



Written by [Larry Elder](#) on April 6, 2023

## Dear Trump Haters: Can You Contain This Fire?

One can trace former President Donald Trump's indictment by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg back to the media/Democrat belief that Trump's 2016 election was illegitimate.

Sure, some, like Hillary Clinton, questioned former President Barack Obama's birthplace. And, after the 2000 *Bush v. Gore* Supreme Court decision some, for a time, groused and called George W. Bush "president select." But never in modern times has a president been so widely and consistently described as "illegitimate" as has candidate, president and now former President Donald Trump. It never stopped.



Larry Elder

I write as the son of a lifelong Democrat mother, as the younger brother of a lifelong Democrat, a Navy vet who was my best friend. My Marine vet father was a registered Republican with whom my mother and brother disagreed in spirited but never hateful debate across the kitchen table.

When John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon in 1960, my father never cried "foul!" despite credible allegations of vote-stealing, especially in Illinois. Nixon knew about this, but chose not to protest and filed no lawsuit, perhaps fearing counter-allegations against his campaign.

Last year, *The New York Times* published a review of a Nixon-friendly biography. According to the book, Nixon, at his Christmas party after Kennedy's narrow victory, told his guests, "We won, but they stole it from us." The *Times* review dismissed Nixon's complaint: "The weakness of the case did not stop Nixon's men from pushing their allegations. But six decades hence — in the absence of new evidence, at a time when false claims of a stolen election pose a mounting threat to our system of self-government — historians ought to think twice before endorsing them."

"Historians ought to think twice" about "endorsing" allegations of stolen elections. Sound advice. And the advice applies to non-historians, particularly media pundits and politicians.

This brings us to the 2016 election in which the upstart Trump, not taken seriously by Democrats and most of the media, defeated the heavy favorite Hillary Clinton, whose chance of winning *The New York Times* on Election Day pegged at 85%.

Obama's Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson testified before Congress that the Russians, despite their efforts, failed to change a single vote tally. As to the Russian election interference, largely through ads and posts on Facebook, Johnson called it unknowable whether this altered public opinion or the outcome of the election.

Yet two years later, a 2018 YouGov poll found 66% of Democrats believe that Russia in 2016 changed vote tallies. And a 2018 Gallup poll found 78% of Democrats believe that the Russian 2016 interference "changed the outcome of the election." This means a greater percentage of Democrats believe the 2016 election was stolen than Republicans who felt that way about 2020.



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Nearly 25% of the Democrat congressional delegation refused to attend Trump's inauguration. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., one of the most respected members of the House, called Trump's election "illegitimate," a charge Lewis reiterated months before he died. Former President Jimmy Carter said: "I think a full investigation would show that Trump didn't actually win the election in 2016. He lost the election, and he was put into office because the Russians interfered on his behalf." Hillary Clinton routinely called the election "stolen" and President Trump "illegitimate."

Yet Republicans — and the mainstream media — did not call Clinton, Carter, Lewis and the Democrats who boycotted Trump's inauguration "election deniers." The First Amendment gives losers, with or without evidence, the right to complain without fear of prosecution, let alone persecution.

Notably, Hillary Clinton has been silent about Trump's indictment. Why? She likely does not want to remind the country that she clearly violated the Espionage Act with her basement server but skated because the FBI's James Comey said she lacked the "intent" to violate the statute — though her violation does not require intent.

About Trump's indictment over hush money payments, two can play the rouge prosecutor game. There are republican DAs and attorneys general, too. In the movie "Tora! Tora! Tora!" about the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto said, "I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve."

*Larry Elder is a bestselling author and nationally syndicated radio talk-show host. To find out more about Larry Elder, or become an "Elderado," visit [www.LarryElder.com](http://www.LarryElder.com). Follow Larry on Twitter @larryelder. To read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate webpage at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).*

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