Words Poorly Used #142 — Loyalist

A few days ago, I sent out a Facebook Friend Request to a person who had over 750 friends in common with me. This person politely replied that we could not be friends since he was a “Trump Loyalist,” so he feared I would be offended by his posts. Such offense would have been a certainty, but I was offended already by the language of the phrase, “Trump Loyalist.” But let us be clear, the utmost problem is not Trumpism — it’s loyalism of any sort.

We can, however, momentarily address the lesser of two evils: Trumpism is a temporary derangement. I have suffered a few myself, first LBJ-ism, then a nearly neck-breaking pivot to Nixonism, then a Zombie-like knee-jerk to Carterism (more on this shocking passage at a later date). Remember, that which can end, will end.

But can loyalism, an affliction upon humanity, end? Merriam-Webster lists the following synonyms for “loyal:”

> *constant, dedicated, devoted, devout, down-the-line, faithful, fast, good, pious, staunch (also stanch), steadfast, steady, true, true-blue*

These are also synonyms for unchanging, unstimulated, unfree, and unthinking. I am a Jefferson *aficianado*, for example, but I am not a Jefferson *loyalist*. In fact, our country (back when it had a minuscule government) was founded on the principle of anti-loyalism — the Declaration of Independence *WAS* a declaration of apartness from (premeditated disloyalty toward) the old order. Loyalism, in a general sense, is constant dedication to the *status quo* (but I repeat myself.)

I am mostly gratified by insults toward POTUS, the current edition especially. But I am the sworn opponent of loyalty.

— Kilgore Forelle