



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on July 6, 2021

The NYT Claims American Flag Is “Alienating to Some,” Sparks Outrage

The *New York Times* appears to have ceded one of the most conspicuous signs of patriotism — the flying of the U.S. flag — to Republicans, saying it may no longer unite people because it’s seen as a symbol of the “Trump supporters.” The story was posted mere weeks after the *Times* was forced to [defend](#) an editorial writer who [said](#) she was “really disturbed” to see Old Glory flown by supporters of former President Donald Trump.

“Today, flying the flag from the back of a pickup truck or over a lawn is increasingly seen as a clue, albeit an imperfect one, to a person’s political affiliation in a deeply divided nation,” the [Times article](#) titled “A Fourth of July Symbol of Unity That May No Longer Unite” said on Saturday, the eve of Independence Day. The article pinned the blame on President Donald Trump.

“Supporters of former President Donald J. Trump have embraced the flag so fervently — at his rallies, across conservative media and even during the Jan. 6 assault on the Capitol — that many liberals ... worry that the left has all but ceded the national emblem to the right,” states the author of the article, Sarah Maslin Nir.

“And it has made the celebration of the Fourth of July,” Nir continues, “of patriotic bunting and cakes with blueberries and strawberries arranged into Old Glory, into another cleft in a country that seems no longer quite so indivisible, under a flag threatening to fray.”

Nir quotes a few individuals who believe that the flag has become so politicized that they now decided against flying it outside their homes or businesses.

One of them, Peter Treiber Jr., described how he had to reveal his “liberal leanings” to strike a deal with a greenmarket customer who was hesitant because Treiber’s family farm is marked by an old truck emblazoned with the Stars and Stripes.

“She said, ‘Oh, whew. You know, I wasn’t so sure about you, I thought you were some flag-waving something-or-other,’” Treiber said.

Nir also quoted a story of a Republican man, David Surozenski, who has been “pressured” by his Republican friends to fly “MAGA” flag alongside Old Glory, which he opposed doing.

The *Times* cited a YouGov [poll](#) that found politically diverging views on the American flag. The survey, which was released in March, found that 95 percent of Republicans are proud of the flag, compared



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with 64 percent of Democrats. Nir also specified that the sentiment varies by race, and is shared by about 80 percent of white Americans, just under 70 percent of Hispanic Americans and slightly less than 60 percent of Black Americans.

Conservatives pounced on the article. “Agreed,” self-described Christian traditionalist Theophilus Chilton [tweeted](#). “If you love your country, you’re probably on the right.”

Mike Hahn, formerly a social-media manager for Trump’s campaign, [posted](#) a similar take on the story: “The New York Times seemingly admitting that the GOP is the party of the American flag.”

Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) [slammed](#) the *New York Times* on *Fox & Friends* Monday, saying, “Over the weekend, you saw The New York Times running a long story about how the flag, for goodness sake, is now a divisive symbol for many Americans.... [O]ur founding fathers declared our independence ... because they wanted to found a new republic dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

U.S. Representative Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) [tweeted](#), “Apparently loving our country’s flag is now offensive. Disgusting.”

A conservative news outlet, the *Daily Caller*, [jested](#), “Trump broke all of your brains.” Other observers [argued](#) that the *Times* itself, as well as other mainstream media outlets, are what’s dividing America. “Why are you guys doing this to America?” the commenter asked. “You are all tearing it apart.”

America’s fault lines over Old Glory and other American symbols go before the political rise of Donald Trump, and ironically usually worsen when Democrats are in control. Anti-war activists routinely burned the flags at protests against the Vietnam War — which escalated under the presidency of Democrat Lyndon Johnson and full Democrat control of both chambers of Congress.

One of the most publicized controversies — the one involving the “kneeling protests” during the playing of the National Anthem at sporting events — a tactic criticized by Republicans and defended by Democrats — [began](#) in June 2016. Then-president Barack Obama [defended](#) the jest, while his press secretary [condoned](#) the practice of flag-burning as a “constitutional right.”

Flag-burning has occurred in the Democrat-run cities in the wake of “racial justice” BLM protests last summer (for example, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)), with a former BLM founder [describing](#) the Old Glory as a “symbol of hate.”

Donald Trump, indeed, defended the main symbols of the nation against the attacks, going so far as to [declare](#) that flag burners should lose their citizenship or spend a year in jail, and that National Football League players who kneel during the national anthem [should be](#) suspended without pay.



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