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A DICTIONARY FOR REPUBLICAN (G.O.P.) CODE WORDS/PHRASES AND INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC

Republican politicians and Kentucky's Members of Congress often use words or phrases when discussing policy to encourage their members support and/or label their Democratic opponents as extremists. It is not unusual to find Democratic policies described by these code words as socialistic, communistic or worse. Meanwhile, extreme GOP policies are often couched in code words that imply fiscal responsibility or conservative values, but in reality are not. Here in alphabetical order is a list of some of the more common code words and phrases and their actual meanings. This list is by no means complete, but will be added to as time progresses with future entries.

Cost effectiveness – This is a phrase constantly cited by Andy Barr and others in the GOP as justification for changes in policy, elimination of protections or to improve government efficiency and lower costs. Cost effectiveness is defined as producing good results without costing a lot of money, or by the effectiveness or savings generated relative to the cost to implement or do something³⁻⁴. Barr and the GOP use the term to label public protections as ***cost-ineffective job killing regulations***, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) was labeled as ***cost ineffective relative to free markets***. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was characterized as ***lacking oversight and being cost ineffective***. These charges are merely political rhetoric, used without the benefit of proving their claim, providing evidence that their repeal would lower costs, improve effectiveness or increase jobs.

Major Government regulations are evaluated prior to their implementation to determine their cost-effectiveness BEFORE they can be implemented. Historically, protections save more money than they cost according to two separate reports by the GAO. Furthermore, there is no evidence that on balance public protections result in more job losses than job gains. The PPACA in particular lowered costs sufficiently to allow tens of millions of Americans to obtain health insurance for the first time. Yet, the GOP still promotes free markets as the antidote and the most cost-efficient healthcare system. Were that true, the US health care should have been the most cost-efficient, highest quality healthcare in the Western Hemisphere. It was not. Prior to the PPACA, US healthcare was the most expensive healthcare system in the world, but was leaving a greater percent of Americans without any health insurance and producing an overall health care outcome that saw US health ranked among the worst in the Western world.

Death Spiral – are inflammatory words used by the GOP to describe the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The purpose is to make it appear the PPACA is a failed program that is dying from its own problems. In truth, the GOP gutted a key aspect of the PPACA that results in insurers losing money and either leaving the exchanges or raising insurance rates¹²⁻¹⁴. The problem could be fixed by removing language ***that prevents*** Health and Human Services (HHS) from paying insurers in high risk corridors if they lose money. Without that reimbursement protection, health insurers refuse to take the risk of expanding into rural and poor areas of the country, or simply raise insurance costs and deductibles to the point people in those areas simply forgo health insurance altogether.

Death taxes – is a phrase used by Barr, McConnell and other GOP members to describe taxes placed on estates of those who have died. At present, there is NO ESTATE TAX on estates worth less than \$5.4 million or estates of couples valued at over \$10.9 million¹⁵⁻¹⁶. Yet, estate taxes are described by Barr, McConnell and others in the GOP as harmful to small businesses and family farms. The current limits on estate taxes means 99.8% of Americans are unaffected by them¹⁷. In addition, property (including farms) can be transferred tax free and thus the estate tax has no effect on family farms. The use of this inflammatory language and faulty justification is to encourage the repeal of estate taxes that specifically benefits billionaire families like Sheldon Adelson's, Walton family members, Johnson & Johnson family, S.C Johnson family, the Koch family, Mars family, Pritzker family, etc¹⁸. It does nothing to help small businesses or family farms.

Deep State – is a body of people, influential members of government agencies, intelligence or military, believed to be involved in the secret manipulation or control of government. When the GOP cannot put their finger on who is responsible for “leaks in government” or “damaging information” regarding Trump and his behavior, they embrace this conspiracy theory that people deep inside government are calling the shots to discredit Trump. This is not too dissimilar from conspiracy theories about the Trilateral Commission back in the 1970's or the Skull and Crossbones secret Yale society in the 1980's. When in doubt, create a conspiracy theory and use that to try and discredit damaging information or create an ominous fear of the unknown.

Entitlement programs – are defined by the GOP as programs like Medicare and Social Security. The word **entitlement** is used to make these social programs appear as if they are provided as an inherent privilege or special treatment to Americans who receive them without earning them¹¹. These are programs every worker paid into during their working careers expecting to receive the Medical benefits (Medicare) and retirement benefits (Social Security) after they quit working. These are socially financed government obligations; not entitlements.

Equal outcomes—This is a term used by GOP loyalists to redefine **equal opportunity**. It is an attempt to discredit equal rights, access and opportunity by describing them in socialist terms. When you are defined as someone who wants “everyone to have one car before anyone can have two”, they clearly have no interest in listening to whatever you have to say. Characterizing whatever you wish to avoid discussing as socialism or communism has been an effective fear tactic to sway GOP voters to ignore even discussing what **equal opportunity** means, let alone what is required to achieve it.

Faceless, unaccountable bureaucrats writing job killing regulations – is a phrase used by Barr and other members of his party on multiple occasions to demonize all civil servants as unknown, unseen and unaccountable people¹⁹⁻²¹. The reality is civil servants work to address social problems (often created by conflicts between social and business interests) by balancing public concerns with those of business. All regulations are first opened for public comment. All major concerns raised are addressed and the final regulation is evaluated for its cost-effectiveness before it can be approved whenever that regulation imposes a major economic burden (>\$100 million/yr) to implement.

Historically, regulations save more than they cost and on balance do not produce any overall decrease in jobs²²⁻²³. These civil servants are also accountable and audited each year by the GAO and often by outside accounting firms as well. Each Department also has an inspector general to investigate problems, conflicts or violations of the law within the Department. Departments in the Administration are also accountable to Congress, and Department heads are often required to testify before Congress about policies, actions and public protections.

Failing government programs – The term “failing” has been applied to the Post Office lacking revenue to cover its cost of operations.²⁹⁻³⁰ It has also been used to describe Medicare and Social Security because the money required to support their operations have reached or are reaching the point of negative returns. These are silly uses of the word “failing” because they imply the government run programs should produce a profit, not a deficit. They are also silly, because all these programs have social obligations they must address, but have no control over their revenue streams. They are not businesses, in the sense they can raise prices to meet increasing costs. Each must go to Congress or a Board of Governors (Post Office) and ask “approval” to either increase the price of a postage stamp, or to increase taxes to cover the cost of their operations. When Congress refuses to do this, these programs go into the red, spending more than they take in to carry out their functions. It isn't the government programs that are failing when Congress does this, ***it is Congress that is failing***.

Congressmen and their supporters talk about failing government programs to justify reducing or privatizing them.²⁷ The Post-office will deliver a letter to any home in the country for far less than Fed-Ex or UPS. In fact, the USPS delivers nearly 1/3rd of Fed-Ex and UPS packages the final mile of their journey because the USPS reaches “every home” in the US. Furthermore, the price of a postage stamp has closely mirrored the increased cost of living over the last 50 years. The Post Office does not exist to make a profit, but to provide a postal service ***at cost***, to the public. That has been its purpose since it was created when this country was founded. It does this far, far better and at less cost than any for profit corporation in America today that delivers mail or packages. Social Security and Medicare are not failing either.³¹⁻³⁶ The declining revenues for both could easily be reversed either by raising the taxes that support them, or in the case of Social Security, eliminating the upper limit on income that is not taxed.

The problems with these government programs reflect ***a failure of Congress to act***, not of the government programs to perform their jobs. Yet, one will hear about the need to privatize all these government programs. It is suggested doing so would decrease taxes. Loss of Medicare and Social Security would cut taxes. The Post Office does not use tax revenue for its operation. In fact, it would cost shift the present burden of Medicare and Social Security paid for by the wealthiest and businesses onto the backs of the public. The poor and middle class would lose the present benefits of the current system. They would pay for a costlier Fed-Ex corporate version of these plans, in place of the far more inexpensive USPS version for old age healthcare and pension. Businesses and the wealthiest would walk away with the majority of the tax cuts. The public, no longer protected by a government run program would be at the mercy of private financial businesses that have a history of cheating, defrauding and abusing the public trust.

Federalism – is a term used by the GOP to describe any federal policy that tells States what to do. It is a throw-back term from the founding days of the US when there were two main political factions. Those who believed in a strong federal government with power over states (Federalists), and those who believed most power should reside with the states, with a weak Federal government (States Rights Group). This argument was resolved more than two centuries ago when it became clear a strong Federal Government was critical to the survival of the United States as a single, unified country, in place of a loose collection of states. However, there are still some who want to go back and relitigate that outcome. These individuals claim States Rights, and object to imposing rules and regulations on States from the Federal Government. They complained about desegregation over the separate but unequal treatment of blacks. They objected to Federalism as it related to the civil rights act and the voting rights act and the idea each person (regardless of color) had a right to be treated equally and be able to vote without any external poll taxes or other Jim Crow Laws. They objected when abortion was made legal and when gays were given the right to marry and were provided the same rights as any other American. They have also objected to EPA protections that required States to comply with clean air and water rules

that impacted demands on industries in their states that were in violation of clean air and water requirements. Federalism is nothing more than Federal requirements that all states and the people in them follow similar rules and laws. Those who dislike such Federal regulations, embrace State Rights and claim government overreach as justification for their embrace of inequality and abuse.

Government Central planning – this is code for an economic system that is totally controlled by the State or government. Central planning was a feature of the former U.S.S.R. and of contemporary China². There are variations in central planning. Today, some industrialized nations are a mixture of central planning and free enterprise. India is one example.

It is used by Andy Barr and other GOP members to describe and inflame discussions surrounding US government efforts to impose protections of the environment by passing environmental regulations affecting energy use and government efforts to provide consumer protections within the health insurance industry. It is meant to imply these government actions are communistic.

This is code for a government that is communistic. Consumer protections are not even close to Government Central planning.

Illegal aliens or illegals – the process of dehumanization starts with the use of words that impart a sense of less than human, or less than normal. Undocumented immigrants who enter the US without going through a normal evaluation and check are not illegal human beings. They are not a crime. They are simply, undocumented immigrants.

Intellectual Elites—this is a term used to denigrate progressives and liberals. It implies people who are disconnected from reality and not belonging to or understanding the problems or concerns of common workers (ivory tower theorists). Often described as supporters of government and its regulations, they are often characterized as only interested in a **nanny state** and a government that tells others what to do. This is in contrast to the Conservative Right that supports few if any regulations to prevent or avoid social problems and conflicts.

Job killing regulations – A term to refer to virtually any regulation that costs business money to implement. The concept is if a regulation costs business money, the only solution to that cost is to cut jobs to pay for it. Thus, Americans who want jobs should fear regulations that are likely to cost them theirs. There is no proof that overall, regulations lead to fewer total jobs. Rather this represents a fear tactic to encourage workers to oppose all business regulations and thus cost shift the consequences of no protections from the cost of business operations to the consumer or worker in general. Less cost for business means higher profits, not greater number of jobs, since jobs are a function of demand, not money supply. Suppose the cost of providing electricity is lowered because of fewer regulations on coal mining. Is that cost reduction passed to consumers in a monopolistic business such as utilities? Does the utility go out and hire more workers because their costs decreased? Or, are the benefits of lower costs passed on as a bonuses to the Utility heads and/or shareholders as increasing profitability? Meanwhile, who pays for less protections, the Utility or the rest of society? There is **a cost of regulation**, but there is also **a cost of no regulation** and that aspect of the issue is ignored entirely by the GOP when it only concerns itself with what regulations cost business.

National Debt – is characterized by the GOP is a result of over-spending. Thus, nearly all GOP solutions to the national debt are resolved by cutting essential government functions and obligations like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security or stimulating the economy and growth by cutting taxes, particularly business taxes⁹. Increasing tax revenue is generally not an option when many in the GOP

party have signed the “no tax pledge”¹⁰. A balance between increased revenue with spending cuts remains an impossible goal because of this extremist position by the GOP.

Profits trapped overseas—This is a phrase used by the GOP to describe corporate profits, as somehow victims of US tax policies which prevents corporate profits from be repatriated and used inside the US. The profits were never trapped, but merely “parked” by US corporations into offshore bank accounts to “avoid” US taxes. Much like “corporate inversions” which are not used to ship jobs overseas, but to shift tax liabilities out of the US and avoid tax responsibilities. The problem could be solved by simply eliminating the ability of companies to use this tax loophole to avoid paying US corporate taxes by demanding taxes be paid when profits are first realized.

Redistribution of wealth – is a term used by Barr and the GOP interchangeably with redistribution of income when referring to taxes on the wealthy. Redistribution of wealth and income are “**not equivalent**” but confabulating them serves to equate taxes with socialism. Redistribution of income by social mechanisms such as taxation, welfare, public services, monetary policies or tort law is done to lower the growth in extreme income inequality within society for the benefit of society and sustainable economic growth⁵. Income taxes help provide all Americans with greater access to essential needs, opportunities and social services. Redistribution of wealth implies our government acts like a socialist totalitarian dictatorship, which takes away the wealth of people (land, investments and businesses) in order to redistribute that wealth to other less wealthy people. That is a policy found in places like Venezuela, Communist China during the cultural revolution and in the former U.S.S.R.

Meanwhile, in the absence of taxes collected and spent to equalize opportunity, access and equality, educational opportunities are reduced. K-12 educational quality declines and in higher education tuition costs rise. Those added family costs diminish opportunities and resources for those who must deal with these changes. Less taxes for healthcare of Americans mean poor and middle-class families either pay more from their pockets to get medical care or they go without any health care entirely and lose their savings or health when a health problem arises. Fewer protections of Americans because of cuts in government means unscrupulous businesses can cheat, abuse or fraudulently prey on poor and middle-income families, decreasing their wealth while these businesses reap larger rewards by their unethical practices. Americans lose \$17 billion annually just by the failure of have financial institutions abide by any fiduciary responsibility to their clients⁶⁻⁷. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has shown billions more are lost each year by millions of Americans due to fraudulent, abusive and misleading financial business practices⁸.

Small Business tax cuts—First, there is no “small business tax”. Small business owners are taxed the same way individual taxpayers are, based on profits. The idea that flow through S-corporations need to be taxed at a lower rate to provide small businesses a more level playing field to compete with larger corporations is nonsense, because competition is governed by business costs (which are not taxed). Government taxes business profits. Taxing S-corporations at 25% merely encourages business owners to net more profit and pay less tax on it. It has nothing to do with competitiveness or job growth, but owner profitability.

Socialized Medicine – are inflammatory words used by the GOP to encourage fear of healthcare change. Socialized medicine requires government provide all aspects of health care from owning all hospitals, employing all doctors and health professionals and regulating prices and costs.¹ The closest thing to this is the VA hospital system. None of the changes implemented by the PPACA even came close to socialized medicine. However, the GOP uses the words ***Socialized Medicine*** to refer to any effort of

Government to ensure all Americans have health coverage, regardless of who owns the hospitals, insurance companies and employs the doctors and determines price and cost.

Stealing from the wealthy—Inflammatory words used by the GOP to encourage fear of taxes. Those who want to “tax individuals based on relative social reward” are only interested in “stealing their money”. When rewards reaped by living in society are decoupled from a corresponding responsibility, this is the outcome. Nothing is owed to society, except by others. Rights come without responsibilities, and freedoms come without obligations to anyone else. People only become wealthy by hard work, and paying for their share of government’s cost is not their responsibility. It has been typical to couple taxes with fear of government over reach and the idea one should have less responsibility to pay for government. Often this view coincides with the belief those who support government are liberals who are jealous of other’s wealth and want to “steal it”.

Tax Fairness—this is a phrase used by the GOP to encourage flat tax rates and lower taxes on wealthy individuals. Often accompanied by questions like “Is it fair to punish people for being successful?” What is avoided in that discussion is what is a “fair wage” or any discussion of “income disparity” and how “fair” are extremes in income. A CEO is paid nearly 300 times more than the average worker? Is it fair that a professional athlete can makes more money in one year than many workers will earn in their lifetimes? That doesn't imply everyone should or will ever receive the same benefits as everyone else for their work. It only means that because people receive ***unequal benefits*** for their work effort for various reasons, we tax income in a manner that addresses that basic income disparity. It means people in society receive different rewards for different levels of effort and society taxes their relative benefits, it does not judge their relative worth. Since the wealthy person will receive a far larger reward from society for their effort than the poorer person, it is an issue of ***tax justice*** that they owe a larger responsibility and obligation to compensate for that ***unequal benefit***. We do not dictate wage ***fairness***, be we can define ***tax justice***. Since it takes a certain amount of revenue to operate government and to ensure it performs its required duties, the cost of that government is born more by those reaping the greatest rewards after allowed expenses. Taxes are then used to address social opportunities and the general welfare of all so ultimately everyone reaps some level of reward by contributing to our society.

Tax penalty, tax incentive – are words used by Andy Barr to describe the PPACA insurance mandate and the AHCA tax credit to make it appear the PPACA punishes people while the AHCA incentivizes them to get health insurance. The PPACA encourages healthy people to get health insurance, but realizes it cannot force people to buy health insurance. Some people will always select the cheapest option. Thus, if it is cheaper to pay a tax rather than pay for health insurance, some people will pay the tax and not buy health insurance. Under the PPACA, if they do that the tax is used to help offset the cost of health insurance for people who need and want health care. By increasing this tax, the advantage of not having versus paying for health insurance becomes less rational and thus more of an ***incentive for them to buy health insurance***.

The AHCA tax credit doesn’t solve the problem of healthy people not wanting to buy health insurance. Rather, it makes the problem worse. Tell healthy people they don’t have to buy health insurance and many won’t, particularly young people, tax credit or no tax credit. This does not incentivize people to do anything except to select the one path that costs them nothing.

Tax and spend – This is a phrase often used to demonize Democrats on those on the left with regard to their attitude toward bigger government.³⁷ It suggests all taxes are just wasted by government, which just spends whatever it receives. It’s a phrase used to imply more taxes will only lead to more spending and thus more waste and therefore justification for cutting taxes. The phrase itself is silly. Of course,

government collects taxes and then invests those taxes in infrastructure, defense, courts, oversight of business and society. It invests in people (social programs and education). The goal of government is not to tax and save or to generate a profit off the public. It's goal is to collect sufficient taxes so that it can pay for the cost of social issues and problems it must address in society. A far more accurate description of tax use is "***tax and invest***". Of course, that phrase does not fit with the efforts to demonize government and taxes in general.

War on the Private Sector – McConnell has used this phrase to refer to regulations on business. Like his famous, War on Coal to bemoan regulations on the coal industry, McConnell goes further and labels most regulations as a war on the private sector. The issue is always what do regulations cost the private sector and not what benefits are produced as a result of the regulations. Any regulations that may cut into the bottom line of the wealthiest, McConnell opposes. Even when those regulations obviously serve to protect his own constituents such as clean air, clean water, lowering air mercury levels or financial protections, McConnell finds fault in their very existence and denies there is any benefit. Protections serve to help constituents and the lack of protections serve to allow businesses to ignore the true expense of their operations and actions, cost shifting the burden of their neglect onto others in society as hidden costs such as poorer health, greater financial losses, earlier death.

Washington over reach—this is a term to describe any effort by Washington DC to address social problems as over reaching their authority to address the issue. It is sometimes also categorized as "Federalism". Usually, the term ***over reach*** refers to regulatory efforts from Washington DC to prevent business abuses. Denigrating those efforts as ***over reach*** justifies GOP efforts to eliminate regulations designed to prevent business excesses and abuse. The GOP often couches their concern in terms of Federal versus State's rights, but the core issue is Social versus Business rights/interests. Limiting regulations from Washington gives businesses a freer rein to ignore social concerns or individual rights and the true cost of problems they create by their actions/behaviors.

Work (i.e. a job) gives you self-worth –Barr employs these phrases when he complains that "social help" harms one's sense of self-worth. He believes work is good and necessary to redeem one's sense of moral purpose. However, this ignores the reality that jobs paying less than a livable wage are actually insufficient to elevate one's moral value or sense of worth²⁵.

Divorce rates in homes living in poverty are higher than homes with college educated couples and well above the divorce rate in upper middle-class households. A full-time job that pays less than a living wage does not provide sufficient resources to live and thus leads to financial stress and family dysfunction.

Andy Barr remains convinced that jobs solve social ills, but he simply and continuously ignores the need to raise the minimum wage to a livable wage to deal with the realities of life. Poverty is not the sole outcome of not working. Poverty also persists for those lacking an adequate family income and resources to live comfortably. The minimum wage has been raised 22 times since it was initially established and seven decades of data show no justification to Barr's and GOP repeated assertions that raising the minimum wage will costs jobs²⁶.

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