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Even Trump shouldn't be slandered

Gerry Feld

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Many presidents have attempted to take revenge on those who opposed them. Look at President Nixon's infamous enemy list. Although it was unethical, it did not make Nixon a fascist.

I've always been astonished how simple it is for people to be slanderous toward others. Know them or not, what kind of positive feelings do people get by demeaning or vilifying another person? Do they actually understand the hurt or damage they may inflict on another's reputation? Probably not.

As a recipient of many types of verbal assaults growing up, I can tell you they not only hurt, but they inspire additional attacks from onlookers who feel the need to add fuel to the fire. One of the most hurtful attacks one can endure is to be labeled a racist. No one knows what is truly in your heart or soul. As a correctional or police officer, this repulsive label is thrown at us every time we do our jobs by people who simply have no respect for law and order.

Sadly, open season for name calling always comes to the forefront during political campaigns. It absolutely brings out the worst in candidates who can't help labeling their opponents as liars, cheats, two-faced, ignorant or scoundrels.

Of course, the flames are always fanned by broadcast media, who have a heyday replaying the attacks through several news cycles, while their expert panelists attempt to explain and define the verbal insults.

Many political pundits and opinion columnists who have their personal agendas can be very brutal. This election cycle Donald Trump appears to be the most maligned and hated candidate in many years. On Feb. 25, syndicated columnist Mona Charon referred to him as an ignoramus. On Jan. 26, Bill Crystal, editor of The Weekly Standard, called Trump a peddler of know nothing protectionism.

However the most dangerous and outrageous assertion I've read regarding Trump was by David Boaz of the Cato Institute, who wrote Jan. 22 that "Trump is effectively vowing to be an American Mussolini, concentrating power in the Trump White House and govern by fiat."

Regrettably, that line of thinking was echoed April 12 by my fellow Times Writers Group member Adam Ulbricht in his column, "Fascist finally seems like it applies."

Ulbricht compared Trump to Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini on several occasions. “Trump isn’t going to have his own SS or Blackshirts, but he has certainly hinted at going after those opposing him,” he wrote.

In America’s history many presidents have attempted to take revenge on those who opposed them. Look no farther than former President Nixon’s infamous enemy list. Although it was unethical, it did not make Nixon a fascist. It is also important to remember Hitler and Mussolini had personal, violent armies long before they attempted to seize power. They were actively engaged in destroying rival political parties by intimidation or violence. Additionally, both had their hands bloodied in numerous political coups before attempting to seize power.

Ulbricht also wrote, “Trump’s campaign is centered on nationalism. His slogan is make America great again is a direct nod at it. Consistent campaign speeches are focused on how America doesn’t win anymore and that we’re being taken advantage of by other countries.”

How does making America great again make one a fascist? Desiring to have America on top should be the mantra of every candidate regarding their party status seeking the presidency! Plus, if you don’t believe countries take advantage of us, look no further than the recent Iran nuclear deal or China’s militarism in the South China Sea.

All too often, fear of the unknown provokes wild, unsubstantiated provocations to enrage a targeted audience. However, referring to someone as a fascist conjures up graphic images of World War II and the Holocaust — things no one ever wants to relive.

By no means am I a supporter of Trump or his own vilifying, petulant comments. However, we need not be dragged into the unsettled waters by using inflammatory and unsubstantiated attacks because everyone else is doing it. Degrading another human being by malicious allegations is simply wrong.