

Please Stop Hate-Monger Campaigning

By Jonathan Guerin

The Trump campaign is a threat to freedom and democracy. It's important to distinguish between the Trump campaign and Trump policy. Just because there is disagreement with someone on the issues doesn't make them a threat to freedom and democracy. It's also important to distinguish between hate-mongering and political incorrectness. Just because a campaign is politically incorrect or negative doesn't make it a threat to freedom and democracy. Trump's campaign is more than politically incorrect, it is hate-mongering. This is a threat to democracy because hate-monger campaigning appeals to people's basest emotions which prevents rational discussion of the issues. This is a threat to freedom because the campaign itself makes society more prejudiced.

For example, let's consider immigration to see why Trump's campaign is hate-mongering as opposed to being politically incorrect or negative campaigning. A politically incorrect campaign would be plain spoken using terminology that is biased or dated. A negative campaign would cite statistics of the negative effects of immigration policies or tell real stories of immigrants doing bad things. A hate-mongering campaign generalizes negative statements based on race, gender, etc. In other words, a hate-mongering campaign makes sectarian (e.g. sexist, racist) statements such as "They're rapists". Saying such extreme statements rarely or after getting caught up in a heated debate does not necessarily make one a hate-monger. One can clarify or apologize for such statements and move on. However, a hate-monger like Trump doubles-down on his statements when asked for clarification. Moreover, Trump relentlessly made and doubled-down on racist, sexist, xenophobic and sectarian statements. This is why it is a hate-mongering campaign as opposed to a negative or politically incorrect campaign.

Trump's hate-monger campaigning makes society more prejudiced. People in positions of power, especially the POTUS, influence society and embolden behavior with their speech. Trump himself has emphatically and repeatedly used racist, sexist, xenophobic, and sectarian speech. Thus, people are encouraged to talk and behave as racists, sexists, and xenophobes. This appeals to people's basest emotions and creates a prejudiced society where a divided country insults and blames each other. People live in anger and fear which limits freedom to small groups of people they trust to interact with. A prejudiced society makes irrational decisions based on emotions and doesn't rationally discuss the issues. This prevents a democracy from representing the people.

One may argue Trump brilliantly used political hyperbole to get elected. One may argue that any negative effects of a divisive, hate-mongering campaign are justified in order to put a party or person in power to implement their agenda. Trump's speech is completely legal. After all, wasn't Obama's 2008 campaign hyperbolic? Don't all campaign's spin their message? Yes, it is tiresome to sift through political spin and hyperbole. However, other forms of political hyperbole and spin don't prevent rational discussion of the issues or make society more prejudiced all by themselves. A society divided by extreme prejudice is not a just society. This is the direct result of Trump's message alone. Therefore, Trump's hate-mongering campaign is not justified.

One may argue that Hillary allegedly broke the law or the justice department is corrupt. One may argue this is a threat to democracy and freedom. Yes, breaking the law and corruption should be addressed, and they are threats to democracy and freedom. Please prove your case so we can handle

things accordingly. For example, Nixon was forced to resign. Yet, this doesn't justify hate-monger campaigning which is also a threat to democracy and freedom.

One may argue that freedom of speech makes hate-monger campaigning acceptable. Hate-mongering does not fit the legal definition of hate speech. One may argue that there isn't and shouldn't be laws against such speech. The later point is correct. There should not be new laws to restrict speech and have the government responsible for determining what is or isn't hate-mongering. However, the former is incorrect. Just because something is legally permissible does not make it acceptable. The press, citizens and candidates all need to take responsibility and stop hate-monger campaigning.

Trump's campaign is the blueprint for all campaigns in the foreseeable future because it is successful. Republicans, democrats, independents will all be tempted to campaign this way. There will be no discussion of the issues and society will continue to become more prejudiced. A democracy without public discussion of the issues does not represent the people. A prejudiced society is unjust and restricts freedom. The press, citizens, and candidates all need to put a stop to this threat to democracy and freedom. Please stop hate-monger campaigning.