

What is the difference between nationalism and patriotism?

During his presidency, Donald Trump said, “We’re putting America first... we’re taking care of ourselves for a change,” and then declared, “I’m a nationalist.” In another speech, he stated that under his watch, the U.S. had “embrace(d) the doctrine of patriotism.”

Trump is now running for president again. When he announced his candidacy, he stated that he “need(s) every patriot on board because this is not just a campaign, this is a quest to save our country.”

One week later, he dined in Mar-a-Lago with Nick Fuentes, a self-described nationalist who’s been banned from Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and other platforms for using racist and antisemitic language.

Afterward, Trump confirmed that meeting but did not denounce Fuentes, despite calls for him to do so.

The words nationalism and patriotism are sometimes used as synonyms, such as when Trump and his supporters describe his America First agenda. But many political scientists, including me, don’t typically see those two terms as equivalent — or even compatible. There is a difference, and it’s important, not just to scholars but to regular citizens as well.

DEVOTION TO A PEOPLE

To understand what nationalism is, it’s useful to understand what a nation is — and isn’t.

A nation is a group of people who share a history, culture, language, religion or some combina-



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tion thereof. A country, which is sometimes called a state in political science terminology, is an area of land that has its own government.

A nation-state is a homogeneous political entity mostly comprising a single nation. Nation-states are rare, because nearly every country is home to more than one national group. One example of a nation-state would be North Korea, where almost all residents are ethnic Koreans.

The United States is neither a nation nor a nation-state. Rather, it is a country of many different groups of people who have a variety of shared histories, cultures, languages and religions.

Some of those groups are formally recognized by the federal government, such as the Navajo Nation and the Cherokee Nation. Similarly, in Canada, the French-speaking Québécois are recognized as being a distinct “nation within a united Canada.”

Nationalism is, per one dictionary definition, “loyalty and devotion to a nation.” It is a person’s strong affinity for those who share the same history, culture, language or religion. Scholars understand nationalism as exclusive, boosting one identity group over — and at times in direct opposition to — others.

The Oath Keepers and Proud Boys — 10 of whom were convict-

ed of seditious conspiracy for their role in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol — are both examples of white nationalist groups, which believe that immigrants and people of color are a threat to their ideals of civilization.

Trump has described the events that took place on Jan. 6, 2021, as having occurred “Peacefully & Patriotically.” He has described those who have been imprisoned as “great patriots” and has said that he would pardon “a large portion of them” if elected in 2024.

There are many other nationalisms beyond white nationalism. The Nation of Islam, for instance, is an example of a Black nationalist group. The Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center have both characterized it as a Black supremacist hate group for its anti-white prejudices.

In addition to white and Black racial nationalisms, there are also ethnic and linguistic nationalisms, which typically seek greater autonomy for — and the eventual independence of — certain national groups. Examples include the Bloc Québécois, the Scottish Nationalist Party and Plaid Cymru — the Party of Wales, which are nationalist political parties that respectively advocate for the Québécois of Québec, the Scots of Scotland and the Welsh of Wales.

DEVOTION TO A PLACE

In contrast to nationalism’s loyalty for or devotion to one’s nation, patriotism is, per the same dictionary, “love for or devotion to one’s country.” It comes from the word patriot, which itself can

be traced back to the Greek word patrios, which means “of one’s father.”

In other words, patriotism has historically meant a love for and devotion to one’s fatherland or country of origin.

Patriotism encompasses devotion to the country as a whole — including all the people who live within it. Nationalism refers to devotion to only one group of people over all others.

An example of patriotism would be Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, in which he recites the first verse of the patriotic song “America (My Country ‘Tis of Thee).” In his “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” King describes “nationalist groups” as being “made up of people who have lost faith in America.”

George Orwell, the author of “Animal Farm” and “1984,” describes patriotism as “devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life.”

He contrasted that with nationalism, which he describes as “the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests.”

NATIONALISM VS. PATRIOTISM

Adolf Hitler’s rise in Germany was accomplished by perverting patriotism and embracing nationalism. According to Charles de Gaulle, who led Free France against Nazi Germany during World War II and later became president of France, “Patriotism is when love of your own people

comes first; nationalism, when hate for people other than your own comes first.”

The tragedy of the Holocaust was rooted in the nationalistic belief that certain groups of people were inferior. While Hitler is a particularly extreme example, in my own research as a human rights scholar, I have found that even in contemporary times, countries with nationalist leaders are more likely to have bad human rights records.

After World War II, President Harry Truman signed the Marshall Plan. The intent of the program was to help European countries “break away from the self-defeating actions of narrow nationalism.”

For Truman, putting America first did not mean exiting the global stage and sowing division at home with nationalist actions and rhetoric. Rather, he viewed the “principal concern of the people of the United States” to be “the creation of conditions of enduring peace throughout the world.” For him, patriotically putting the interests of his country first meant fighting against nationalism.

This view is in line with that of French President Emmanuel Macron, who has stated that “patriotism is the exact opposite of nationalism.”

“Nationalism,” he says, “is a betrayal of patriotism.”

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Kansas child care crisis puts the state’s economy at risk

The need for accessible and affordable child care extends beyond parents and their children. It has cascading effects in our communities, from helping our local economies flourish to building a strong workforce once kids are grown. Kansas’ current infrastructure is unsustainable, and we’re seeing the stress cracks across the state.

Currently, 21 Kansas counties don’t have any available spots for infants, forcing parents to make difficult choices. According to the 2023 KIDS COUNT Data Book, about one in nine Kansas kids from birth to age 5 are in families where at least one of their parents lacked secure employment. It’s becoming increasingly difficult for families, especially those living on low wages, to maintain steady employment and achieve financial security.

We need to think of child care as an essential part of economic development. In the past few years, Kansas has brought several businesses to settle here that will add thousands of jobs throughout the state. But how can we fill those jobs if parents aren’t able to get to work because they don’t have convenient, affordable and safe child care options?

The lack of affordable child care costs the U.S. economy more than \$100 billion every year. In Kansas (where the minimum wage hasn’t increased since 2009), infant child care costs take up around 8% of a married couple’s income and 26% of a single mother’s income, meaning that potential spending power isn’t boosting local economies as much as it could be.

Unaffordable and inaccessible care is not a problem that can just be solved by providers. Child care workers earn exceedingly low wages. The most recent data shows that Kansas providers make, on average, just \$11.27 an hour (or about \$22,500 a year).

It is time we acknowledge that the Kansas child care crisis is a problem for all of us — advocates, lawmakers, parents, providers, businesses and communities — to collectively solve.

I was encouraged to see robust conversation about the child care crisis this past leg-



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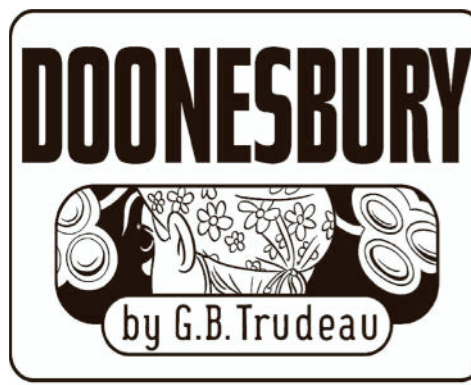
islative session, and I look forward to hearing the recommendations of the Early Childhood Transition Task Force later this year. Recently, the Kansas Children’s Cabinet allocated \$43.5 million for 52 projects that will create more than 4,000 new child care slots across the state. Earlier this month, Gov. Laura Kelly joined a group of other governors urging Congress to invest federal dollars into child

care in the national 2024 budget. Imagine what our kids can achieve if Congress and the Kansas Legislature build up our child care system much like they do the business community. The state must begin investing general fund dollars in child care much like we do K-12 education, so every child has high-quality early learning opportunities, regardless of their ZIP code, race, ability or family income.

Beyond the economic benefits of a robust early learning system are the implications for childhood development. Within the first five years of a child’s life, more than 1 million neural connections are formed every second. This time holds foundational opportunities for developing vital skills that will follow them throughout children’s entire lives. Planning, focus, self-control, and teamwork are among the capabilities learned early in life that can help people manage work, family, and relationships successfully.

Nationwide trends have shown that the number of students with below-average fourth grade reading and eighth grade math continues to climb year after year. We can start reversing these trends by investing in children’s early years and working to maximize their development through high-quality early learning opportunities in that critical time of life.

JOHN WILSON is president of Kansas Action for Children. This column originally appeared in the Kansas Reflector.



Time to rededicate ourselves to the Declaration of Independence

This coming Tuesday marks 247 years since the words of a just-turned 33 year old began to make their way into history: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Yet how many remember the opening paragraph: “When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the Earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

Or the pursuit of “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness”? “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Gov-



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ernment becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

It would take a civil war and more American dead in four years than all other wars combined through the Korean War to save the union, end slavery and set this union on a path to begin the long march to “all men are created equal.”

Though that march would take another hundred years before it reached the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, the next leg has accelerated with amazing speed.

In the four decades to follow, that next leg would include such greats as Arthur Ashe, Hank Aar-

on’s home run number 715, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and in 2008, the White House delivered to Barack Obama.

Yet now we’ve stalled. The rage machines that profit from division are full force forward in doing all they can to ensure we stay divided. Fifteen years after electing its first Black president, and a more diverse Congress, Supreme Court, and field of 2024 hopefuls for the White House than ever, progress is ignored while hate is celebrated.

Now consider Jefferson’s follow-on paragraph: “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...”

I don’t care what your politics are, can anyone honestly look back at the past 2½ years and say they’ve given “consent” to be “governed” in the way they have — American energy attacked from day one, restricting supply and driving up price, a price that filters through every aspect of the economy hitting our most vulnerable on grocery shelves and gas pumps from sea to shining sea.

Or federal bureaucrats dictating

that you can no longer buy an incandescent light bulb, mandating specifications for your dishwasher and washing machine, attacking gas stoves, putting forth automobile emission standards so burdensome that they will basically phase out any choice of purchasing a decent gas-powered vehicle in coming years.

Or unilaterally using a radical Waters of the United States regulation to perpetrate the largest land grab in history. Or forcing female athletes to compete and share locker rooms with biological males.

And last but by no means least, throwing open our southern border to millions of immigrants living in the country illegally and forcing taxpayers in cities and states across the country to spend billions upon billions of their own treasure to feed, house and educate them while our own veterans, seniors and working poor struggle more with each passing day.

And each and every mandate happily signed or approved by a mumbling, bumbling octogenarian who can’t make it through a

single speech without a “what did he just say?” moment or go a week without being seen wandering aimlessly, unsure of where to go.

What the everyday American is facing today in forced regulations and mandates from faceless authorities far removed from their daily lives and unconcerned about the consequences is exactly what inspired those rebels of ’76 to sign their names to Jefferson’s prose.

The administrative-regulatory complex has become the King George III of the 21st century, handing down edicts as they desire while we the commoners either obey or face its wrath.

If this nation is to celebrate its 250th birthday with even a wisp of the spirit that founded it, it is imperative that we begin the process of reducing the unjust power that the administrative regulatory complex wields today. And that process starts Nov. 5, 2024. Pay attention America, choose wisely or forever lose your freedom.

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