

A BETTER FUTURE

Posts in this series

The Republican Hundred Year War On Democracy

The Allies Of The Billionaires

A Better Future

In the first two posts in this series I described the constant onslaught led by the filthy rich against our democracy, and identified groups of people who supported those attacks. In this post, I offer two thoughts about going forward.

We cannot go back

The guidepost of the Biden Administration and the Congressional Democrats was a return to normalcy. They were convinced that Trump was a blemish on the brilliance of the US, a blemish that would come off with some scouring; that it was a nightmare from which voters had awakened. They believed that the US could resume its position as Leader of the Free World, the greatest economy ever, the center of innovation and progress and a beacon of freedom.

They restored an economy devastated by the Covid shutdown and the millions it killed and damaged. They were fairly successful in restoring the faith of our allies in our stability and worthiness to lead.

They were wiped out in the 2022 mid-terms. Harris promised to continue the restoration project. The voters rejected her. The Democratic Party dream of restoring normalcy is dead.

1. We cannot go back because that is not what the majority of us want. Whatever Trump voters want, it isn't restoration. Non-voters wouldn't go to the polls to vote for restoration or to vote against Trumpian chaos and destruction. Harris voters were willing to accept restoration, but even among them a large number, perhaps a majority, wanted much more.

2. We cannot go back because Trump has wrecked

the institutions and norms we need for restoration. He has gutted agencies devoted to accumulation of soft power around the world, especially USAID. In the process he is potentially responsible for millions of premature deaths. How do we recover from that?

He attacked our basic research institutions. He made it scary for foreign students to study and do research here. He handed our national health efforts to an ignorant buffoon. He turned the Department of Justice into a stable of third-rate lawyers loyal to himself. We aren't going to recover from that for a long time.

3. We cannot go back because John Roberts and the Fasces won't let us. They have wrecked the legal structure of the Administrative State, which sought to replace arbitrary decisions by the President with informed decision-making by independent boards for technical and scientific matters. They have blunted legislative power on purely political grounds. They have formed a protective barrier around the Presidency, so that Trump is effectively beyond the rule of law.

In the process, they have surrendered the the judicial power. Trump is free to do as he sees fit, throwing his tariff tantrums, his prosecutions, his lawsuits, his ICE thugs, and the US military around like a toddler angry at his toys. John Roberts and the Fash Five won't let District Courts enforce the laws Trump is violating, meaning that the judicial branch is irrelevant.

When our young people think on this, why would they trust the government? How do we persuade them to follow the rules?

4. We cannot go back because no sane national leader would take us seriously. The period of US domination in world affairs is done. There is no going back.

5. We cannot go back because Trump has empowered the stinking worst of us to bully and torment us. They and their vile ideas sit like dead

things in the dark poised to spread their deadly poisons.

6. We cannot go back because the filthy rich, the Theists, the Neoliberals, and the Grifters don't like it and they will figure out how to hold on to as much of their power as they can. Too many weaklings sit in positions of authority, unwilling to protect the democracy that gave them their positions. They are easy prey for the anti-democracy ghouls.

But suppose a Democrat gets elected president, and Democrats take the House and Senate. It's possible that she would try to rule like Trump, using the powers he asserts and those given him by John Roberts and the Reactionaries. That's not far-fetched. See this at The Atlantic. Or maybe Roberts and the Revanchists will apply their double-standard to Democratic presidents, leaving the precedents for the next right-wing wannabe dictator.

Where should we go?

I don't know.

But I do know we need to think about it starting immediately. The Democratic Party has run as the "We aren't them" party for so long it's in their DNA. Nothing changes unless we force change.

One possible starting place for a future is Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms. They make a great program, and as the pic on the front page shows, they come with Norman Rockwell images. FDR articulated these ideas in his 1941 State of the Union Address, and expanded on them in his 1944 address:

We have come to a clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. "Necessitous men are not free men." People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.

In our day these economic truths have

become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all regardless of station, race, or creed.

Among these are:

The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the Nation;

The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;

The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living;

The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad;

The right of every family to a decent home;

The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health;

The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment;

The right to a good education.

These principles are the precise opposite of the program of Trump and the filthy rich.

Changing the future

If we don't organize and act together, the forces that put us here will try to restore the social structures that benefit them and no one else. And as Hannah Arendt tells us, participation in the political sphere is one

part of what it means to be a full human being. Certainly she participated, as this PBS documentary shows.

There are plenty of people willing to organize against Trump. We also need people to help us see and organize for a better future.