

THE ANGST AT THE WASHINGTON POST

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They really don't like Jeff Bezos at the *Washington Post* (WaPO). Not only did the opinion editor, David Shipley, resign, their longtime columnist Ruth Marcus called it quits; so did other staffers. Moreover, many of those who are sticking around are not happy campers. In fact, news stories report that the paper's employees were "shocked and stunned."

The hysterical response stems from the announcement Bezos recently made. "We are going to be writing every day in support and defense of two pillars: personal liberties and free markets."

Why would this set workers off? There are three possible reasons: (a) they don't like being told what to write about, (b) they don't like personal liberties, and (c) they don't like free markets. In fairness, the reason why Marcus resigned was more personal—WaPO refused to publish an editorial she wrote criticizing Bezos for making the aforementioned changes.

Regarding the first reason, it is understandable that reporters and other staffers would object to anything that might compromise their independence. But how independent were they before? If a reporter, or someone on the editorial staff, were pro-life, how secure would that person be in expressing his independence from his colleagues?

Why would staffers object to free markets? After all, they make their living from a market economy. But maybe that doesn't matter. It is hardly a secret that WaPO is home to liberal and left-wing reporters, and for them, socialism is not a dirty word. Capitalism is. This is a reflection of what they learned in school.

New York Post columnist John Stossel recently noted that a prominent TikTok star, Madeline Pendleton, told her considerably large audience that “Socialism is working better than capitalism 93% of the time.” Forget Stossel’s astute rebuttal, what matters is that a lot of young people, in particular, believe this to be true.

Similarly, Touro University professor Yuriy V. Karpov observes that half of young voters are pro-socialist. “According to a recent survey, 49.6 percent of young American voters would prefer to live in a socialist country.” But for some reason, none want to move to Venezuela.

In short, the hard left has taken command of a large portion of our nation’s youth. While staffers at WaPO may not be quite as radical as these young people, many are closer to them than they are to the Young Republicans. After all, the staffers were also trained by those on the left.

Karpov reports that a survey of faculty at elite American universities found that 91 percent identify as liberal. Importantly, he notes that “liberal” means people like Angela Davis. He accurately describes her as “a radical communist and a professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who has been awarded the Lenin Peace Prize from the Soviet Union.”

What about personal liberties? Why would staffers object to that? They don’t when it comes to drugs and abortion. But when it comes to free speech, that is problematic. Even though they make their living by exercising their right to free speech, recent studies show that liberals are the least supportive of this First Amendment right.

Two years ago, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression released its annual survey on the status of free speech on campus. In a survey of almost forty-five thousand college students from 201 colleges, it found that liberals were the most intolerant of free speech; conservatives were

much more tolerant.

Bezos is trying to move the newspaper away from being a forum for liberal-left thinking. He has no nefarious agenda: he simply wants employees to start showing an appreciation for the liberties that allow for a free society. That this is controversial shows how deeply ideological WaPO has become.