

Anti-Trump New York Times' columnists are on Trump's side. They just don't know it.



by Lev Tsitrin

The very same thing can be said in different ways, and it is interesting to observe how at times people say the same thing while, to all appearances, they violently disagree with one another. Consider the *New York Times'* anti-Trump court conservative David Brooks. Here is how he diagnoses the puzzling for him reason for Trump's popularity among republicans: "Trumpists tell themselves that America is being threatened by a radical left putsch that is out to take over the government and undermine the culture," Mr. Brooks writes in his "[*Why Is There Still No Strategy to Defeat Donald Trump?*](#)" The course of treatment for this disease, according to

Mr. Brooks, is not to continue with the current regimen of *ad hominem* attacks on Trump ("The net effect of these strategies has been to sell a lot of books and subscriptions and to make anti-Trumpists feel good," he observes, rather than the wished-for undermining of the "continued prominence of Donald Trump") but "to show by word and deed that this [perceived threat of a radical left putsch] is a gross exaggeration."

Now this is a very strange phrase, well worth parsing. "To show by word" likely means deception – apparently, Mr. Brooks means to say that the media should pull wool over public's eye and pretend that "a radical left putsch" is not happening. Should it ignore Bernie Sanders and loudmouths of the "squad"? Should it sweep under the rug the lawlessness and demagoguery of BLM? The rise of crime in the cities? The loss of control over the border? The bizarre claims of "transgenderism?" Perhaps – though this is what the mainstream press has been doing all along, excusing, explaining away, and downplaying them, so it is unlikely that this is what Mr. Brooks meant; his meaning is unclear.

But it is crystal clear what "by deed" means. "By deed" can only mean targeting and eliminating these pernicious symptoms of "a radical left putsch" – but isn't this the same as saying "make America great again"? Trump's slogan may be more catchy and easy to grasp – yet it does not differ one bit from what Mr. Brooks suggests in the *New York Times*. Yes, Mr. Brooks uses different words, yet on the substance, he is in full agreement with President Trump.

So why is Mr. Brooks so eager to "defeat Trump"?

Because, as he put it, "American establishment correctly identified Trump as a grave threat to American democracy." To Mr. Brooks (and to his readers, perhaps) it is such a self-evident truth, the word "correctly" apparently clinches it, leaving no need for elaboration, that he leaves his reasons unsaid, though It would have been interesting to hear them.

Yes, I am fully aware of the “January 6 insurrection” argument – but this cannot be Mr. Brooks’ reason, simply because he was a “never Trumper” all along from the get-go. His dislike of Trump is unrelated to the events of January 6, having predated them by half a decade. Now, when one puts the January 6 aside (and Trump’s role in what happened on that day is highly debatable), one has to agree that there is simply nothing illegal – let alone undemocratic – in Trump’s insistence that the election was stolen from him, or in his attempts to re-litigate it. Sure, Al Gore is praised for his statesmanship in refusing to push for recounts in the 2000 elections; but just because Gore decided to forego his chance, does not mean that Trump should, too. It simply does not follow from Al Gore’s conceding the 2000 elections that Trump was obligated to do the same in 2020.

So Mr. Brooks is in a curious position. To him, democracy faces two threats – one comes from “a radical left putsch:” demagogic Sanderites, unruly BLMers, insane transgenderists and the like; the other comes from Trump. It almost seems that Mr. Brooks is willing to paper over the former in order to stop the latter – while acknowledging that the latter is a remedy against the former. I don’t see this as a particularly logical position. Does Mr. Brooks really think that Trump’s second term will harm our democracy more than “a radical left putsch”? If Trump’s first term is any guide – as it should be – than that worry is baseless. If Mr. Brooks thinks that Mr. Trump would refuse to leave the White House after the second term – which would indeed imperil our democracy – he does not say so; nor is there any reason to expect that he will. To me personally, it would be much better for the country to have a second Trump term than “a radical left putsch” which Mr. Brooks does not find palatable either, since he wants to resist it “by deeds.”

Oddly, next to Mr. Brooks’ piece was another essentially pro-Trump piece by an anti-Trumper, Farah Stockman’s [*The Martha’s*](#)

[Vineyard Migrant Stunt Is Making One Truth About This Country Clear](#)" – a plea for having a legally-sound control over immigration, for separating economic migrants from legitimate political asylum-seekers, so "U.S. agents can swiftly deport or fine people caught illegally entering the United States unless they are deemed eligible to claim asylum," as she put it. Yet making the border controllable and controlled, and having an immigration system that works is precisely one of Mr. Trump's key agendas.

It seems to me that anti-Trumpers are, first and foremost, confused. They should start thinking straight, and decide what they are for, and what they are against. Once they do that, it may well turn out that people like the readers of (and writers for) the *New York Times* who think they are against Trump, are actually for him – and they should vote accordingly.