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## Why the Hullabaloo Over State Representative Matt Shea?

The 2018 midterm election cycle saw a repeat — and in many ways an escalation — of the left-wing political violence and mayhem of the 2016 elections: Antifa rioting in the streets; Indivisible occupying and disrupting congressional offices and town hall meetings; and Maxine Waters’ cadres stalking and terrorizing Republican officeholders and conservative pundits at restaurants, supermarkets, and their homes. Did the media mavens and pundits of the press scold and denounce this violence and incivility? To the contrary, when not covering up or soft-pedaling the Left’s criminal antics, the media moralizers often egged them on with stories that justified the violence as expressions of righteous anger. That was to be expected. The Never-Trump “Resistance” — politicians, media, academics, professional organizers, paid agitators — had already announced even before Donald Trump’s inauguration that they were going to war, and that the 2018 midterms would be the first major battlefield. Their failure to scuttle Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation to the U.S. Supreme Court on October 6 — one month before the elections — further inflamed their road rage and Trump Derangement Syndrome. So House and Senate races became the battlegrounds, with conservative GOP incumbents and challengers on the receiving end of hostile coverage by the always-leftist “mainstream” media. Again, that was expected, since — short of an actual coup d’état or assassination — taking back the House and/or the Senate would be key to thwarting President Trump’s America First agenda, protecting Robert Mueller’s Trump-Russia witch hunt, initiating impeachment, putting a “progressive” Democrat in the White House in 2020 — and





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much more.

Given the stakes, the all-out media onslaught against House and Senate conservatives was normal and predictable. Not so predictable — at least for those viewing from afar and focused on national politics — was the massive media attack on a little-known state representative from Spokane Valley, Washington. Why is the Fake News Industrial Complex so alarmed over five-term State Representative Matt Shea that it would expend huge salvos of slime and digital dung in a last-ditch effort to unseat him?

There are 7,383 state legislators spread across our 50 states. Why did the leftist pundits and reporters of the “mainstream” media go especially apoplectic over one particular representative from Washington State? And why did they time their swarm of alarmist smear attacks to appear strategically in the days and hours immediately preceding the November 6 election?

Like most conservative Republicans, Representative Matt Shea has faced adversarial coverage from much of the regional and statewide media from the get-go. However, Shea’s outspoken leadership on a host of issues — abortion, the Second Amendment, property rights, traditional marriage, limited government, federal usurpation, strict adherence to the Constitution — has earned the legislator, attorney, radio talk-show host, and decorated combat veteran the attention of the big guns of the national media. But it was his presence at the Bundy Ranch standoff in 2014 and the Oregon Malheur Refuge standoff in 2016 that particularly seem to have made him a marked man.

Representative Shea is a co-founder and the current chairman of the Coalition of Western States (COWS), an organization that aims to transfer public lands back to the states. He believes in “interposition,” the duty of public officials to peaceably interpose themselves between citizens and government bureaucrats or agencies that are harassing and oppressing them. However, when Shea and other legislators intervened to de-escalate those confrontations, their political critics and the media portrayed them as dangerous fire-breathers leading an armed terrorist militia.

*Photo: [mattshea.houseRepublicans.wa.gov/](http://mattshea.houseRepublicans.wa.gov/)*

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Thus, the media herd responded with an all-out push in the last days before this year’s critical midterm election to oust him from office. The Associated Press, *Newsweek*, *Huffington Post*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Hill*, and *New York Daily News* (to name a few) have targeted Representative Matt Shea in a barrage of stories aimed at branding him as “dangerous,” “extremist,” “racist,” “anti-government,” “homophobic,” “Islamophobic,” “xenophobic,” and a “conspiracy theorist.”

These attacks are in addition to an onslaught by the *Seattle Times*, the *Spokesman-Review*, *The Olympian*, *The News Tribune*, Spokane Public Radio (an NPR member), and other Washington print and broadcast organs. Even the international press got into the Shea bashing, with articles in *The Guardian* (U.K.), *Al Jazeera*, and the *Irish Times*.

An October 23 *Rolling Stone* article entitled “Something’s Brewing in the Deep Red West” helped kick off the pre-election day media bombardment. Shea represents Washington State’s eastern divide of what is often referred to as the “Cascade Curtain”: the Blue Democrat coastal areas versus the Red Republican side of the Cascade Mountains; the liberal-left Seattle-Olympia-Microsoft-Starbucks urbanites versus the more conservative rural and small-town populations of the eastern end of the state, which is dominated by Spokane.



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*Rolling Stone* reporter Leah Sotille was obviously disappointed when Representative Shea didn't provide her with the incendiary responses she was hoping for to reinforce the negative stereotype her media allies have crafted for him.

"Downtown Seattle just does not represent the values, traditions, cultures and beliefs of those folks in Eastern Washington," Representative Shea reportedly told her during a rally in Spokane. "Downtown Seattle comes out with a carbon-tax increase, or a sugar tax, or a property-tax increase, or an employee head tax.... A lot of folks over here are having a hard time getting by — they don't need more tax increases."

Sotille was sure that these reasonable-sounding objections are merely cover for a much more "extremist" agenda. "He gives me the boilerplate answers that are likely what have allowed him to get re-elected time and again," she wrote. "On the surface, there's nothing shocking. But scratch a little deeper, and you see an extremist hiding in plain sight."

And of course, the *Rolling Stone* writer was there to scratch and scratch and scratch until she finds something warranting the extremist label. Matt Shea, a five-term state representative, was on track for winning a sixth term, and in addition to his growing stature among liberty-loving patriots nationwide, was also well positioned for possible future advancement to a seat in the U.S. Congress. That has a lot of liberal-left Democrats and mushy, establishment Republicans very alarmed.

Like most of the other media smearers against conservatives, patriots, and constitutionalists, Sotille invokes the supposed authority of the discredited far-left smear merchants of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). And *Rolling Stone* is such a serious, nonpartisan, unbiased publication, right? Deserving of great respect, right? Yes, this is the same venerable, serious *Rolling Stone* that features, on its current cover, a naked Zoe Kravitz in a Playboy-style pose.

On November 4, the Associated Press came out with a story that was carried on the *Huffington Post* and many other "news" outlets under the title "GOP Lawmaker Shares Document Calling For 'Holy Army' To Kill Men Who Flout Biblical Law." Now, that sounds pretty serious, no?

Here's the opening salvo in the article:

A Republican lawmaker in Washington state denied Friday that he is racist or a white nationalist for distributing a document describing how a "Holy Army" should kill people who flout biblical law.

State Rep. Matt Shea of Spokane Valley in conservative eastern Washington has been under fire since he acknowledged in a Facebook video last week that he had distributed the four-page document titled, "Biblical Basis for War" to some of his supporters.

The document condemns abortion and same-sex marriage and describes how those who don't follow biblical law should be punished. At one point, the document says, "If they do not yield, kill all males."

News of the document prompted several of Shea's political contributors to demand refunds of their donations.

"I have consistently and unequivocally condemned racism, anti-Semitism and white nationalism and do so again," Shea said in a Friday tweet.

He said his critics were involved in a "ridiculous smear" to derail his election to a sixth term in the



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state House, where he has served since his election in 2008.

The AP smear was repeated in other articles that make it appear that Representative Shea authored a “manifesto” that advocates killing people who disagree with his biblical view. One of the worst examples of this misrepresentation was a *New York Daily News* story by Nancy Dillon that appeared on October 31, entitled “Spokane GOP leader authors ‘Biblical Basis for War’ manifesto calling for end to abortion, same-sex marriage and death of enemies who disagree.”

The “manifesto,” writes Dillon, “includes multiple biblical citations and says vanquished enemies must ‘stop all abortions,’ disavow Communism, prohibit same-sex marriage and ‘obey Biblical law.’ If they do not yield — ‘kill all males,’ the document reads.”

All of these statements are misquotes or have been ripped totally out of context, Representative Shea told *The New American* in a telephone interview. The so-called manifesto, he says, is actually text from a talk he delivered on the Christian doctrine and theory of “Just War” practices. In the course of his address, he quoted the harsh Old Testament injunctions. He was not, he says, advocating the same application, and his media opponents know that.

Shea charges that they are using his citations from Deuteronomy and other books of the Old Testament to make it appear that he advocates murder of homosexuals, abortionists, and others with whom he disagrees. “They’re using Deuteronomy to make it sound like I’m a domestic terrorist,” he told *The New American*, “but they’re not going to silence me on this.”

We note that Representative Shea’s media ordeal in this regard is a repeat of the many media/SPLC attacks on pastors, preachers, and other Christian leaders who have cited the strict Old Testament penalties against homosexuality, not to advocate the same punishment today, but to demonstrate the severity of God’s condemnation of perversion.

Like the *Rolling Stone* piece and many of the other recent broadsides against Shea, the *New York Daily News* hit piece quotes Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich, who has become Shea’s full-time critic and nemesis. “This document is not a sermon, this is a ‘how to’ manual for what they plan to do if there’s ever civil war or a government collapse,” he says, referring to what the media are calling Shea’s manifesto. “These people are focused on the apocalypse. And quite frankly, they’re happy to push that into happening.”

According to Shea, Sheriff Knezovich has been trying to characterize him as a “white nationalist” and a “domestic terrorist” for some time now. Many of Knezovich’s early supporters have been increasingly concerned about his leftward drift, and particularly his virulent opposition to Shea.

When this writer delivered a speech exposing the Southern Poverty Law Center in Spokane in 2012, Representative Shea gave my introduction. Sheriff Knezovich was in attendance. After the presentation, the sheriff asked to speak to me. We met in the forum vestibule, and in a brief conversation, he complimented me on my lecture and said he agreed with what I had to say. However, in recent years, he seems to be more and more regurgitating the SPLC propaganda and adopting the politically correct tones that are playing so well with the establishment media.

Another charge that appears in many of the recent attacks is that Representative Shea associates with the Marble Community Fellowship, a rural Christian congregation in Stevens County deemed racist. He has been a featured speaker at their annual Fourth of July God and Country Celebration. The media



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“throw around this ‘white nationalist’ label concerning Marble, but they have two black pastors, American Indians, and at least one Jewish member, I believe, so the charge of ‘white nationalism’ falls on its face,” he told *The New American*.

“They claim I am inciting violence, but the media’s constant attacks and lies are what’s stirring up hatred and violence,” Shea points out, noting that he has been the victim of death threats, insults, and calumny, as a result of the ongoing media bombardment. But he notes, the inordinate media attention must mean that he has hit some of the right targets. “You know you’ve arrived when even *Al Jazeera* and *The Guardian* are blasting you,” he joked.

Jim Robinson, a longtime Shea supporter (and former aide) in the Spokane area says the current media onslaught “shows they’re afraid Matt’s message is gaining four-wheel-drive traction with an expanding constituency.”

“The media titans can see he has struck a nerve,” he told *The New American*. “They know there is a large segment of America that is on the same moral frequency, and they’re afraid that he will educate, motivate, and activate that segment. They’re doing everything they can to stop and defeat him. Some voters may buy into the media propaganda. But all of these attacks and false charges are also motivating Matt’s volunteers to work harder and providing more incentive for his voters to come out to the polls. In some ways, it will backfire in Matt Shea’s favor.”

The total impact of the media smear barrage on the campaign is hard to judge, at this point, but when the votes were counted on November 6, Shea was the winner, with 58.3 percent of the vote.

*Rolling Stone’s* Leah Sotille, who takes credit for helping launch the bombardment of Shea, was none too happy. Her November 7 story entitled “Extremist Washington Rep. Matt Shea Wins Reelection Bid” carried the subtitle, “The longtime Republican incumbent wins handily despite backlash following several stories about his ideological beliefs.”

Like so many in her inky fraternity, Sotille preaches “civility” and pretends to be greatly concerned about the coarseness, polarization, and growing problem of “hate” in our political culture. However, she seems to find no problem with the intemperate language of Ted Cummings, the left-leaning Democrat who ran against Matt Shea. “I lost to a fascist — what can I say?” Cummings reportedly told Sotille. He vowed to run again, asserting, “I’m not going to let my home be a haven for hate and white nationalists.”

“I’m going to run again and I’m going to try twice as hard, and I’m not going to ever stop until he’s a private citizen back in his basement worried about aliens,” Cummings said. “He’s just bat\*\*\*t crazy. I’m not going to be polite, and I’m not going to sugar-coat it. He’s a coward and a bully and an embarrassment — and I hope you put that in print.” Sotille obliged, sans any reproach about civil discourse — or any mention of Cummings’ political baggage, such as his endorsement by the radical activists of Indivisible, Planned Parenthood, and other leftist organizations. Like virtually all Democrats running in conservative Republican districts, Cummings portrays himself as a conservative, patriotic, family-values guy. On his campaign website, he describes himself as a “devout Catholic.” Yes, like Nancy Pelosi, Joe Biden, Jerry Brown, Tim Kaine, and many other “devout Catholics” in politics who tout their religion when politically expedient — while ignoring their church’s teachings and precepts. Cummings received endorsements from the Progressive Voters Guide, Planned Parenthood, the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), the National Organization for Women, the Sierra





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Club, and the radical unionists of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), American Federation of Teachers, and Washington State Labor Council. Mentioning these connections would hurt Cummings' efforts to woo Shea voters, so naturally, Sotille obligingly covered for him. Ditto for the rest of the "impartial," "non-partisan" media.

However, the media malfeasance in assisting Cummings and relentlessly hammering Shea did not play out as the "progressives" had hoped. Washington voters sent Shea another vote of confidence. The ambush failed, and Matt Shea is still riding tall in the saddle, on his way to a sixth term in office.

*Photo: [mattshea.houseRepublicans.wa.gov/](http://mattshea.houseRepublicans.wa.gov/)*



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