

Democrats, now and then

This is not your grandparents' political party

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After primary elections last week in which the rise of Democratic Socialists of America candidates alarmed many longtime Democrats, House Speaker Mike Johnson read a list of things he said those far-left candidates stand for.

To conservatives and independents, the list sounded like a grand jury indictment.

Mr. Johnson said the democratic socialists' effort to take over the Democratic Party and refashion it in their image is not limited to deep-blue New York City but is also surfacing across the country — especially among younger people who have never lived under these systems. That is mostly because they have been taught little about the cruelty and failures of these ideologies.

Mr. Johnson said, “Across the country, Democrats have candidates winning primaries and rising through the ranks.” He said there were many more than the few he mentioned, citing Sacramento City Council member and former congressional candidate Mai Vang.

Videos recently resurfaced show Ms. Vang refusing to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and intentionally turning her back on the American flag during municipal meetings.

Mr. Johnson also mentioned Adam Hamawy, a New Jersey Democrat who won the primary to succeed retiring Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman. Jewish Insider reported that Mr. Hamawy once volunteered in Bosnia with a Chicago-based nonprofit whose offices were raided by U.S. and Bosnian authorities in 2002 after it was determined to be a front for al Qaeda.

Mr. Hamawy was born in Egypt and served as a combat trauma surgeon in Baghdad during the Iraq War. He had described his 1994 internship with the now-defunct Benevolence International Foundation. The Treasury Department designated the foundation a financier of terrorism because of its financial and operational associations with al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

“Democratic congressional candidate JoAnna Mendoza in Arizona wants to decriminalize trans prostitution,” Mr. Johnson said. “Apparently, that’s the thing.” He added that Democratic Iowa congressional nominee and Iowa state Rep. Lindsay James “wants to apologize for being White.”

Rebecca Bennett, the New Jersey Democratic nominee for a House seat, said she “stopped going to church” because too many people there had voted for President Trump.

Mr. Johnson said Iowa state senator and U.S. House candidate Sarah Trone Garriott, who is a Lutheran minister, previously participated in a Satanist wedding as an intern pastor in West Virginia.

Other Democrats want to erase the border, empty the prisons, abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement, pack the Supreme Court and do other things to guarantee that Democrats hold power forever. Too many of these are antisemitic and hate Israel.

Mr. Johnson went on, “This is just a sampling” of how the Democratic Party is being hijacked by people who hate and want to destroy America.

He also might have mentioned biological men playing on women’s teams and sharing locker rooms and bathrooms with them. Those issues were losers for Democrats in the 2024 election. Contrast this nonsense with the Democratic Party of President Kennedy, who was for lower taxes and was an ardent anti-communist. Labor unions, though largely supportive of Democrats, were once strongly pro-American. Public schools once taught the real history of America and opened every day with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States (not foreign flags).

Students were allowed to pray and even read from the Bible until the Supreme Court ruled that prayer and Bible reading were unconstitutional.

How has that worked out, as anticapitalist teaching and poor achievement in math, science and reading are now the norms in many schools? Did I mention growing violence, especially in inner-city public schools and in the streets among teens?

President Jackson is often credited with founding the Democratic Party around 1828. The party’s principles then included agrarianism, states’ rights (code for slavery), limited federal government and opposition to corporate and banking monopolies.

Such were the party’s principles until the early 20th century, when things began to change — some for the better, such as the battle for civil rights and Social Security, and some not so great, such as higher taxes and bigger government.

As the saying goes: “This is not your grandparents’ Democratic Party.” It has clearly gone off the rails.

Readers may email Cal Thomas at tcaeditors@tribpub.com. Look for Cal Thomas' latest book, "A Watchman in the Night: What I've Seen Over 50 Years Reporting on America" (Humanix Books)