

# The Delray Democrat

## The Republican Party and “Jewish Ideals”<sup>1</sup>

*Michael K. Cantwell*

Did you see that Mike Pence claims that the “Republican Party has stood for the ideals that have been characteristic in the Jewish community”? For a moment, I thought I was reading *The Onion* or *The Borowitz Report*.

It is oxymoronic to use the word “ideal” in the same sentence as the modern “Republican Party.” For the last half-century, the Republican electoral strategy has been to sow fear, division, hatred, racism, and ignorance, from Richard Nixon’s “Southern Strategy” through Ronald Reagan’s “Welfare Queens” and Donald Trump’s vulgar vilifications.

Among Jews, there is no dearer ideal than Tikkun olam, the belief that we bear responsibility not only for our own moral, spiritual, and material welfare, but also for the welfare of society at large. Our Haggadah – our tradition to tell and retell the story of our ancestors’ liberation from slavery – reminds us that we can never be truly free while others suffer slavery or deprivation, that our holiday cannot be complete while others lack food or liberty.

Jews remember a time when our children were ripped from the arms of their parents, a time when we were strangers in a strange land, a time when we were slaves of Pharaoh. The majority of us simply cannot support a political organization that demonizes immigrants, enacts laws to prevent minorities from voting, sows and celebrates race hatred, and outlaws the teaching of history.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Delray Democrat*, July 2022, page 7.