



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on August 21, 2020

## MSM Attacks John Birch Society With QAnon Comparison

On the heels of a reporter's inane questions to President Trump about his thoughts on the QAnon movement, the mainstream media are pressing forward. Using both the questions and their interpretation of President Trump's answers, they are bending over backward to tie the president to a movement that lacks credibility. Not content to stop there, they are also trying to draw a connection between QAnon and this magazine's parent organization, [The John Birch Society](#).



The questions were asked during Wednesday's press briefing and are addressed in another [article](#) written by this writer. The gist of it is that Trump was asked if he believed and supported the wild claims made by QAnon — a conspiracy theory group that has gained popularity in the past few years. Trump made it clear that he does not “know much about the movement” and had not even heard of some of their wilder claims.

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The mainstream media then set about spinning that into a presidential endorsement. It appears that the past few years have not taught them anything about journalistic integrity. They just keep attacking, and the facts can be damned.

Case in point: *USA Today* published [a hit piece under the guise of an op-ed](#) Friday claiming that “Trump and Republicans are following the Goldwater model with QAnon.” The headline states that Goldwater's model “didn't end well” for him. The article, penned by [Jonathan Zimmerman](#), begins with a slanted version of the history of the presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater — claiming that his refusal to accept the sage advice of “conservative journalist William F. Buckley” to “distance himself from the John Birch Society” led to his defeat.

The *USA Today* piece states:

In 1962, conservative journalist William F. Buckley flew to Florida to meet with Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater. Buckley's main goal was to persuade Goldwater to run for president on the Republican ticket in 1964. But he also wanted the senator to [distance himself from the John Birch Society](#), which had already indicated its support for Goldwater.

And that was bad news for the GOP, because the Birchers were — in Buckley's term — nuts. Their leader, a candy manufacturer named Robert Welch, charged that over half of the American government was “communist-controlled.” Most notoriously, Welch insisted that former President Dwight Eisenhower was a “dedicated, conscious agent of the communist conspiracy.”

Like Goldwater, Buckley shared the strong anti-communism of the John Birch Society. But the Birchers' claims were “so far removed from common sense” that they threatened to undermine the cause, [Buckley wrote](#). “The underlying problem is whether conservatives can continue to acquiesce quietly in a rendition of the causes of the decline of the Republic and the entire Western world



which is false.”

The next text that appears in the article is a subhead claiming that “QAnon is the new Birch Society.”

Before moving on, perhaps a little fact-checking is in order. Zimmerman — who has an impressive list of liberal *bona fides*, having taught at one liberal university after another and authored a long list of articles pushing a leftist agenda — makes more than one blatantly false statement. Perhaps his education did not include how to use the Internet to research facts before regurgitating falsehood via his keyboard.

First, he states that The John Birch Society (JBS) “had already indicated its support for Goldwater.” It is a matter of record that JBS has never endorsed a political candidate. While individual Birchers are free to endorse or campaign for any candidate they may choose, they do so as individuals — not as Birchers. The purpose of the JBS is to create the understanding the will result in better government. If voters are informed, they will make better decisions when they vote, and candidates who want to become or remain viable will shift their positions in the constitutionalist direction. “All we must find and build and use to win is sufficient understanding,” Robert Welch said at the Birch Society’s founding meeting.

Second, Zimmerman’s claim that “Welch insisted that former President Dwight Eisenhower was a ‘dedicated, conscious agent of the communist conspiracy’” is misleading, to say the least. Prior to the founding of The John Birch Society, Welch wrote in a long private letter that later was published in book form called *The Politician*: Eisenhower could have been an opportunist, too dumb to recognize that his actions were helping the communists, or “a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist Conspiracy.” He offered his opinion that it was the latter, while also acknowledging that readers could choose any of the three possibilities to explain Eisenhower’s actions. And the specific words Welch used to express his own personal opinion made clear that he did not view Eisenhower as a “communist” (though over the years many liberal commentators have falsely accused him of saying this), but as an “agent of the Communist Conspiracy.” Readers may disagree with that conclusion, so there is no question that the facts assembled by Welch in *The Politician* (which is still in print) make a very compelling case that Eisenhower’s actions both before and when president benefited the communists while undermining America — a much, much more compelling case than liberals who claim today, despite the absence of facts, that Trump is an “agent” of Putin.

Next, Zimmerman cites Buckley’s *opinion* of both Welch and JBS as if it is an established fact. That is such bad journalism as to make the word journalism meaningless. Where is any evidence that Buckley was correct?

Finally, Zimmerman implies (if not outright states) that Goldwater’s defeat was due to the JBS. In fact, it was the liberal establishment (of which Buckley was a [pied piper](#)) that brought about that defeat.

But perhaps Zimmerman felt no need to prove any of his second-hand claims about JBS, since he seems to think the society is a defunct relic of the 1960s. Because he never once refers to JBS in the present tense, choosing instead wording such as, “The same problem faces the Republican Party this fall, but in a different form. It’s called QAnon, and it’s every bit as removed from reality as the Birchers *were*.” (Emphasis added.)

Again, this brings up the issue of journalistic integrity. Basic research does not appear to make Zimmerman’s list of things that matter when spewing Leftist attacks. This writer would like to take this moment to do that “heavy lifting” for Zimmerman for any future pieces he may decide to do referring to JBS. He can simply click [this link](#) and learn something valuable. If Zimmerman had conducted that



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simple search, he would have seen that the very first result returned was a link to [jbs.org](#), showing that the society is still very active.

Having led with JBS, Zimmerman then moves on to QAnon. His not-so-clever attempt at comparing the organizations is a perfect example of yellow journalism. Having called JBS “nuts” without offering a single example of that alleged insanity, he then lays out the most far-flung examples of QAnon’s claims:

The same problem faces the Republican Party this fall, but in a different form. It’s called QAnon, and it’s every bit as removed from reality as the Birchers were. It, too, imagines that the government is in the grips of a conspiracy, this time hatched by a cabal of Satan-worshipping pedophiles. The plot is supposedly led by prominent Democratic politicians like Hillary Clinton, who eat little children (yes, you read that right) to extract a life-extending chemical from their blood.

A recent investigation by the Guardian found more than 170 QAnon groups, pages and accounts on Facebook and Instagram, with over 4.5 million followers. That’s the kind of breadth the John Birch Society could only dream of, back in the predigital era. By most estimates, it enlisted fewer than 100,000 members.

And whereas the Birchers fantasized about putting Barry Goldwater in the White House, QAnon already has its man there: Donald Trump. Indeed, it claims, President Trump is the only man who can stop the conspiracy eating America (literally and figuratively) from the inside.

There he goes again. Referring to JBS in only the past tense, Zimmerman attempts to paint JBS with a brush smeared with QAnon claims.

This writer reached out to Bill Hahn, CEO of the very much [alive-and-well — and vibrant — John Birch Society](#). He provided this statement:

Mr. Zimmerman’s piece attacking the President is part of the media smear machine that has plagued patriots for decades. The media attacks on The John Birch Society began in 1961 with the communist People’s World that was quickly picked up and greatly amplified by the mainstream press. Its lies and yellow journalism quickly spread, saddling the organization and its tireless and patriotic members with unfair labels and baggage that follow it today.

JBS Founder Mr. Robert Welch’s predictions are more true now than they ever have been. Anyone doubting this can merely look at the last few months to see the tyranny that has been laid at their doorstep by governments operating outside of its constitutional limitations.

Americans need to see that it’s pieces such as this that contribute to the division in the country. History has demonstrated that division is largely a tool employed by radicals that keeps the people focused on fighting each other instead of noticing what is happening within their own government.

The piece should be a wake-up call for all those that believe in the founding principles of limited government and personal responsibility and to work toward protecting and restoring those two concepts, which have been consistently ignored as of late. Concerned Americans will find the way to do so is through the programs of The John Birch Society. We’ll see you at [JBS.org](#).

Hahn is correct. The division in America deserves to be laid squarely at the feet of those who — like Zimmerman — employ baseless smear tactics instead of journalistic integrity. Zimmerman’s attempt to stain JBS by fabricating a philosophical connection to QAnon is false on its face. In fact — going back to this writer’s previous comments about Zimmerman’s failure (or refusal) to simply conduct anything resembling research — he could easily have found evidence to the contrary. This writer addressed the



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QAnon phenomenon in a print article which was later published online. In that article, I addressed the lack of credibility and veracity of QAnon's wild claims and conspiracy theories. I also compared (and contrasted) QAnon and JBS, writing:

Perhaps a comparison between Q and this magazine's parent company, The John Birch Society, will help illuminate what real patriot leadership looks like. Since its founding in 1958, The John Birch Society has published innumerable books, articles, and other documents to expose the forces bent on global control. In all of the claims made by JBS, four points stand out. First, they are all deliberately clear, never vague and obfuscated to create confusion or misinterpretation. Second, they have all been painstakingly researched and documented, usually including citations to original source material. Third, JBS has never been shown to have gone out on any limbs with unfounded theories. In other words, JBS has never credibly been accused of making false claims or predictions. And fourth, when JBS exposes a problem, it also proposes a solution that members and others can work to employ. In other words, the JBS recognizes that if we are going to save our freedoms, we must work to bring that about through our own hard work (while, of course, also recognizing the need for God's help); we cannot sit back and watch the show, expecting somebody else to save our freedoms for us. None of this can be said of Q. And above and beyond all of that, JBS publishes a list of its leaders, both at its headquarters in Appleton, Wisconsin, and in the field staff across the country. While Q's followers have speculated wildly about who Q is, no one knows. But given the facts populating this article, the question should be raised: If the Deep State wanted to discredit and neutralize American patriots, could it have invented anything that would have been better designed for that purpose than Q? Of course, considering the trollish nature of 4chan, it is just as likely that Q is a group of 20-somethings laughing themselves silly for having pulled off a large-scale Internet prank that has taken on a life of its own.

One thing is obvious: Q is not — as claimed — someone with access to classified information involving the battle between the Trump administration and its opponents in the liberal establishment and who is working to save America by sharing the truth.

That — published by the magazine wholly owned and operated by JBS — should serve to dispel any connection — philosophical or otherwise — between QAnon and JBS. If only Zimmerman cared to know the truth, it was already at his disposal.

*Photo: Eugenia Shulim/iStock/Getty Images Plus*

*C. Mitchell Shaw is a freelance writer and public speaker who addresses a range of topics related to liberty and the U.S. Constitution. A strong privacy advocate, he was a privacy nerd before it was cool.*

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