

Semi-loyal democrats

Rather than sever ties to antidemocratic extremists, semi-loyalists tolerate and accommodate them. Rather than condemn and seek accountability for antidemocratic acts committed by ideological allies, semi-loyalists turn a blind eye, denying, downplaying and even justifying those acts — often via what is today called whataboutism. Or they simply remain silent.

And when they are faced with a choice between joining forces with partisan rivals to defend democracy or preserving their relationship with antidemocratic allies, semi-loyalists opt for their allies.

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, who acknowledge Juan Linz originated the notion and term "semi-loyal democrats", in New York Times, September 8, 2023