

The Conway Daily Sun

Contagion

Jonna Carter

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Technology-proficient Russians have been fleeing Russia en masse, creating what has been widely referred to as a “brain drain” in that country. Since the start of the war an estimated 200,000 have fled to neighboring Georgia and to a handful of countries that haven’t banned Russian planes from their airspace. Much of this exodus has been in the wake of the new censorship law criminalizing criticism of Kremlin policy and threatening Russian citizens in violation with jail sentences of up to 15 years.

In New Hampshire we’ve been experiencing a different kind of brain drain created not from an exodus but rather from an influx. Since we won the “lottery” in 2003, Free Staters have been flocking to the state with the intention of usurping state government, and 19 years later they’ve strategically positioned themselves to do just that. Their infiltration has been enabled by a confluence of departure from ethics and reason, as this alien faction is succeeding by cowing formerly moderate Republicans into adopting Free State initiatives.

The progressive advocacy organization Granite State Progress reports that in an effort to advance their agenda, Free Staters have aligned with QAnon and the boogaloo movement. We all know QAnon adherents have parted company with sanity, but the boogaloo “boys” as they’re known take it up a notch as they’re armed and dangerous. This is an anti-government militia group seeking another civil war, and it has quite a presence in New Hampshire. These fine fellows have reportedly been training in the mountains which, if I’m not mistaken, is what I’m looking at from my kitchen window. Yikes!

Today it’s more important than ever to know for whom you are voting! As we’ve witnessed repeatedly, many elected into office on a moderate platform have proven to be anything but! As pertains to Republicans, erstwhile “moderates” have capitulated to extremism in order to retain their status in this aberrant Republican Party.

Rep. Karen Umberger has ensured the Mount Washington Valley is not spared the brain drain as she brings the radical Free State agenda home — hopefully to roost. A review of the 2022 voting records to date reveals that Umberger, chair of the House Finance Committee and Joint Fiscal Committee, has proven herself repeatedly to be in lockstep with the Free Staters.

Umberger has claimed to be pro-choice, but actions speak volumes. In a blatant negation of choice she voted to retain New Hampshire's curtailed abortion options. She also voted to repeal the mandatory buffer zone granting safe access to women's health clinics for clientele and staff.

As well as anti-choice, this current legislative session reveals her to be anti-LBGQTQ as she voted to consider a repeal of the state law banning the repugnant conversion therapy.

Umberger has also voted to rescind local control of the most basic community decisions as is evidenced in her support of HB 1131 prohibiting schools from implementing mask ordinances. Removing communities' authority over their school policy is just one in a series of steps designed by Free Staters to take down public education in the state.

Umberger was instrumental in crafting the current state budget trampling among other things women's reproductive freedoms and teachers' free speech. This is the state budget Chris Sununu signed into law, and I don't believe he had a boogaloo boy's AK-47 to his head when he put pen to paper. In fact, January saw our governor traveling to Washington to the libertarian Cato Institute to tout "freedom" and schmooze with the founder of the Free State Project, Jason Sorens.

As for the brain drain in Washington, it was on full display last week at the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson. Just when we thought we'd seen it all, Ted Cruz arrived with props!

Ted is a great fan of children's books, and clearly an inexhaustible student of the genre.

His nod of approval last week catapulted his favorite, "Antiracist Baby," to the top of Amazon's best seller list! If Ted knows anything it's books. Ted's own book, 2020's "One Vote Away: How a Single Supreme Court Seat Can Change History," achieved best seller status after he spent \$153,000 in campaign donations buying copies.

As for children's books, for anyone wondering as to their relevance in a Supreme Court nomination hearing, I believe the following exchange will provide illumination:

Cruz: "What do you as a Democrat think about racist babies?"

Jackson: "I think they're delicious."