

Accidents Will Happen
by Larry Fisher

My daughter and son in law gave my wife and I a terrific gift as a show of appreciation for giving them a beautiful wedding. Although it wasn't necessary, it's clearly an indication of the kind of people they are. The present was a gift certificate to an extremely fancy farm to table restaurant in Westchester County. These kind of restaurants pride themselves on growing most of their offerings locally, reducing the carbon footprint and providing greater sustainability for the environment. I made the reservation a couple months in advance and made clear that my wife has certain allergies to shellfish especially shrimp, lobster and crab. Because I made the reservation so far in advance, I forgot if I had told the restaurant about her allergies. So, I called the restaurant again near the date of the reservation and the young lady on the phone told me that yes, the allergies are noted that she is allergic to shellfish but **not** shrimp, lobster and crab. I shrieked no, that's the opposite of what I requested. She replied, "Oh yes, I see, it's just a typo."

I nervously laughed and strongly said, "yeah, I can see my wife passed out in your restaurant, completely red from iodine poisoning and I tell her, it was just a typo. Or on her tombstone, I can have it written, it was a typo." We both had a good laugh at that. Even my wife laughed.

A couple weeks later, when the issue of Iran's nuclear capabilities was in the news due to President Trump's withdrawal from the deal made during the Obama administration, it was said that "Iran has a robust, clandestine nuclear weapons program that it has tried and failed to hide from the world and from its own people." Soon after, the Trump Administration corrected their "typo" stating that the word **has** was meant to be **had**, that Iran had nuclear capabilities. Words matter. And in this case, could have led to war and disaster.

Yes, indeed, words matter. Obama did not "wiretap" Trump. The FBI did not "raid" Michael Cohen's home, hotel room and office. There was not a "spy" inside the Trump campaign. But to listen to Fox News, Sean Hannity, Rudolph Giuliani, and Donald Trump, one would think that they are the victims of a deep state hell-bent on the destruction of the Trump Presidency. That they willingly utilize these highly charged terms in order to play the victim role is deeply disturbing. It is no typo.

Just as it is no accident that this president insists on calling immigrants criminals, gang members, and other derogatory names. Just as it is no accident that every opportunity this administration gets, it is all too willing to inflame racial tensions whether it be NFL players, black military servicemen, or black congresswomen. Just as it is no accident that there were “very fine people, on both sides” in Charlottesville, Virginia. Just as it is no accident that Giuliani chose to use the word “stormtroopers” (connoting Nazis) when characterizing the FBI search and seizure of Cohen. Remember, Giuliani’s Police Chief called striking taxi drivers “taxi terrorists” and that was before 9/11 when terrorist usually implied Palestinian or Arab. Words matter, and actions matter more.

Actions like cutting off funding for Children’s Health Insurance Program, attempting to destroy the Affordable Care Act leads me to believe that Trump and his followers want poor people to die. Actions like defunding Planned Parenthood leads me to believe that Trump’s administration is all too willing to leave poor women without an option for reproductive health and other women’s health concerns. Allowing the EPA to cut regulations without regard to the environment further leads me to believe that for Trump and his true believers there is no regard for life or sustainability.

Sustainability is an interesting concept. The Obama economy was widely criticized for being slow even tepid growth. Now we are in our ninth year of growth, albeit still slow. Maybe the days of 4% growth are behind us as the law of large numbers takes hold. In any case, sustainability is healthier for the populace than the vagaries of the roller coaster economy driven by artificially low interest or tax rates. Yup, sustainability is the ticket, like farm to table restaurants.