important issue of having critical work that needs to be done by the Congress, but surely there is time to investigate the actions of the most malignant president in the history of our nation.

How we study this is another question. Clearly Biden has no direct dealing with New York prosecutors and the New York Attorney General, so their investigations go forward. But it will not touch on much of the main damage done by Trump. It's up to the Justice Department and Congress and that will be affected by Biden's desires, but not bound

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A Christmas Grift for the Nation

Rob Resnick

The Trump campaign and many of his MAGA supporters continue to push the false and ridiculous narrative that by some mysterious conspiracy Democrats stole the election from him. Using the slogan, “Stop the Steal,” Trump has raised over \$200 million dollars in the month since election day and he is still going. While some equate Trump’s blatantly dishonest attacks on the election as a modern-day coup (and they are clearly an attack on our democracy), others recognize it as just part of Trump’s ongoing pattern of criminality. He is using the election and the misplaced passion of his followers to steal from them.

Trump’s attempts to literally steal the election from Joe Biden are epically failing, which is critical for the nation to see. Trump’s team knows he did not win the election and that they cannot use the courts to change what is a clear and incontrovertible outcome. Their aim is to moderate the demonstrable mental health challenges that resulted in his refusal to concede the race and his desperate attempts to feel relevant and powerful. More importantly, they are using this quixotic battle just to raise large sums of money. While most people wonder why Trump continues to wage unwinnable fights and has already lost each of the contested states three times over, he is winning the cash game.

Lax regulations, made even weaker by the Supreme Court in *Citizens United*, allow PACs to do almost anything with little check on their activities. Trump is heavily soliciting money from millions of small donors across the country (the big money has long

abandoned his folly) through one of his PACs. Predominantly, these supporters believe they are directly supporting efforts to fight the election results. It is bad enough that these uninformed individuals have been exploited into rabid fervor, perhaps forever believing, albeit completely unfounded, that there was something untoward with the election, but they are also being duped into donating. In order to actually send any money to the election fights or to the RNC, they must donate over \$5,000. Everything below \$5,000 per gift goes to Trump’s personal PAC. Remember, these are small donors who will not come near \$5,000, thus none will actually be supporting the election challenges they intended to back.

There are widespread questions and concerns over what Trump can and will do with this incredible amount of money (that he continues to raise). The Trump family criminal enterprise has plenty of ideas. Trump is personally heavily in debt as are many of his properties and will manipulate the relative inability to regulate to use the money for his properties and to “pay” family members. Despite tighter controls, the campaign successfully squandered significant amounts of money paying Trump family members for purported services, and this would technically be even easier to do now. Whatever they do, you can bet it will be to further his personal interests, not those of the nation or his supporters.

Why Trump Must Be Investigated

(Continued from page 3)

by them. I recall the outrage from Republicans when Bill Clinton met on a tarmac with the Attorney General, supposedly a non-political position. But we have Trump ordering the Attorney General to do his bidding and in fact becoming his virtual personal attack attorney.

Biden’s Justice Department will go back to being independent from the president, but surely will be influenced by him. The Congress will be more independent but will take its cue from the Speaker,

although again, some voices will not be silenced. The bottom line is, I’m not so much interested in Trump ending up in jail; but I am very interested in saving our country from a repeat performance.

And on a different note, I’ve written before about how the Trump years have forced me to have an accommodation and even defend people and institutions that I’ve long despised such as the CIA and FBI, Voice of America, George W Bush, even John **** Bolton. Incredibly we have to add to that list Fox News, now being attacked for not being insane enough. Hopefully anyone capable of rational thought is learning that the real enemy is fascism.

Our Community, Our Impact

Jennifer Jones

Here in Delray Beach, we have a vibrant and growing immigrant population that is in dire need of understanding and representation.

Haitian immigrants form the largest population of immigrants in Palm Beach County according to the Census results of 2010. This year multiple organizations collaborated to reach Haitian voters.

Along with Palm Beach County Democrats, the Democratic Club of Delray Beach, Senator Bobby Powell, State Representative-elect Omari Hardy and the Biden camp, the UNIFY Group, New Florida Majority, and the Volunteer Association and Fund of Florida have all contributed to raise awareness about the recent Presidential election.

Thousands of Haitian-Americans were mobilized to get out and vote. The GOTV efforts were strengthened by the need and desire to restore democracy to America, and together we have succeeded in bringing people to the polls.

The Democrats turned out in record numbers in Palm Beach County. To be included in the democratic process was key for us this election cycle. For so long, immigrants of Haitian descent have felt underappreciated and discounted in American politics.

From being called “boat people” in the 90s, to the influx of desolated Haitians forced into Temporary Protective Status in America after the 2010 deadly earthquake, it has been difficult for us to find where we belong. Considering that the current administration has been under the leadership of someone who felt very comfortable referring to Haitians as people from a “sh*t-hole country,” the American dream felt unattainable to us.

However, Haitian immigrants are proud and dutiful people. We have worked hard to maintain a legal status and attain naturalization privileges as U.S. citizens, which we take very seriously. There are a number of hardworking Haitian-American elected officials who fight every day for the betterment of their constituents.

In areas where the African-American and Haitian residents are concentrated in Delray, notably in Delray Shores and the Chatelaine, we have seen an increased voter turnout to 75% this year, based on data reported by the PB Supervisor of Elections, which is significantly higher than in the 2016 Presidential election.

The tireless efforts of dedicated precinct leaders and community organizers have impacted our city as a whole. We have seen these results duplicated throughout the city, including in the Set Neighborhood.

Why does that matter? It matters because having more well-informed residents in our town ensures that the people come first. It means that no longer will communities stay on the sideline and watch others make decisions for them. It shows the love and commitment we all have for our city.

In the intersectionality of being of Haitian descent and U.S. citizens, we find a deep sentiment of patriotism. Representation matters, and participating in the process provides an exceptional sense of duty. We are a part of the solution. We get to rejoice with our neighbors across all ethnic backgrounds, creeds and orientations, to effect real positive changes.

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What We're Reading

Democracy Now

[Trump Set to Execute Brandon Bernard Even as Jurors & Ex-Prosecutor Call for Clemency](#): President Trump has sent eight people to their deaths so far this year, breaking a 17-year hiatus in federal executions, and plans to execute five more in the final weeks of his administration. On December 10, International Human Rights Day, the federal government is scheduled to kill Brandon Bernard, a Black man who was 18 years old when he was convicted as an accomplice to the murder of a young white couple in Texas. Bernard did not kill either person and says he was a “getaway driver” during a robbery gone wrong. Citing moral reasons and new evidence, five of the nine surviving jurors have changed their minds, and the former assistant U.S. attorney who helped secure his death sentence is calling for his execution to be halted. “It’s very rare that you have five of the nine surviving jurors saying that they would like to see clemency in this case,” says Liliana Segura, a criminal justice reporter for The Intercept, who has covered the case extensively. “Brandon Bernard’s death sentence hinges on evidence that has been called into significant question.”

The Economist

Lexington, [The end of the embarrassment. The assumption that Republicans will remain in thrall to Donald Trump could be misplaced](#): “Hence the ridiculous Rudy Giuliani, dripping sweat and hair dye and ranting about George Soros and Hugo Chávez, has been the spear-point of Mr Trump’s attempted heist. It has been laughable, a shambles. It has also illustrated—yet again—Mr Trump’s iron grip on his party, to the extent that most commentators seem to think the Republican nomination for the 2024 election is already his for the taking. They could be right. But Lexington is sceptical.”

The New York Review of Books

Ankush Khadori, [The Case for Prosecuting Trump](#): “But the potential benefits of a serious criminal investigation are salutary and substantial. We generally like to see lawbreakers punished, and an orderly pursuit of criminal justice among members of the elite political class, including the president, would be a testament to the country’s commitment to the rule of law. Of course, Trump himself implemented a morally repugnant ‘zero tolerance’ policy for border crossings that deliberately resulted in thousands of children being separated from their parents, so you might reasonably wonder why we should treat him any better than he has treated some of the most vulnerable people in the world—or why we should not fulfill the promise he signally failed to carry out and ‘drain the swamp.’”

The New York Times

Michelle Goldberg, [No One Expects Civility From Republicans](#): “What’s worse: making Sarah Sanders leave a restaurant, or terrorizing election officials? . . . Somehow, though, few are asking the same question of Republicans as Trump devotees terrorize election workers and state officials over the president’s relentless lies about voter fraud. Michigan’s secretary of state, Jocelyn Benson, described her family’s experience this past weekend: ‘As my 4-year-old son and I were finishing up decorating the house for Christmas on Saturday night, and he was about to sit down and to watch ‘How the Grinch Stole Christmas,’ dozens of armed individuals stood outside my home shouting obscenities and chanting into bullhorns in the dark of night.’”

Steve Inskeep, [Trump Looms Large Now, but Maybe Not Forever](#): “One-term presidents who escape obscurity often did something beyond the presidency — like John Adams, one of the nation’s founders, or Jimmy Carter, whose much-admired post-presidency has lasted 10 times as long as his term. John F. Kennedy’s legacy rests, in part, on legislative achievements that passed after his assassination. **Others are known for their failures while in office**: Warren G. Harding for a corruption scandal, Herbert Hoover for economic calamity, Andrew Johnson for being impeached.” Trump scored a trifecta.

Steven Teles, [Our Political System Is Unfair. Liberals Need to Just Deal With It](#): “The initial step in accepting our federal system is for Democrats to commit to organizing everywhere — even places where we are not currently competitive. Led by Stacey Abrams, Democrats have organized and hustled in Georgia over the last couple of years, and the results are hard to argue with. Joe Biden should beg Ms. Abrams (or another proven organizer like Ben Wikler, the head of the party in Wisconsin) to take over the Democratic National Committee, dust off Howard Dean’s planning memos for a “50 state strategy” from the mid-2000s and commit to building the formal apparatus of the Democratic Party everywhere.”

Dear Mitch
Michael K. Cantwell

Okay, you win, but what about your legacy? Unlike George W. Bush, who said, “I don’t care, I’ll be dead,” I suspect that you do care what history will say once you’ve shuffled off this mortal coil.

In an interview just before the 2010 midterms, you said that you’d been studying how presidents who suffered big defeats in their first midterms fared in their reelections. Somewhat maladroitly you admitted “The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term president.”

You said you didn’t want to repeat the mistake that Newt Gingrich made by underestimating Clinton and overestimating himself. Newt is an example of “a stupid man’s idea of what a smart man sounds like,”

***It is time for you to put country over party, lives over politics.
It is time for you to listen to the American people.***

but no one would dispute your intelligence or your parliamentary prowess and leadership skills. Obama’s reelection may be your only significant loss since that interview.

Who but you could have engineered the brazen theft of two Supreme Court seats, based on the flimsiest of arguments? First you claimed that presidents in the final year of their term should be denied the right to appoint a justice to the Supreme Court even though neither the Constitution nor history justified such a Congressional putsch. Since 1900, [seven Supreme Court justices](#) were seated during the last year of a presidential term, and no nominee was denied a hearing.

But you won because principle and precedence bow to power. The corporate media soon returned to their fascination with Trump, who rode their free advertising straight to the White House. They were surprised and embarrassed, but you were neither. You knew that making that Supreme Court seat a subject of the election was a way to whip the base into a frenzy, and you have never been embarrassed by winning.

One would have thought you’d be hoist by your own petard when another Supreme Court vacancy emerged only weeks before the recent election that sent Trump packing. But no, employing logic even

more tortured than that supporting your refusal to give Garland a hearing, you offered the corollary that it is different when the White House and Senate are held by different parties. Not so, Mitch. In Ronald Reagan’s last year, a Democratic Senate confirmed his nomination of Anthony Kennedy by a 97-0 vote.

And those seats weren’t even your biggest win. You also shut down appointments to the lower federal courts during the final two years of Obama’s term. This allowed Trump to appoint almost twice as many circuit court judges in four years as Obama appointed in eight. Since the Supreme Court hears only a small number of cases, packing the federal circuits will enable rightwing judicial activists to overturn democratically enacted policies for decades to come.

And that leads back to the question of your legacy. Joe Biden will be inaugurated as America is being battered by the worst public health crisis in over a century and the greatest economic collapse in over 80 years.

Biden says that he knows to reach across the aisle, but you have been silent, just as you have been silent about Trump’s preposterous and democracy-destabilizing claim that he won the election. It is time for you to put country over party, lives over politics. It is time for you to listen to the American people.

A recent New York Times poll found overwhelming support for an active government role in addressing the crises facing our country: 72% of respondents support a \$2 trillion stimulus package, 67% support a government-run health insurance plan, and 66% support a \$2 trillion plan to increase the use of renewable energy and build energy-efficient infrastructure.

Will you lecture Biden on a deficit that you ignored for the last 4 years while America bleeds? Will your greatest priority be to make Biden a one-term president or will you recognize that your principal duty is to Promote the General Welfare? The future will be watching, and history is written by the winners. While “the arc of the moral universe is long . . . it bends toward justice.”

WE VOTED, WE WON! NOW LET'S TAKE THE SENATE!

It's critical that the United States Senate **NOT** be controlled by Republicans any longer. We plan to do whatever we can to help Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock win their respective Senate run-off elections in Georgia on January 5, 2021.

To make phone calls, the direct links to the phone banks are:

Jon Ossoff <https://www.mobilize.us/electjon/event/362688/>

Raphael Warnock <https://www.mobilize.us/warnockforgeorgia/event/362553/>

To send texts, write postcards or share campaign information online, the links are:

Jon Ossoff <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfOCmXM5Ts8-1Yh-XXTfsyt1KhWo7qznF46EvPSC9iO5ljTtw/viewform>

Raphael Warnock https://secure.warnockforgeorgia.com/page/s/website_vol

To make a donation to either or both campaigns, the links are:

Jon Ossoff <https://electjon.com/>

Raphael Warnock <https://warnockforgeorgia.com/>

Stacey Abrams <https://fairfight.com/>

Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2021 Membership Application



Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

Community/Condo Name _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone number _____

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here _____ and we will not share your E-mail address.)

Preferred method of contact: E-mail _____ Mail _____ Phone _____ Text _____

Send newsletter by: E-mail _____ Hand delivery _____ U.S. Mail _____

I/we are in South Florida from _____ to _____ each year or are a permanent resident _____.

Payment: Individual \$25 _____ Household \$35 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to P.O. Box 8224, Delray Beach, FL 33484. Thank you and welcome to our Club.