

Which Side Are You On?

"Which Side Are You On?" is the title and refrain of a song written in 1931 by Florence Reece, whose family was attacked and terrorized by the local Kentucky sheriff and his allies for the "crime" of her husband being a miner's union organizer. Which Side Are You On?

For the past four, terrible years, Donald Trump has been our president. He has said and done terrible things, but always could fall back on the illusion of plausible (implausible) deniability. People of good will and conscience could find a way to stand behind him and brush off the poison that was obvious to so many. No more.

I have built my career in violence prevention, and indeed my life, on the belief that people ought not be judged based on the worst moments, and biggest mistakes, in their lives. I accept that even until this week there were people of good will and conscience who believed in Trump's deniability, that of course he didn't mean what he said. No more.

Up until this week, I accepted that there were people of good will in the Republican Party who did not believe in or align with Trump's hateful rhetoric. But this week, scant hours after the Trump-inspired and incited mob stormed our nation's capitol, murdered a police officer and literally and figuratively defecated and urinated on the floors and walls of our democracy, the Republican National Committee met and re-elected leadership squarely aligned with and in support of Trump's politics and legacy. Remaining in this party now clearly means remaining on the side of the mob.

There is no longer any ambiguity to answer the refrain, "Which Side Are You On?" You are either for democracy, justice, and the rule of law, or you are for the ongoing desecration and destruction of this country that we saw on full display on 1/6/21, and will likely see continued and amplified in the coming days and weeks.

Now is the time for all Republicans, and all citizens of good will and conscience, to answer the question: Which Side Are You On?

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