

# THE JOURNAL (AFTER NOV. 5)



*When Men Protect Women 'Whether They Want It or Not',  
This Week In Misogyny by Lucinda Lugeons p. 16*

*Transcript of Vice President, Kamala Harris' Concession  
Speech p. 65*

[awareonesofthetreasurecoast.com](http://awareonesofthetreasurecoast.com)

# AOTCJournal

Welcome to the **Journal of the Aware Ones of the Treasure Coast**, a secular humanist gathering, providing companionship, conversation, support, and good times, within honest and objective atheist, agnostic and freethinking values.

Vol.9, No.6-a

November / January 20, 2025

***I honestly think people are in denial about what's about to happen. I refuse to be angry, scared or in anyway let the people that did this take up any space in my head. I will go to bed every night knowing that the day is coming, fast, when what they've done will turn their lives into a living hell. And I'll take great joy in completely not giving a shit.***

# INTRODUCTION

## November 19, 2024

I have experienced two full weeks of numbness. I have awoken for fourteen consecutive mornings hopeful that I have only experienced fourteen consecutive nightmares. Fourteen incredibly devastating, shock-inducing, mind-ripping nightmares.

Each morning, I have faced the dismaying reality; the people of the United States – my fellow citizens – are incredibly stupid and the Fourth Reich has begun. (However, after checking the vote results, we can say that only ½ of the voters are stupidly bigoted. And, even though bigotry negligibly won, it was by the proverbial whisker. There was no landslide, there is no mandate.)

Unfortunately, the way elections are set up, intolerance and prejudice won the 2024 election, and a lying conman will occupy the seat of power on January 20, 2025, for who knows how long.

He achieved his victory by not so much “appealing” to a base segment of society, but by shouting out that “the sky is falling.” White privilege was being attacked and undermined. Dark pigmented citizens are the problem (as if they had the same rights that we white, male patricians have!) along with homosexuals and creatures born without penises (or, having had their penises excised). They no longer know their places! The country needed to return to an era when such assaults to the status quo were not even thought of. *To make America great again.*

Many of my contemporaries sincerely believe, vulgarly, that we are, indeed, fucked.

The last two weeks have produced many reactions from disbelief to despair, to denial, to disgust, to anger, to reluctant acceptance, to forlorn hope. I found the articles included in this compilation all

interesting in their own way. I want to share them with the readers of the Journal of the Aware Ones of the Treasure Coast.

As of this morning, I cannot say that we are fucked, and I cannot say that we are not fucked. But we are not alone. Have a great day!

*Virgil*



Here's your friendly reminder, don't forget to bring up politics at Thanksgiving this year to save on Christmas gifts. 🌲

We continue the process of increasing the distribution of this Journal in the hopes of attracting new members. If you are new to

the Aware Ones and would like to know more about us, please visit our website at <http://www.AwareOnesOfTheTreasureCoast.com>.

You are also welcome to join our tables and the fresh air at either Stuart's *Sandsprit Park* 3443 SE Saint Lucie Blvd, or *Flagler Park* (under the Roosevelt Bridge on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month), where we gather every Friday *around* 11:00 am to share ideas and challenge your mind – masks optional. Members are encouraged to share and spread what is becoming a very interesting magazine. Outside criticism and interesting contributions are welcomed. Everyone is welcome to join us at the Sunday 11 am Zoom meeting.

# MEETINGS & EVENTS

## Meetings

Friday gatherings: *First Friday of month at Flagler Park\** (next to *Hudson's on the River* restaurant across the tracks from the Roosevelt Bridge). All other Fridays, *Summits at Sandsprit* – 11 am gathering in the sun and fresh air of Stuart's Sandsprit Park. BYOB. *\*May or may not be transferred to Sandsprit Park at time of publishment. Check with Dan.*

Sunday Zoom – 11 am Zoom meeting. Contact Dan Vignau <[vignaujdane@aol.com](mailto:vignaujdane@aol.com)> to be included with the connection codes.



TC Secular Writers – We have returned to Jensen Beach at the *House of Brews* (3311 NW Main Ave, Jensen Beach, FL 34957) on every other Thursday evening at 6:30 pm.

*Bennett Chattanooga Times Free Press*

## THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF

1. DENIAL
2. ANGER
3. BARGAINING
4. DEPRESSION
5. ~~ACCEPTANCE~~  
**RESISTANCE**







**"THE DEATH OF HUMAN EMPATHY IS  
ONE OF THE EARLIEST AND MOST  
TELLING SIGNS OF A CULTURE ABOUT  
TO FALL INTO BARBARISM."**

**HANNAH ARENDT**

**(1906 - 1975)**

historian, philosopher, political critic

# COMMENTARY



Wednesday, November 06, 2024

## The Second Tower

It wasn't a fluke.

It wasn't pilot error.

It wasn't instrument failure.

This is what Republicans wanted, and now they have achieved it.

For longer than I'd care to think about we have been warning anyone who would listen that the Republican party was building a monster machine, and that if this went on, it would end in tears and terror.



The Conservative elite laughed those warnings off as Liberal hysteria and crackpot alarmism until it was far too late. Now most of the Conservative elite bends the knee to the demons they created, while a few flail around trying to understand what just happened, and a fewer still seem willing to entertain the possibility that the Republican base they helped to create really are a mob or reprogrammable meatbags and completely lost to reason.

The legacy media mocked and ignored those warnings as absurd, or childish or otherwise unserious, or somehow too shrill and strident to be "tonally" acceptable. They categorically refused to see the danger coming for them with knives out until it was far too late. Now most of the legacy media bends the knee to the monsters they enabled, while a few stumble about looking for an answer – **any** answer – that doesn't implicate them.



As for me, other than being unutterably sad at the outcome of the election and fearful in a hundred new ways about the future, nothing has fundamentally changed in my estimation of the forces at work in our country. The Republican party remains a fascist killdozer being run by hobgoblins and grifters. The legacy media continues to be a near-comatose husk of its former self, being run by amoral moguls and fascist-friendly cooperators.

The dangers have escalated and are much more immediate, but other than the fact that no one need bother with fig leaf hyphenates like "neo-" or "proto-" to describe what is very clearly our American fascist party, the job remains the same. Protect the weak and the vulnerable who didn't ask for and do not deserve any of this, support each other and take it one day at a time.

So whether you are a person of faith or not, whether in victory or defeat, this by John Wesley remains sound advice.

*"Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can."*

Best of luck to us all.

– Driftglass

[The Professional Left Podcast with Driftglass and Blue Gal](#)



# The Election!



By Max's Dad

I was shocked. Yeah, it was a gut punch when the American public decided a felonious piece of crap like Donald Trump was preferable to a black woman. Well, you spoke. And now you will have to deal with your choice. Project 2025, Agenda 47 whatever the fuck it is coming because the far right controls the 3 branches of government and they can do what they want. Obnoxious assholes like Marjorie Taylor Greene, Lauren Boebert, Matt Gaetz, Ted Cruz, Rick Scott and the rest all won easily. This country is incapable of change even if their Rep is a pedophile, a crazy person, a hand job artiste', a Medicare thief or a werewolf.

Trump's dark message of hate, despair and gloom and doom appealed with a majority of the voters. It was yet another white man, male Latino and white women tantrum. That black or Indian broad was just to goddamned joyful for the white men and the women they tell what to do. White privilege is real and whether we admit it or not, we like it. And we wanna keep it. Oh yeah, we tell pollsters we love our minority neighbors and have no problem with the gays, but deep down when the doors are closed and the

windows down and we are among our white friends and family we don't particularly like them. They are too loud, too demanding, too ungrateful we freed them, and they dress funny. Why can't they just be like us? Dull and less flamboyant. When the cops pull us over, we want to laugh and joke and try and get out of the ticket because the cops are just like us. White meatheads. And if those obnoxious blacks just sat there and took it like we do, they wouldn't be ~~murdered~~ killed by scaredy cat cops who are just like us, scared of anything unlike us. And the gays, oh don't get me started, if they just read the Bible or stayed in the closet, or better yet converted, none of their problems would be known like the good old days. And why do they all dress up like women and groom kids? Ya know, like youth pastors or Republican legislators. White privilege rocks, vote fascist and deal with it, losers!

The hidden Trump vote. It's there and we must acknowledge it. The polls lie, we all know it, if a Democrat leads by a little or is tied they are toast. People tell pollsters they hate bigotry and hate discrimination, and that Trump is a bad guy, but a certain portion are lying. They love all that. Yet, they for some reason feel obligated to be "woke" when they are anything but. The question I have is if you think that way, yet lie to pollsters, you MUST think what you actually believe is wrong. Think about that. What you believe is wrong in your own mind, so you lie about it. That's some fucked up psychological shit there. Get some help, on the DL of course cuz men don't need any help or you're a sissy.

Here in Nebraska. Holy cow! This is one fucked up state. We voted for medical marijuana huge, we voted for paid sick leave bigly, we repealed a law that gave tax money to private schools, YET, we voted to restrict abortion and allow our super majority legislature to eventually ban it Texas style and rejected codifying abortion, the ONLY state to do so when asked. Go Big Red baby. We sent back to the Senate the most worthless woman in the Senate named Deb Fischer, we sent back a trust fund baby name Pete Ricketts to the Senate for two years and we sent back 3 utterly worthless backbenching Congress critters named Bacon

Flood and Smith, a really bad law firm. Now here in Omaha and Lincoln, the places where people actually live, we voted for Kamala, we voted for Dan Osborn to oust Fischer, we voted for Preston Love to send Ricketts back to Daddys bank vault, and we voted for Democrats to be Congress Folks, BUT, the rural voter demands dullness and the 1950s and thus, we lose. We voted to codify abortion bigly, we voted against abortion bans, yet rural voters doing what their charlatan pastor tells them vote in such overwhelming numbers unlike us its impossible to overcome. If Omaha/Lincoln votes 55-45 or even 60-40, the 85-15 or even 90-10 against us beats us every time. It sucks to live here sometimes. But the Blue Dot remains and thus so do I.

Yes, this blows, just like Trump and a microphone, but there are decent people I pal around with. And really this is all that matters, right? Gawd, even I don't buy that, and I so want to.

I don't know what lies ahead, my predictions suck, but I see darkness and pain, I see polio and new viruses undealt with, I see grocery prices soaring after the mass deportation, I see everyday goods rising 30% due to tariffs, I see pain for young women and their rights, I see pain in the Latino community as they lose family members, I see black folks getting no breaks unless they kowtow to the white power structure that deep down hates them anyway(see Byron Donalds) and I see white women being just as terrible as white men. This is a stupid country. Yesterday proves it.

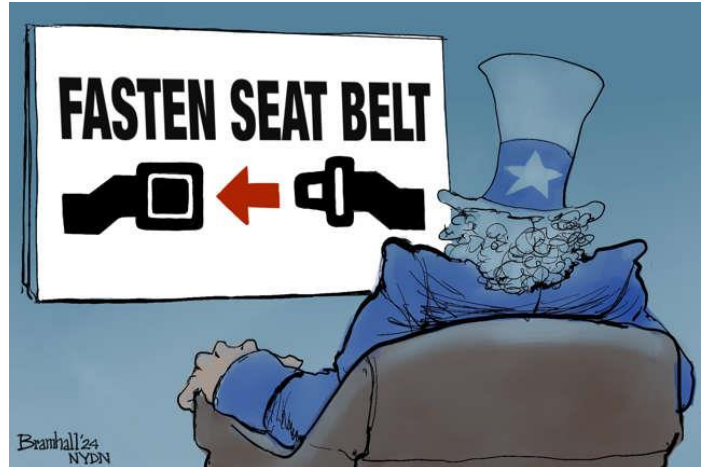
Good luck to Ukraine, Gaza, and western Europe, you are gonna need it.

[maxdad.blogspot.com](http://maxdad.blogspot.com)

# Fuck

Diatribes by Noah Lugeons of  
The Scathing Atheist

This was about what we are as a country. That's what was on the ballot. And what we are is hate. We are racism and transphobia and misogyny and classism and xenophobia and fear and cowardice and ignorance and hate. That is what America is at its core.



And why should we be surprised, right? A nation built on genocide, grown rich on slave labor, brutally divided by a persistent racial hierarchy that we've *still* never reckoned with. Here we stand, peering out from a lofty perch atop the bones of America's victims, going "I don't know, I don't see any hate from up here."

I mean, I did the whole diatribe last week about "why is it even close," but we all know why, ***hate***. Some people even called me out online about it. They were like, "Really Noah? Why is it close? Because fucking racism. Because bigotry and white grievance and fear of the other." Trump was *all* hate. That's all he ever was from the beginning. From the "Mexicans are rapists" kickoff of his campaign and before that, to his rising to political prominence by questioning the American-ness of our first black president. And we've stood around with our thumbs up our asses going "Why do people manage to like this guy despite all his hateful rhetoric?"

But, of course, it was never *despite* the shit he did. The hate was the point. When Kamala started surging in the polls, what did he do? He tripled down on the bigotry. His ads got more transphobic, his rallies got more racist, his speeches got more violent. He gave America the fuel that's powered it since before its inception; he



gave it *hate*. And along the way, he showed every right wing demagogue to follow him that no amount of viciousness, resentment, or bigotry will ever be too much for the American electorate. Because viciousness, resentment, and bigotry *is what the American electorate is*.

So where do we go from here? I mean, as a country the answer is easy: fascism. Fascism and theocracy. Oppression and repression and regression. But where do we go? Where do those of us who still want a better country go? Well, I've got an answer, but it's not an answer most of you are gonna like. Because the answer is that we fight fire with fire. What we need on our side is HATE.

See, last time we went through this, those motherfuckers told us we needed to open our hearts to these disaffected, blue collar, "rustbelt" white dudes in flyover country. We needed to listen to their grievances and sympathize with their plight and hum a minor key version of "My country tis of thee" as they stare forlornly over the boarded-up factories, wiping away a single tear shed for the diminishing industrial sector.

Well, where the fuck did any of that get us? It got us here. It left us kicking away at Lucy's football once again, thinking we'd solved the problem by tackling the issues they supposedly cared about. Kamala ran a campaign about togetherness and inclusiveness and lower taxes and more affordable housing and rebuilding the middle class; all the shit the "love thy neighbor" think-pieces told us those disaffected Trump voters wanted in 2016. Meanwhile, Trump ran a campaign about hate. And he won. That's what they *really* wanted no matter what they said out loud.

Look, we tried love. It wasn't enough. We didn't love our immigrant neighbors enough to protect them from mass deportations. We didn't love our gay and trans friends enough to close ranks around their rights. We didn't love women or people who rely on Social Security or the air we breathe or the water we

drink or our healthcare or our children or ourselves enough. Obviously, we didn't, because the way we lost this election was just by not showing up. We called for love, and we got apathy. So now it's time to call for hate.

And I know some people will wince at that and try to give me more shit about taking the high road when they take the low road, but that whole concept is predicated on the idea that there's some moral core to appeal to in this fight. The better angels of our nature went to war with the worst demons of it on Tuesday, and they *lost*. So we need to stop coating this shit with sugar. We need to stop looking at a fucking fascist and seeing Uncle Rob. We need to stop looking at a Nazi and seeing a "disaffected voter." We need to stare right into the heart of who they are and what they've done and what they're doing and we need to *hate it*. We need to hate what our country has become and all that empowered it. We need to seethe with anger at every abuse like it was the first one. And to hate ourselves for letting it turn into this.

Because look, as uncomfortable as it is to call for more hate, the absence of hate in this instance is acceptance, and calling for that is even worse. Ceding this nation to the people who perked up at the naked bigotry of Trump's campaign and said "That's my man" is far less palatable than hating them.

As long as we hate what this country has become, we carry a memory of what it promised us it could be. What is still *could* be. What we could at least steer it back towards if we can muster the rage that we clearly lacked for this election. We need to cultivate our hate. We need to nurture it and grow it and feed it until it blossoms into action. We planted these fields with love, and they lay barren. So now either we plant something else — something we know can grow in the native soil, or we wither away.

<http://www.patreon.com/ScathingAtheist>

# This Week in Misogyny

By Lucinda Lugeons

<http://www.patreon.com/ScathingAtheist>



So I've been gone for a week. Any misogynist shit happen while I was away?

Y'all, I'm gonna be honest with you, I sat down to do this today, and I just couldn't. Because, you see, step one in bringing you this segment is combing through the various news sources where you find the most misogyny. Sure, sometimes we get great TWIM stories in our inbox at Scathing News at Gmail dot com. But mostly I find them out in the wild. I go to right wing websites and

left wing watch dogs and I look for the kind of shit that matches what we talk about here.

But right now all those right wing websites are gloating, and all those left wing watch dogs are talking about the gloating, and I just can't take it. America was given the choice between a well qualified, articulate, compassionate, intelligent woman and a pampered, boorish, heartless idiot of a man, and they chose the second one. And it's a story every woman is familiar with because it's a story that every woman has lived through.

And even the parts of the media-sphere that I can stomach at this point are already hard at work churning out that fog of denial. They're all going "Gee, what could possibly account for so many people in so many demographics turning against the nominee that voted for Biden?" Yeah, what possible difference could there be that would unite people across racial lines like that? And they'll tell me it can't be sexism because Harris's support dropped among women too, as though women can't be sexist — as though anybody can be raised up in this patriarchal culture without internalizing some of its sexism.

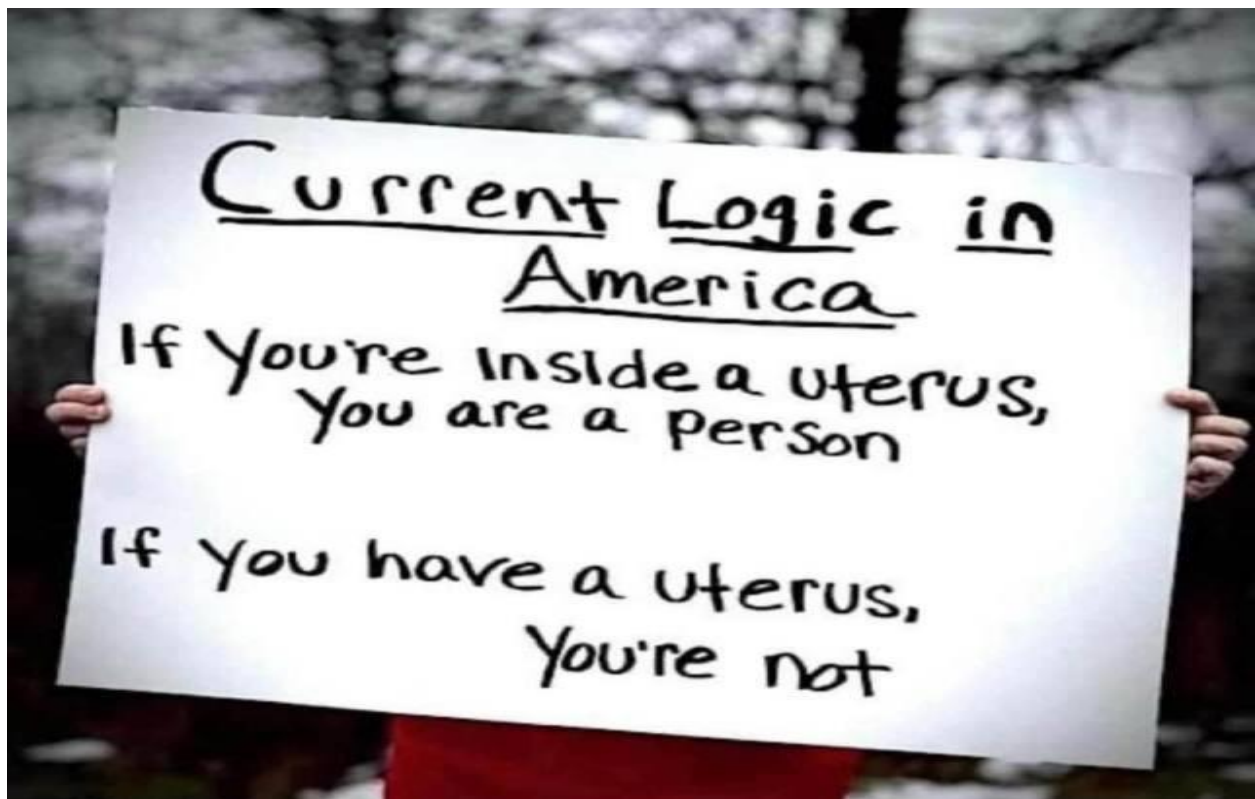
And, of course, it wasn't just one woman on the ballot. We all were. Even when you set aside the fact that the man we elected is an adjudicated rapist who brags about sexually assaulting women and ran on a platform that promised to protect women whether they like it or not. Because the biggest change Trump was able to wrest from America in his first term was repealing the right to abortion. It was his signature achievement. It was his "Obamacare." And even though he kind of ran away from it down the stretch in the campaign, when you look at the people he's surrounding himself with and the people he's pandering to, there's no question that it gets worse from there.

Take the way JD Vance and Elon Musk judge women by the size of their broods for example. Vance gave a speech in 2021 about the problems with no-fault divorce where he strongly implied that women in abusive relationships should at least try to work things

out first. Elon Musk has said multiple times that declining birth rates are gonna lead to the collapse of civilization. You couple that with the Christian ongoing effort to restrict access to contraception, and you'd have to be deluded not to think access to that is at risk.

Look, Harris lost for a lot of reasons, and everybody seems to think her loss proves their point. But women all over this country lost along with her. And if you doubt me on that, I'm sure Trump's new, even more unhinged administration will be quick to prove my point for me.

And I just want to add one thing before I wrap this up. A *LOT* of people sent me emails and messages in the aftermath of the election expressing their fear and resentment and desperation. And I was as overwhelmed as y'all were, so I didn't answer back to as many of those as I'd have liked to. But I'm proud that you felt safe to send me those thoughts, and I want to make sure you know that I'll remain a safe place for them.





# ARTICLES



**November 6, 2024**

By HEATHER COX RICHARDSON

---



Yesterday, November 5, 2024, Americans reelected former president Donald Trump, a Republican, to the presidency over Democratic candidate Vice President Kamala Harris. As of Wednesday night, Trump is projected to get at least 295 electoral votes to Harris's 226, with two Republican-leaning states still not called. The popular vote count is still underway.

Republicans also retook control of the Senate, where Democrats were defending far more seats than Republicans. Control of the House is not yet clear.

These results were a surprise to everyone. Trump is a 78-year-old convicted felon who has been found liable for sexual assault

and is currently under indictment in a number of jurisdictions. He refused to leave office peacefully when voters elected President Joe Biden in 2020, instead launching an unprecedented attack on the U.S. Capitol to stop the counting of electoral votes and said during his campaign that he would be a “dictator” on his first day in office.

Pollsters thought the race would be very close but showed increasing momentum for Harris, and Harris’s team expressed confidence during the day. By posting on social media—with no evidence—that the voting in Pennsylvania was rigged, Trump himself suggested he expected he would lose the popular vote, at least, as he did in 2016 and 2020.

But in 2024, it appears a majority of American voters chose to put Trump back into office.

Harris and her running mate, Minnesota governor Tim Walz, offered a message of unity, the expansion of the economic policies that have made the U.S. economy the strongest in the world in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, and the creation of an “opportunity economy” that echoed many of the policies Republicans used to embrace. Trump vowed to take revenge on his enemies and to return the country to the neoliberal policies President Joe Biden had rejected in favor of investing in the middle class.

When he took office, Biden acknowledged that democracy was in danger around the globe, as authoritarians like Russian president Vladimir Putin and China’s president Xi Jinping maintained that democracy was obsolete and must be replaced by autocracies. Russia set out to undermine the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that enforced the rules-based international order that stood against Russian expansion.

Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán, who overturned democracy in his own country, explained that the historical liberal democracy of the United States weakens a nation because the

equality it champions means treating immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and women as equal to men, thus ending traditionally patriarchal society.

In place of democracy, Orbán champions “illiberal democracy,” or “Christian democracy.” This form of government holds nominal elections, although their outcome is preordained because the government controls all the media and has silenced opposition. Orbán’s model of minority rule promises a return to a white-dominated, religiously based society, and he has pushed his vision by eliminating the independent press, cracking down on political opposition, getting rid of the rule of law, and dominating the economy with a group of crony oligarchs.

In order to strengthen democracy at home and abroad, Biden worked to show that it delivered for ordinary Americans. He and the Democrats passed groundbreaking legislation to invest in rebuilding roads and bridges and build new factories to usher in green energy. They defended unions and used the Federal Trade Commission to break up monopolies and return more economic power to consumers.

Their system worked. It created record low unemployment rates, lifted wages for the bottom 80% of Americans, and built the strongest economy in the world in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, setting multiple stock market records. But that success turned out not to be enough to protect democracy.

In contrast, Trump promised he would return to the ideology of the era before 2021, when leaders believed in relying on markets to order the economy with the idea that wealthy individuals would invest more efficiently than if the government regulated business or skewed markets with targeted investment (in green energy, for example). Trump vowed to cut taxes for the wealthy and corporations and to make up lost revenue through tariffs, which he incorrectly insists are paid by foreign countries; tariffs are paid by U.S. consumers.

For policies, Trump's campaign embraced the Project 2025 agenda led by the right-wing Heritage Foundation, which has close ties to Orbán. That plan calls for getting rid of the nonpartisan civil service the U.S. has had since 1883 and for making both the Department of Justice and the military partisan instruments of a strong president, much as Orbán did in Hungary. It also calls for instituting religious rule, including an end to abortion rights, across the U.S. Part of the idea of "purifying" the country is the deportation of undocumented immigrants: Trump promised to deport 20 million people at an estimated cost of \$88 billion to \$315 billion a year.

That is what voters chose.

Pundits today have spent time dissecting the election results, many trying to find the one tweak that would have changed the outcome, and suggesting sweeping solutions to the Democrats' obvious inability to attract voters. There is no doubt that a key factor in voters' swing to Trump is that they associated the inflation of the post-pandemic months with Biden and turned the incumbents out, a phenomenon seen all over the world.

There is also no doubt that both racism and sexism played an important role in Harris's defeat.

But my own conclusion is that both of those things were amplified by the flood of disinformation that has plagued the U.S. for years now. Russian political theorists called the construction of a virtual political reality through modern media "political technology." They developed several techniques in this approach to politics, but the key was creating a false narrative in order to control public debate. These techniques perverted democracy, turning it from the concept of voters choosing their leaders into the concept of voters rubber-stamping the leaders they had been manipulated into backing.

In the U.S., pervasive right-wing media, from the Fox News Channel through right-wing podcasts and YouTube channels run



by influencers, have permitted Trump and right-wing influencers to portray the booming economy as “failing” and to run away from the hugely unpopular Project 2025. They allowed MAGA Republicans to portray a dramatically falling crime rate as a crime wave and immigration as an invasion. They also shielded its audience from the many statements of Trump’s former staff that he is unfit for office, and even that his chief of staff General John Kelly considers him a fascist and noted that he admires German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler.

As actor Walter Masterson posted: “I tried to educate people about tariffs, I tried to explain that undocumented immigrants pay billions in taxes and are the foundation of this country. I explained Project 2025, I interviewed to show that they supported it. I cannot compete against the propaganda machines of Twitter, Fox News, [Joe Rogan Experience], and NY Post. These spaces will continue to create reality unless we create a more effective way of reaching people.”

X users noted a dramatic drop in their followers today, likely as bots, no longer necessary, disengaged.

Many voters who were using their vote to make an economic statement are likely going to be surprised to discover what they have actually voted for. In his victory speech, Trump said the American people had given him an “unprecedented and powerful mandate.”

White nationalist Nick Fuentes posted, “Your body, my choice. Forever,” and gloated that men will now legally control women’s bodies. His post got at least 22,000 “likes.” Right-wing influencer Benny Johnson, previously funded by Russia, posted: “It is my honor to inform you that Project 2025 was real the whole time.”

Today, Trump campaign press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Trump would launch the “largest mass deportation operation” of undocumented immigrants, and the stock in private prison companies GEO Group and CoreCivic jumped 41% and 29%,

respectively. Those jumps were part of a bigger overall jump: the Dow Jones Industrial Average moved up 1,508 points in what Washington Post economic columnist Heather Long said was the largest post-election jump in more than 100 years.

As for the lower prices Trump voters wanted, Kate Gibson of CBS today noted that on Monday, the National Retail Federation said that Trump's proposed tariffs will cost American consumers between \$46 billion and \$78 billion a year as clothing, toys, furniture, appliances, and footwear all become more expensive. A \$50 pair of running shoes, Gibson said, would retail for \$59 to \$64 under the new tariffs.

U.S. retailers are already preparing to raise prices of items from foreign suppliers, passing to consumers the cost of any future tariffs.

Trump's election will also mean he will no longer have to answer to the law for his federal indictments: special counsel Jack Smith is winding them down ahead of Trump's inauguration. So he will not be tried for retaining classified documents or attempting to overthrow the U.S. government when he lost in 2020.

This evening, Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán posted on social media that he had just spoken with Trump, and said: "We have big plans for the future!"

This afternoon, Vice President Kamala Harris spoke at her alma mater, Howard University, to concede the election to Trump.



She thanked her supporters, her family, the Bidens, the Walz family, and her campaign staff and volunteers. She reiterated that she believes Americans have far more in common than separating us.

In what appeared to be a message to Trump, she noted: "A fundamental principle of American democracy is that when we lose an election, we accept the results. That principle as much as any other distinguishes democracy from monarchy or tyranny, and anyone who seeks the public trust must honor it. At the same time in our nation, we owe loyalty not to a president or a party, but to the Constitution of the United States, and loyalty to our conscience and to our God.

"My allegiance to all three is why I am here to say, while I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fuels this campaign, the fight for freedom, for opportunity, for fairness and the dignity of all people, a fight for the ideals at the heart of our nation, the ideals that reflect America at our best. That is a fight I will never give up."

Harris urged people "to organize, to mobilize and to stay engaged for the sake of freedom and justice and the future that we all know we can build together." She told those feeling as if the world is dark indeed these days, to "fill the sky with the light of a billion brilliant stars, the light of optimism, of faith, of truth and service," and to let "that work guide us, even in the face of setbacks, toward the extraordinary promise of the United States of America."

**"They're eating the cats, they're eating the dogs" proved a more effective message than "Let me help you buy your first house."**

## Democracy Is Not Over

Opinion by Tom Nichols



*Democracy Is Not Over© Callaghan O'Hare / Reuters / The Atlantic Daily*

An aspiring fascist is the president-elect, again, of the United States. This is our political reality: Donald Trump is going to bring a clique of opportunists and kooks (led by the vice president-elect, a person who once compared Trump to Hitler) into government this winter, and even if senescence overtakes the president-elect, Trump's minions will continue his assault on democracy, the rule of law, and the Constitution.

For a decade, Trump has been trying to destroy America's constitutional order. His election in 2016 was something like a prank gone very wrong, and he likely never expected to win. But once in office, he and his administration became a rocket sled of corruption, chaos, and sedition. Trump's lawlessness finally caught up with him after he was forced from office by the electorate. He knew that his only hope was to return to the

presidency and destroy the last instruments of accountability.

Paradoxically, however, Trump's reckless venality is a reason for hope. Trump has the soul of a fascist but the mind of a disordered child. He will likely be surrounded by terrible but incompetent people. All of them can be beaten: in court, in Congress, in statehouses around the nation, and in the public arena. America is a federal republic, and the states—at least those in the union that will still care about democracy—have ways to protect their citizens from a rogue president. Nothing is inevitable, and democracy will not fall overnight.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not counseling complacency: Trump's reelection is a national emergency. If we have learned anything from the past several years, it's that feel-good, performative politics can't win elections, but if there was ever a time to exercise the American right of free assembly, it is now—not least because Trump is determined to end such rights and silence his opponents. Americans must stay engaged and make their voices heard at every turn. They should find and support organizations and institutions committed to American democracy, and especially those determined to fight Trump in the courts. They must encourage candidates in the coming 2026 elections who will oppose Trump's plans and challenge his legislative enablers.

After Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, then-Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell vowed to make Obama a one-term president, and obstructed him at every turn. McConnell, of course, cared only about seizing power for his party, and later, he could not muster that same bravado when faced with Trump's assaults on the government. Patriotic Americans and their representatives might now make a similar commitment, but for better aims: Although they cannot remove Trump from office, they can declare their determination to prevent Trump from implementing the ghastly policies he committed himself to while campaigning.



The kinds of actions that will stop Trump from destroying America in 2025 are the same ones that stopped many of his plans the first time around. They are not flashy, and they will require sustained attention, because the next battles for democracy will be fought by lawyers and legislators, in Washington and in every state capitol. They will be fought by citizens banding together in associations and movements to rouse others from the sleepwalk that has led America into this moment.

Trump's victory is a grim day for the United States and for democracies around the world. You have every right to be appalled, saddened, shocked, and frightened. Soon, however, you should dust yourself off, square your shoulders, and take a deep breath. Americans who care about democracy have work to do.

### Related:

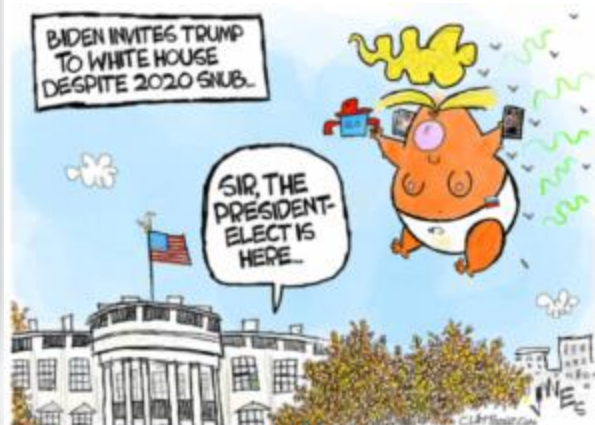


**Kimberly Michael**

Admin 1h · 🗨

...







## **The Bob Cesca Show**

### **'I Know The Way Out'**

(The following is a repost of something I wrote for The Banter yesterday.)

WASHINGTON, DC – I can't stop thinking about the people of Ukraine. Imagine having zero say in an election thousands of miles away – an election that will determine whether your country will be taken over by an authoritarian kleptocrat after so many of your friends and family have been killed in the effort to fight back.

Due to the selfishness, hate, and nihilism of 72 million very stupid American voters, Ukraine is faced with the inevitable fate of being seized and annexed by Russia, which could employ battlefield nukes in the process – with the full-throated support and encouragement of the incoming American president.

The feeling of helplessness and obvious fear among the people of Ukraine is breaking my heart today. The same goes for everyone here who will be steamrolled by Donald Trump's Project 2025 agenda, his economically devastating tariffs, his mass deportations, his maniacal retribution against anyone who speaks out against him,

and, worst of all, the mounting effects of the climate crisis.

This isn't just any election loss, this loss will mean the erosion if not elimination of our democratic norms, torn down by an addled mad man who possesses nothing but seething disrespect for anything that actually makes this country great. But that's why we have no choice but to hold fast to those values and protect them from extinction by reminding people what it really means to live in a pluralistic society built on freedom and inclusion.

Our instinct will be to turn away so we don't have to witness the atrocities. Many of us will consider abandoning politics or leaving the country. But we can't do that. We can't let them force us from our homes and lives and what's important. That's what they want. They want to make things so shitty that we flee and leave the hollowed-out carcass of the nation for them to fully colonize. No matter what, this country still belongs to all of us. And we have an obligation to stand our ground and protect it from the ungainly idiocrats.

Like you, I'm grieving today. I might be grieving tomorrow and the next day, too. But soon my grief will dissipate. Yours will, too. Don't force it. Let it run its course. Take some personal time. Reconnect with non-political things you love. Enjoy your family during the holidays. Once you've recovered, lean forward, crack your knuckles, and prepare to defend the values and institutions we all cherish.

One of the realities that's getting me through the day is knowing that second terms don't usually go very well for presidents. Just ask Ronald Reagan, who faced the Iran-Contra scandal. Ask Bill Clinton, who faced impeachment. Ask George W. Bush, who faced his vice president shooting a guy in the face, the catastrophe of Hurricane

Katrina, a worsening insurgency in Iraq, and a major economic collapse. Events have a way of stacking up against second termers, and what's abundantly clear to anyone paying attention: while Donald Trump is a fascist menace, he's also horrendously incompetent and stupid, surrounded by a rogue's gallery of equally incompetent and stupid people.

Once people realize, no, he's not returning prices to 2019 levels, and as Donald's tariffs and mass deportations spike inflation – or trigger another deep recession or both – people will abandon him. The 2026 Senate map is already favorable to the Democrats, and we all know how midterms go for the party in power. Combine that with anger over the incompetence and tyrannical overreach and suddenly the pushback begins to take shape.

That optimism aside, this will be a painful era. I'm fully cognizant of my privilege as a white man, but that doesn't supersede my empathy for so many other vulnerable friends and non-friends alike who will be on the front lines – whether they're activists facing down the possibility of military crackdowns on peaceful protests, or our LGBTQ friends who will face a Supreme Court that could overturn their freedoms, or our Hispanic friends who could be inadvertently swept up in Donald's mass deportations. We need to remain vigilant and aware. We need to keep informing people of what's going on. We have to be the sentinels, warning our non-political friends about incoming emergencies – pandemics, raids, or financial calamities.

The first Donald Trump term was a dark ride, and this next one will be even darker. And that means we have work to do.

Back in 2016, I borrowed a story from an episode of *The West Wing*, told by Leo McGarry, the White House chief of



staff, to Josh Lyman who was experiencing PTSD from an assassination attempt.

This guy's walking down a street when he falls in a hole. The walls are so steep, he can't get out. A doctor passes by, and the guy shouts up, "Hey you, can you help me out?" The doctor writes a prescription, throws it down in the hole and moves on. Then a priest comes along, and the guy shouts up "Father, I'm down in this hole, can you help me out?" The priest writes out a prayer, throws it down in the hole and moves on. Then a friend walks by. "Hey Joe, it's me, can you help me out?" And the friend jumps in the hole. Our guy says, "Are you stupid? Now we're both down here." The friend says, "Yeah, but I've been down here before, and I know the way out."

Sadly, we've been here before. So, let's use it – let's all be that friend who knows the way out.

<https://www.bobcesca.com/>





TRUMP'S CABINET...

STANLEY  
ANDERSON  
FUNDATION  
GRAPHICS.COM







## 10 ways to be prepared and grounded now that Trump has won

The key to taking effective action in a Trump world is to avoid perpetuating the autocrat's goals of fear, isolation, exhaustion and disorientation.

Daniel Hunter November 4, 2024 This story was published prior to the election and updated on Nov. 6 to reflect the results.

It's important we squarely face Trump's victory and what there is to do about it.

Trump has already signaled the kind of president he will be: revengeful, uncontrolled and unburdened by past norms and current laws. I won't go through the litany of awful things he's pledged to do, since that's been well-established with his words, Project 2025 plans and excellent analyses from authoritarian experts.

Looking into an even more destabilized future is not easy. If you're like me, you're already tired. The prospect of more drama is daunting. But authoritarianism isn't going away no matter the election results. So here's some thinking about ways to orient so we can ground ourselves better for these times ahead.

I am blessed to have spent time writing scenarios about what might happen, developing trainings for a Trump win and working alongside colleagues living under autocratic regimes. One of the things they keep reminding me is that good psychology is good social change. Authoritarian power is derived from fear of repression, isolation from each other and exhaustion at the utter chaos. We're already feeling it.

Thus, for us to be of any use in a Trump world, we have to pay grave attention to our inner states, so we don't perpetuate the autocrat's goals of fear, isolation, exhaustion or constant disorientation.

### 1. Trust yourself

I started writing this list with strategic principles (e.g. analyze your opponent's weakness and learn to handle political violence), but actually the place to start is with your own self.

Trump is arriving at a time of great social distrust. Across the board, society has reduced trust in traditional institutions. Yes, there's more distrust of the media, medical professionals, experts and politicians. But it extends beyond that. There's reduced trust in most community institutions and membership groups. Whether from COVID or political polarization, a lot of us have experienced reduced trust in friends and family. Even our trust in predictable weather is diminished.

Distrust fuels the flame of autocracy because it makes it much easier to divide. We can see that in the casual nature of Trump's rhetoric — telling people to distrust immigrants, Democrats, socialists, people from Chicago, women marchers, Mexicans, the press and so on.

This is a social disease: You know who to trust by who they tell you to distrust.

Trust-building starts with your own self. It includes trusting your own eyes and gut, as well as building protection from the ways

the crazy-making can become internalized.

This also means being trustworthy — not just with information, but with emotions. That way you can acknowledge what you know and admit the parts that are uncertain fears nagging at you.

Then take steps to follow through on what you need. If you're tired, take some rest. If you're scared, make some peace with your fears. I can point you to resources that support that — like [FindingSteadyGround.com](https://www.findingsteadyground.com) — but the value here is to start with trusting your own inner voice. If you need to stop checking your phone compulsively, do it. If you don't want to read this article now and instead take a good walk, do it.

Trust all these things inside of you because trust in self is part of the foundation of a healthy movement life.

## 2. Find others who you trust

I promise I'll head towards practical resistance strategies. But the emotional landscape matters a great deal. Hannah Arendt's "The Origins of Totalitarianism" explored how destructive ideologies like fascism and autocracy grow. She used the word *verlassenheit* — often translated as loneliness — as a central ingredient. As she meant it, loneliness isn't a feeling but a kind of social isolation of the mind. Your thinking becomes closed off to the world and a sense of being abandoned to each other.

She's identifying a societal breakdown that we're all experiencing. Under a Trump presidency, this trend will continue to accelerate. The constant attacks on social systems — teachers, health care and infrastructure — make us turn away from leaning on each other and towards ideologically simple answers that increase isolation (e.g. "distrust government," "MAGA is nuts," "anyone who votes that way doesn't care about you").

In extreme cases, like Chile in the 1970s and '80s, the dictatorship aimed to keep people in such tiny nodes of trust that



everyone was an island unto themselves. At social gatherings and parties, people would commonly not introduce each other by name out of fear of being too involved. Fear breeds distance.

We have to consciously break that distance. In Chile they organized under the guise of affinity groups. This was, as its name suggests, people who shared some connections and trust. Finding just a few people who you trust to regularly act with and touch base with is central.

Find people you trust to meet with regularly. (What If Trump Wins /Elizabeth Beier)



Following Trump's win: Get some people to regularly touch base with. Use that trust to explore your own thinking and support each other to stay sharp and grounded.

For the last several months I've been hosting a regular group at my house to "explore what is up with these times." Our crew thinks differently but

invests in trust. We emote, cry, sing, laugh, sit in stillness and think together.

I've written an agenda for such gatherings right after a Trump win that you can use.

All of us will benefit from actively organized nodes to help stabilize us. In a destabilized society, you need people who help ground you.

### 3. Grieve

No matter what we try to do, there's going to be a lot of loss. The human thing to do is grieve. (Well, apparently humans are also

very good at compartmentalizing, rationalizing, intellectualizing and ignoring — but the damage it does to our body and psyche is pretty well documented.)

If you aren't a feelings person, let me say it this way: The inability to grieve is a strategic error. After Donald Trump won in 2016, we all saw colleagues who never grieved. They didn't look into their feelings and the future — and as a result they remained in shock. For years they kept saying, "I can't believe he's doing that..."

An alternative: Start by naming and allowing feelings that come to arise. The night that Donald Trump won in 2016, I stayed up until 4 a.m. with a colleague. It was a tear-filled night of naming things that we had just lost. The list ranged from the political to the deeply personal:

"Trump will leave the Paris Climate Agreement and that means much of the world will soft pedal its climate plans."

"Ugh, I'm gonna have this man in my dreams. We're all going to sleep less and wake up to bat-shit crazy headlines each morning."

"Trump's gonna constantly attack immigrants — the wall may or may not happen, but he's gonna raise the threshold for racism. I don't think I can take it."

"Friends I know who signed up for DACA are never going to trust government again."

And on and on. It wasn't only a list, but it was finding the impact inside of us of sadness, anger, numbness, shock, confusion and fear. We alternated between rageful spouts and tears. We grieved. We cried. We held each other. We breathed. We dove back into naming all the bad things we knew we'd lost and things we thought we'd be likely to lose.

It wasn't anywhere near strategizing or list-making or planning. It was part of our acceptance that losing a presidency to an awful

man means you and your people lose a lot. Ultimately, this helped us believe it — so we didn't spend years in a daze: "I can't believe this is happening in this country."

Believe it. Believe it now. Grief is a pathway to that acceptance.

#### 4. Release that which you cannot change

Growing up my mom had a copy of the Serenity Prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference." Notably, that prayer comes from theologian Reinhold Niebuhr as he was watching the rise of Nazis in Germany.

Trump's first day likely includes pardoning Jan. 6 insurrectionists, reallocating money to build the wall, pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement, and firing 50,000-plus government workers to begin replacing them with loyalists. There's little reason to believe that day two will get much quieter.

Under a Trump presidency, there are going to be so many issues that it will be hard to accept that we cannot do it all. I'm reminded of a colleague in Turkey who told me, "There's always something bad happening every day. If we had to react to every bad thing, we'd never have time to eat."

An elder once saw me trying to do everything and pulled me aside. "That's not a healthy lifelong strategy," she said. She'd been raised in Germany by the generation of Holocaust survivors who told her, "Never again." She took it personally, as if she had to stop every wrong. It wracked her and contributed to several serious ongoing medical conditions. We can accept our humanity or suffer that lack of acceptance.

Chaos is a friend of the autocrat. One way we can unwittingly assist is by joining in the story that we have to do it all.

Over the last few months I've been testing out a terribly challenging tool. It's a journaling exercise that invites you

to reflect on which issues you'll spend energy on. It asks: what are issues you'll throw down on, do a lot for, a little for, or — despite caring about it — do nothing at all for? That last question can feel like a kind of torture for many activists, even while we're intellectually aware that we cannot stop it all.

Unaddressed, this desire to act on everything leads to bad strategy. Nine months ago when we gathered activists to scenario plan together, we took note of two knee-jerk tendencies from the left that ended up largely being dead-ends in the face of Trump:

- Public angsting — posting outrage on social media, talking with friends, sharing awful news
- Symbolic actions — organizing marches and public statements

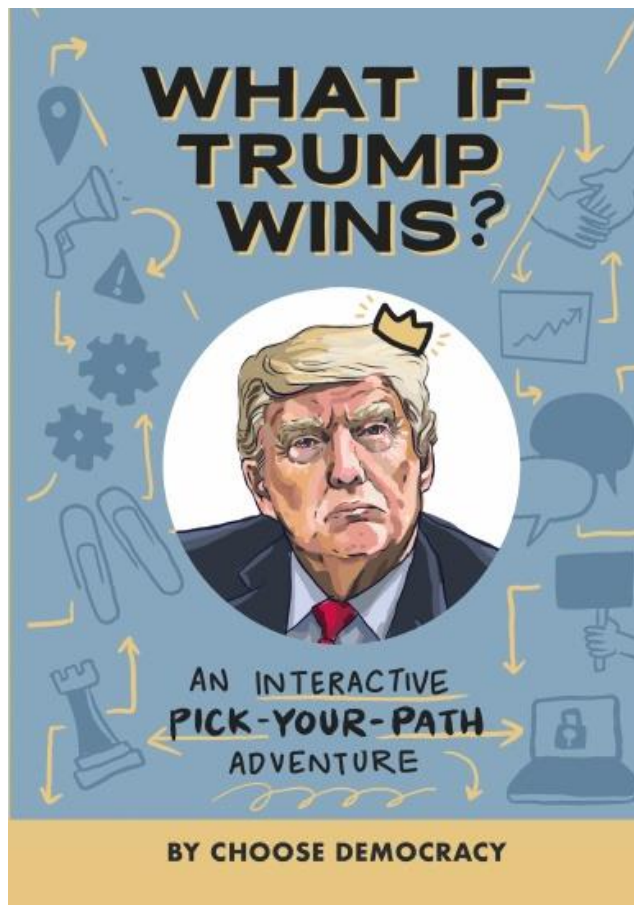
The first is where we look around at bad things happening and make sure other people know about them, too. We satisfy the social pressure of our friends who want us to show outrage — but the driving moves are only reactive. The end result wasn't the intended action or an informed population. It's demoralizing us. It's hurting our capacity for action. Public angsting as a strategy is akin to pleading with the hole in the boat to stop us from sinking.

Symbolic actions may fare little better under a Trump presidency. In whatever version of democracy we had, the logic of rallies and statements of outrage was to build a unified front that showed the opposition many voices were opposed to them. But under an unleashed fascist — if it's all you do — it's like begging the suicidal captain to plug the hole.

Let me be clear. These strategies will be part of the mix. We'll need public angsting and symbolic actions. But if you see an organization or group who only relies on these tactics, look elsewhere. There are other, more effective ways to engage.

5. Find your path

I've been writing scenarios of how a Trump presidency might play out. (You can read the scenarios written as a choose-your-own-adventure-style book at [WhatIfTrumpWins.org](http://WhatIfTrumpWins.org) or [order the book](#).) The initial weeks look chaotic no matter what. But over time some differentiated resistance pathways begin to emerge.



One pathway is called "Protecting People." These are folks surviving and protecting our own — especially those of us directly targeted, such as trans people, folks choosing abortions and immigrants. This might mean organizing outside current systems for health care and mutual aid, or moving resources to communities that are getting targeted. Further examples include starting immigrant welcoming committees, abortion-support funds or training volunteers on safety skills to respond to white nationalist violence.

Another pathway is "Defending Civic Institutions." This group may or may not be conscious that current institutions don't serve us all, but they are united in understanding that Trump wants them to crumble so he can exert greater control over our lives. Each bureaucracy will put up its own fight to defend itself.

Insider groups will play a central battle against Trump fascism. You may recall government scientists dumping copious climate data onto external servers, bracing for Trump's orders. This time, many more insiders understand it's code red. Hopefully, many will bravely refuse to quit — and instead choose to stay inside as



long as possible.

Institutional pillars understand a Trump presidency is a dire threat. The military, for one, is well aware that Trump's potential orders to use them to crack down on civilian protesters would politicize them permanently.

These insiders will need external support. Sometimes it's just folks showing compassion that some of our best allies will be inside, silently resisting. A culture of celebrating people getting fired for the right reasons would help (then offering them practical help with life's next steps). Other moments will need open support and public activation.

Then there's a critical third pathway: "Disrupt and Disobey." This goes beyond protesting for better policies and into the territory of people intervening to stop bad policies or showing resistance.

Initially a lot of that prefigurative work may be purely symbolic. In Norway, to create a culture of resistance during World War II people wore innocuous paperclips as a sign they wouldn't obey. The symbolism is to build preparation for mass strikes and open resistance. In Serbia, protests against their dictator started with student strikes before escalating to strikes by pensioners (which were both largely symbolic) before finally escalating to the game-changing strike of coal miners.

In effective "Disrupt and Disobey" type actions the ultimate goal is paving a path for mass noncooperation: tax resistance, national strikes, work shut-downs and other nonviolent mass disobedience tactics — the most effective strategies to displace authoritarians.

Lastly, there's a key fourth role: "Building Alternatives." We can't just be stuck reacting and stopping the bad. We have to have a vision. This is the slow growth work of building alternative ways that are more democratic. It includes grounding and healing work, rich cultural work, alternative ways of growing food and caring for kids, participatory budgeting or seeding constitutional conventions to build a majoritarian alternative to the Electoral

College mess we're in.

Each of us may be attracted to some pathways more than others.



Myself, I'm attracted to "Disrupt and Disobey" — though I know when certain moments hit I'll be pulled into some immediate "Protecting People." I'm perhaps too impatient for most "Building Alternatives" and too unhappy with the status quo to do "Defend Civic Institutions." However, I'm delighted others will do that work!

I'm reminded of another way of finding your role that comes from my friend Ingrid's grandfather, who lived in Norway under the Nazi regime. He learned that the resistance was hiding people in the basement of a church near a cemetery. As a florist he already traveled to and from the cemetery — so he found a role smuggling messages in funeral wreaths, delivering them all over the city.

He didn't go out designing his perfect role. In fact, I'm not sure he would have looked at the list of possible "roles" and found his political path. Instead, he found his space by circumstance.

In other words: Your path may not be clear right now. That's okay. There will be plenty of opportunities to join the resistance.

## 6. Do not obey in advance, do not self-censor

The Washington Post and Los Angeles Times' cowardly refusal to endorse a political candidate is, it appears, a classic example of self-censorship. Trump did not have to make a direct threat to these media outlets. Their own leadership told them to "sit this one out."

Why? Because they wanted to stay safe.



### [WNV's guide to protecting and expanding democracy](#)

If autocrats teach us any valuable lesson it's this: Political space that you don't use, you lose.

This is a message to all levels of society: lawyers advising nonprofits, leaders worried about their funding base, folks worried about losing their jobs.

I'm not coaching to never self-protect. You can decide when to speak your mind. But it is a phenomenally slippery slope here we have to observe and combat.

Timothy Snyder has written a helpful book called "On Tyranny" — and turned it into a video series. He cites ceding power as the first problem to tackle, writing: "Most of the power of authoritarianism is freely given. In times like these, individuals think ahead about what a more repressive government will want, and then offer themselves without being asked. A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do."

Put simply: Use the political space and voice you have.

## 7. Reorient your political map

A few months ago I sat in a room with retired generals, Republicans like Michael Steele, ex-governors and congress people. We were scenario-planning ways to prevent using the Insurrection Act to target civilian protesters, playing step-by-step who would give the orders to whom and how the worst could be avoided.

For a committed antiwar activist, the phrase "strange bedfellows" doesn't begin to describe the bizarre experience I felt.

I came out of it realizing that a Trump presidency reshapes alignments and possibilities. The bellicose, blasphemous language of Trump will meet the practical reality of governing. When you're out of power, it's easy to unify — but their coalition's cracks will quickly emerge. We have to stay sharp for opportunities to cleave off support.

How we position ourselves matters: Are we interested in engaging with people unhappy with the regime — whether because they love the current institutions or are unhappy with Trump's policies on them? Are we able to tell a story that explains how we got here — and do political education? Or are we only interested in maintaining ideological purity and preaching to our own choir?

Even if you don't want to engage with them (which is fine), we'll all have to give space to those who do experiment with new

language to appeal to others who don't share our worldview of a multiracial true democracy.

Empathy will be helpful here. I write all this with a particular moment in mind: At the end of the scenario day, we whipped around the room with conclusions. The generals said "The military cannot stop Trump from giving these orders." Politicians said "Congress cannot stop it." The lawyers said "We cannot stop it."

I could see a lot of pain in high-ranking people of great power admitting a kind of defeat. I felt a level of compassion that surprised me.

Only the left activists said: We have an approach of mass noncooperation that can stop this. But we'd need your help.

I'm not sure that projected confidence was well-received. But if we're going to live into that (and I'm far from certain we can), we have to get real about power.

## 8. Get real about power

In Trump's first term, the left's organizing had mixed results. With John McCain's assistance, we were able to block Trump's health proposal. Rallies proved less and less effective as time went on. The airport shutdowns showed that disruptive action can activate the public and helped pave the way for the court's dismissal over the Muslim ban. But Trump was still able to win huge tax cuts and appoint right-wing Supreme Court judges. The narrative lurched, and sizeable chunks of the population have now been captivated by the "Big Lie." It was elections that ultimately stopped Trump.

This time will be much harder.

The psychological exhaustion and despair is much higher. Deploying people into the streets for mass actions with no clear outcome will grow that frustration, leading to dropout and radicalized action divorced from strategy.

Trump has been very clear about using his political power to its fullest — stretching and breaking the norms and laws that get in his way. The movement will constantly be asking itself: “Are you able to stop this new bad thing?”

We’re not going to convince him not to do these things. No pressure on Republicans will result in more than the tiniest of crumbs (at least initially). We’re not going to stop him from doing these things just by persuasive tactics or showing that there are a LOT of us who oppose them.

### The upside down triangle. (What If Trump Wins/Elizabeth Beier)



It will be helpful to have a power analysis in our minds, specifically that’s known as the upside-down triangle. This tool was built to explain how power moves even under dictatorships.

The central tenet is that like an upside-down triangle, power can be unstable. It naturally topples over without anything supporting it. To prevent that, power relies on pillars of support to keep it upright.

Casually, the left often focuses on pillars of support that include governments, media, corporations, shareholders and policy makers. Describing the pillars of support, Gene Sharp wrote:

By themselves, rulers cannot collect taxes, enforce repressive laws and regulations, keep trains running on time, prepare national budgets, direct traffic, manage ports, print money, repair roads, keep markets supplied with food, make steel, build rockets, train the police and army, issue postage stamps or even milk a cow. People provide these services to the ruler through a variety of organizations and institutions. If people would stop providing these skills, the ruler could not rule.



Removing one pillar of support can often gain major, life-saving concessions. In response to Trump's 2019 government shutdown, flight attendants prepared a national strike. Such a strike would ground planes across the country and a key transportation network. Within hours of announcing they were "mobilizing immediately" for a strike, Trump capitulated.

Another example comes from the recently deceased long-time activist Dick Taylor. In his book "Blockade," he writes about how he and a tiny group changed U.S. foreign policy by repeatedly blocking armaments sent to support Pakistani dictator Yahya Khan. The ragtag crew sent canoes to block mighty military shipments leaving from East Coast ports until eventually the International Longshoremen's Association was persuaded to refuse to load them. This broke the back of national policy.

For larger system change we have to look outside of recent U.S. organizing. A good place to start is with Waging Nonviolence's recent interview series with folks sharing key lessons on fighting autocracies and aiming for system change.

In our country, pressuring elite power is reaching its end point. Power will need to emerge from folks no longer obeying the current unjust system. This tipping point of mass noncooperation will be messy. It means convincing a lot of people to take huge personal risks for a better option.

As a "Disrupt and Disobey" person, we have to move deliberately to gain the trust of others, like the "Protecting People" folks. Mass noncooperation does the opposite of their goal of protection — it exposes people to more risk, more repression. But with that comes the possibility that we could get the kind of liberatory government that we all truly deserve.

## 9. Handle fear, make violence rebound

Otpor in Serbia has provided an abundance of examples on how to face repression. They were young people who took a sarcastic response to regular police beatings. They would joke amongst

each other, “It only hurts if you’re scared.”

Their attitude wasn’t cavalier — it was tactical. They were not going to grow fear. So when hundreds were beaten on a single day, their response was: This repression will only stiffen the resistance.

This is attitude.

They were also practical. They would follow their arrested protesters to jail cells and insist on making sure they were being treated well. They would target police who beat them up — showing up outside their houses with pictures of the people they beat up. Their call was rooted in the future they wanted: “You’ll have a chance to join us.”

Handling fear isn’t about suppressing it — but it is about constantly redirecting. One activist described to me two motions in the universe: shrinking or expansion. When Donald Trump directs the Justice Department to use sedition charges against protesters or arrest his political enemies like Jamie Raskin or Liz Cheney, what’s our response?



Political violence is surging, but there’s a playbook to counter it  
Activist/intellectual Hardy Merriman released a studied

response about political violence that had some news that surprised me. The first was that physical political violence hasn't grown dramatically in this country — it still remains relatively rare. The threats of violence, however, trend upwards, such as this CNN report: "Politically motivated threats to public officials increased 178 percent during Trump's presidency," primarily from the right.

His conclusion wasn't that political violence isn't going to grow. Quite the opposite. But he noted that a key component to political violence is to intimidate and tell a story that they are the true victims. Making political violence rebound requires refusing to be intimidated and resisting those threats so they can backfire. (Training on this backfire technique is available from the HOPE-PV guide.)

We can shrink into a cacophony of "that's not fair," which fuels the fear of repression. Or we take a page from the great strategist Bayard Rustin.

Black civil rights leaders were targeted by the government of Montgomery, Alabama during the bus boycott in the 1950s. Leaders like the newly appointed Martin Luther King Jr. went into hiding after police threats of arrest based on antiquated anti-boycott laws. Movement organizer Rustin organized them to go down to the station and demand to be arrested since they were leaders — making a positive spectacle of the repression. Some leaders not on police lists publicly demanded they, too, get

arrested. Folks charged were met with cheers from crowds, holding their arrest papers high in the air. Fear was turned into valor.



#### 10. Envision a positive future

Spend some time envisioning how we might advance our cause. (What If Trump Wins/Elizabeth Beier)

I don't feel certain, and I'm not predicting we win. But we've all now imagined storylines about how bad it might get. We would do ourselves a service to spend an equal measure of time envisioning how we might advance our cause in these conditions. As writer Walidah Imarisha says, "The goal of visionary fiction is to change the world."

In my mind, we'll have to eventually get Trump out of office. There are two paths available.

The first: Vote him out. Given the bias of the electoral college, this requires successfully defending nearly all local, state and national takeovers of elections such that they remain relatively fair and free.

Winning via the path of electoral majority has a wide swath of experience and support from mainstream progressive organizations and Democratic institutions. It's going to be a major thrust.

In my scenario writing I've explored what that strategy could look like, including preparing electoral workers to stand against last minute attempts by Trump to change election rules and even stymie the election with dubious emergency orders. They don't obey — and go ahead with elections anyway.

The second strategy is if he illegally refuses to leave or allow fair elections: Kick him out. That means we are able to develop a national nonviolent resistance campaign capable of forcing him out of office.

I've written several versions of this: One where large-scale strikes disable portions of the U.S. economy. If you recall from COVID, our systems are extremely vulnerable. Businesses running "just in time" inventory means small hiccups in the system can cause cascading effects.

Sustained strikes would face deep resistance, but they could swing communities currently on the fence, like the business

community, which already is concerned about Trump's temperamental nature. Trump's own policies might make these conditions much easier. If he really does mass deportations, the economic injury might be fatal.

In another scenario I explore another strategy of taking advantage of a Trump overreach. Autocrats overplay their hands. And in this imagined scenario, Trump overreaches when he attempts to force autoworkers to stop building electric vehicles. UAW workers refuse and keep the factories running. Eventually he's unable to stop them — but in the process he's publicly humiliated.

A very public loss like this can cause what Timur Kuran calls an "unanticipated revolution." He noted many incidents where political leaders seem to have full support, then suddenly it evaporates. He gives as an example the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79. "None of the major intelligence organizations — not even the CIA or the KGB — expected Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's regime to collapse. Right up to the revolution, they expected him to weather the gathering storm."

Kuran's analysis reminds us to look at Trump's political weakness. Political hacks like Lindsay Graham appear to be sycophants — but if given the chance to turn their knife in his back, they might. This means exposed political weaknesses could quickly turn the many inside Trump's campaign against him.

That feels far away from now. But all these remain possibilities. Practicing this future thinking and seeing into these directions gives me some hope and some strategic sensibilities.

On the days when I can't sense any of these political possibilities (more than not), I zoom out further to the lifespans of trees and rocks, heading into spiritual reminders that nothing lasts forever.

All of the future is uncertain. But using these things, we're more likely to have a more hopeful future and experience during these turbulent times.

CORRECTIONS 11/6/24: Hardy Merriman's name was incorrectly spelled. And the quote from Otpor was mistated as "It doesn't hurt if you're afraid."

---

---

## [Daniel Hunter](#)

Daniel Hunter coaches and trains movements across the globe. As founder of Choose Democracy he's helped stop Trump's coup attempts. He has trained extensively with ethnic minorities in Burma, pastors in Sierra Leone, and independence activists in northeast India. He has written multiple books, including "[What Will You Do If Trump Wins](#)," "[Climate Resistance Handbook](#)" and "[Building a Movement to End the New Jim Crow](#)."

**To all the women in the U.S.  
who sold out your own sisters,  
now, and for future generations.**







## **MAGAS Lost the Election, Too. They Just Don't Know it Yet.**

November 13, 2024

By John Pavlovitz

***There is joy in MAGAville right now.***

They're arrogantly reveling in a euphoric moment they've been lustfully coveting for the past four years: their mobster messiah has risen from the dead, his glorious second coming imminent, his anti-woke American kingdom come.

And in their emotionally-intoxicated state they're puffing out their chests on social media, brazenly posturing on street corners, toasting to their oppressed white victory with Solo cups filled with liberal tears. They're wildly dancing to Kid Rock on the grave of Kamala Harris and Democrats.

But their strident victory celebrations will be short-lived.

Soon, and very soon, they're going to feel the crushing weight of objective reality come smashing down upon their red hats, as the truth that cannot be covered over by Fox News fictions or GOP spin doctors becomes terrifyingly clear: they have lost, too.

As they finally take the thirty seconds they should have months ago to do a Google search and see exactly what a tariff is and how it will impact their manufacturing jobs, their take home pay, and their cost of living here—they'll have the sudden gut punch of buyer's remorse.

Watching brown-skinned farm laborers violently rounded up and driven out of the country, they will be met with the brutal economic cause-and-effect of this on grocery store prices and inflation, that they couldn't see in the midst of their nationalistic, white-power fever dreams.

When their nieces and wives are bleeding out in hospital emergency rooms because their doctors have their trained hands tied backs by their state legislature, they'll reckon with the reality that health emergencies and anti-women legislation are nonpartisan in the threat they pose. And as they feel the rush of helpless bedside panic, their spray-tanned savior will be nowhere to be found.

As Project 2025 quickly transforms from a laughable Leftist myth into the sobering true horror story of a life without access to education, no public health protection for their families, and an economic quicksand they will be unable to extricate themselves from—they'll ask why no one warned them.

When Trump supporters come to grips with the fact that he doesn't give a damn about them, they may finally understand something their tribalism could never allow them to see: we Liberals were fighting for them all along.

We've haven't just been incessantly battling him for our families but for theirs, too.

We've been trying to secure affordable healthcare for red voters as well as blue voters, knowing illness and injury don't acknowledge party lines.

We have been working for public school funding and environment protections and women's autonomy and fewer assault weapons, because these things improve the human experience of conservatives, as well as progressives.

This has been true for the past eight years in matters of the law and human rights and civil rights: we have been opposing him on behalf of them, as much as ourselves.

The election results, while a cheap and easy high to red voters in the moment, will prove to be a mirage that gives way to a grim reality that no rally speech can distract them from.

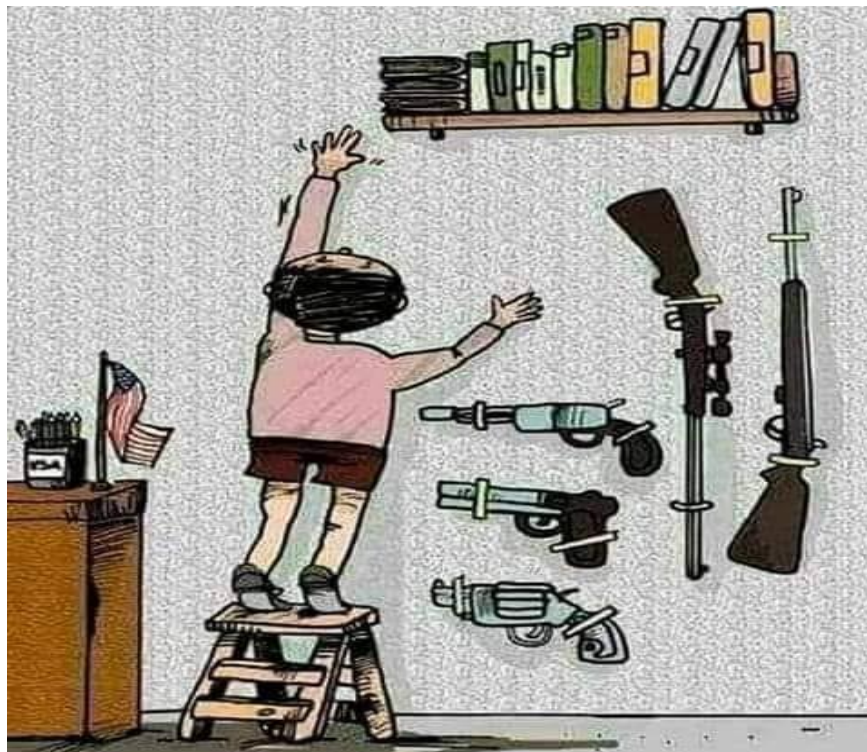
And maybe, just maybe, in the coming weeks and months when there is no Democratic president or congress to lazily blame for the fact that they can't pay their mortgage, afford their medical bills, sustain their business, or provide for their children, they might actually be ready to stand alongside us and defeat the real enemy within.

Here's hoping when that time comes, it won't be too late.

MAGAs have lost, too. They just don't know it yet.

**I THINK IN MANY CASES,  
YOUR MORALITY IS DEEPLY  
LACKING IF ALL YOU  
WANT IS A CHILD  
BORN BUT NOT A  
CHILD FED, NOT A  
CHILD EDUCATED,  
NOT A CHILD HOUSED.  
THAT'S NOT PRO-LIFE.  
THAT'S PRO-BIRTH.**

SISTER JOAN CHITTISTER



# ***Your Blood, Sweat, Treasure, and Tears Accomplished So Much***

Friends,

In many ways, this election year did not result how we wanted. Everything seems bleak, but there are things to be proud of and hopeful for.

With our campaign, we:

- Registered over 9,000 likely Democrats, increasing Democratic turnout in this district for this past election and future ones.
- We helped elect local Democrats like Chris Craft and Alexcia Cox who won by a very narrow margin thanks to higher turnout of Democrats.
- We raised over 260,000 dollars, and didn't spend one nickel on consultants (which sometimes account for over 30 percent of campaign expenses). With this, we forced Mast to spend 4 million. Last election, he donated over 500,000 to the RNC. This year, he donated nothing.
- Thanks to a massive volunteer movement, we sent millions of text messages, knocked on tens of thousands of doors, and sent out thousands of phone calls and postcards.
- We built a community around values. We held over 130 house parties, rallies, and events with folks from all backgrounds since we started this campaign nine months ago. By bringing together strangers, neighbors, and friends, we mobilized a group of



people- united by their belief in the Constitution and our democracy- to make a stand in a state where we need it most.

With this movement, we held Mast accountable. Brian Mast often says one thing (like he cares about the middle class or the



environment) and then does another (pushes Koch Brother tax cuts and development on wetlands). We effectively used TV, newspaper, rallies, and TikTok to call him out and hold him accountable.

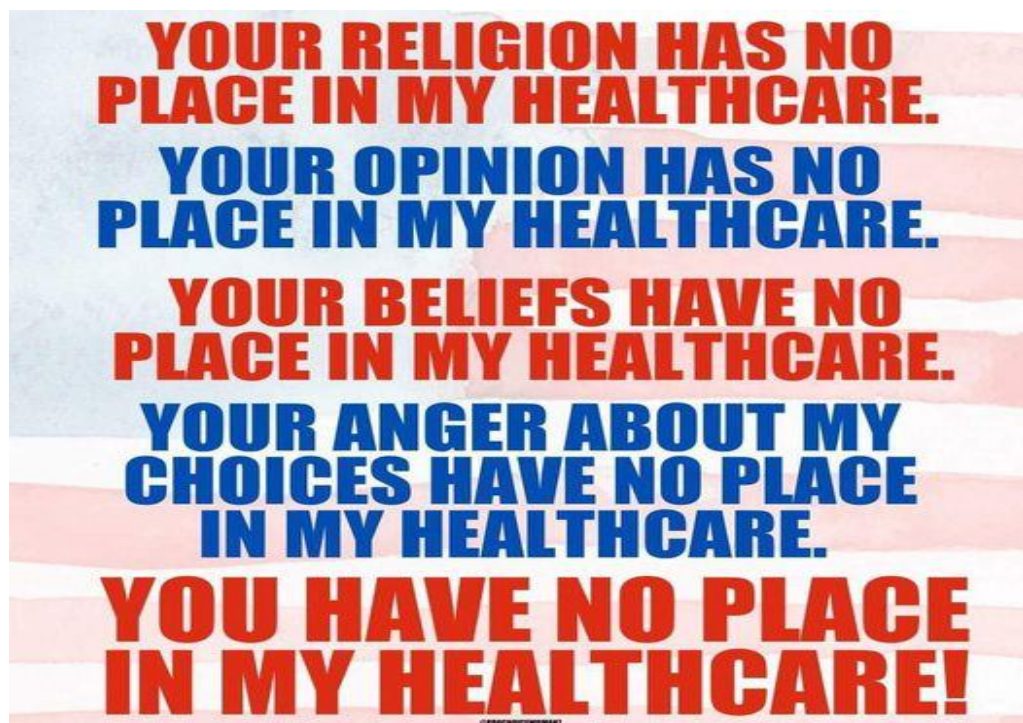
Out of all of the times we called on him to step up, I'm most proud of mobilizing around JD State Park to pressure Mast to take a stand and ultimately shut down the plans to develop on JD. Initially, Brian Mast claimed to know nothing about the plans and remained neutral. We used a 50,000 person Facebook group and TV interviews to show Mast takes money from the very developers who initiated the developments on the park AND voted to leave the Florida Scrub Jay unprotected just months



before the plan to build on the parks. Ultimately, Mast was forced to say “Don’t trust politicians who politicize this! Over my dead body will golf courses be built on JD State Parks.” Pictured here is the rally we helped put together outside his office. This event epitomized how we can use the voice of the people to sway the decisions of lawmakers.

Words cannot describe my gratitude for your volunteerism, donations, and commitment to our democracy. It has been one of my greatest honors being your candidate for this race. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or want to finally catch up!

Sincerely,  
Thomas Witkop



## PROSE & POETRY

### **Today I wear black.**

**I wear black because I'm mourning.**

**Mourning the loss of hope, unity, the  
opportunity to show ourselves and the world  
that we could be better humans, better  
citizens of the world.**

**Mourning the fact that instead of embracing  
that opportunity, we have now shown the  
world, and our children, that we were not  
ready or willing to grow as a nation. We  
prefer to embrace old hate, outdated ways,  
and historic divisions.**

**I mourn because the damage that is to come  
will not end in four years, but will remain, as a  
stain on our country long after this has  
passed. The lives that will be impacted, and  
forever changed will not be repaired, the  
examples shown to our children cannot be  
unseen.**

**I mourn because my heart breaks for what  
our country could have been and what it will  
now be.**

**LOVE DID NOT WIN.  
TOLERANCE DID NOT WIN.  
JOY DID NOT WIN.  
COMPROMISE DID NOT WIN.  
OPPORTUNITY DID NOT WIN.  
HUMAN RIGHTS DID NOT WIN.**

**NOTHING WON THAT UPHOLDS  
HUMAN DIGNITY.**

**MISOGYNY, HATE, DISINFORMATION,  
APATHY, IGNORANCE AND REVENGE WON.**

**BUT IT'S NOT OVER, FOLKS.  
BECAUSE WE WILL CONTINUE  
TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.  
WHEN WE RECOVER FROM THE SHOCK.**

**FOR NOW, HERE'S A BIG HUG FROM ME.**



# Goodbye Democracy

By Bud Koenemund

(With apologies to Margaret Wise Brown)

Dedicated to those who would not look past their own  
wallet

In a great white house  
There sits an orange man;  
With an enemies list,  
A Diet Coke, and bucket of chicken.

Oh, how he'll brag, and spout, and lie –  
A ManChild nothing short of bratty –  
And set about doing the only job he has:  
To destroy us from within for his Sugar Vladdy.

Goodbye NATO;  
Goodbye Ukraine;  
Goodbye Paris Climate Accord;  
Welcome back acid rain.

Goodbye Supreme Court  
And women's rights, it seems;  
So, too, LGBTQ protections;  
Welcome Heritage Foundation's religious wet dreams.

Goodbye to bodily autonomy;  
Goodbye to abortion;  
Goodbye to proper health care;  
Welcome, once more, medical burden.

Goodbye to equal rights for People of Color;





Goodbye to those lost in mass deportations;  
Goodbye to non-partisan government employees;  
Welcome back those found guilty of insurrection.

Goodbye Social Security;  
Goodbye Medicare;  
Goodbye prescription drug caps,  
And Obama's Affordable Care.

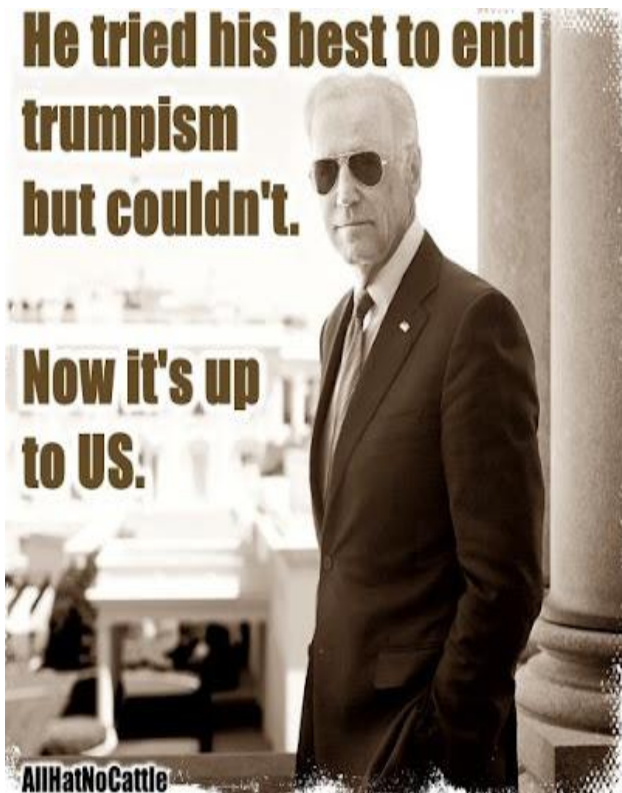
Goodbye independent DoJ and FBI;  
Goodbye Department of Education;  
Goodbye school breakfast and lunch;  
Welcome the dangers of deregulation.

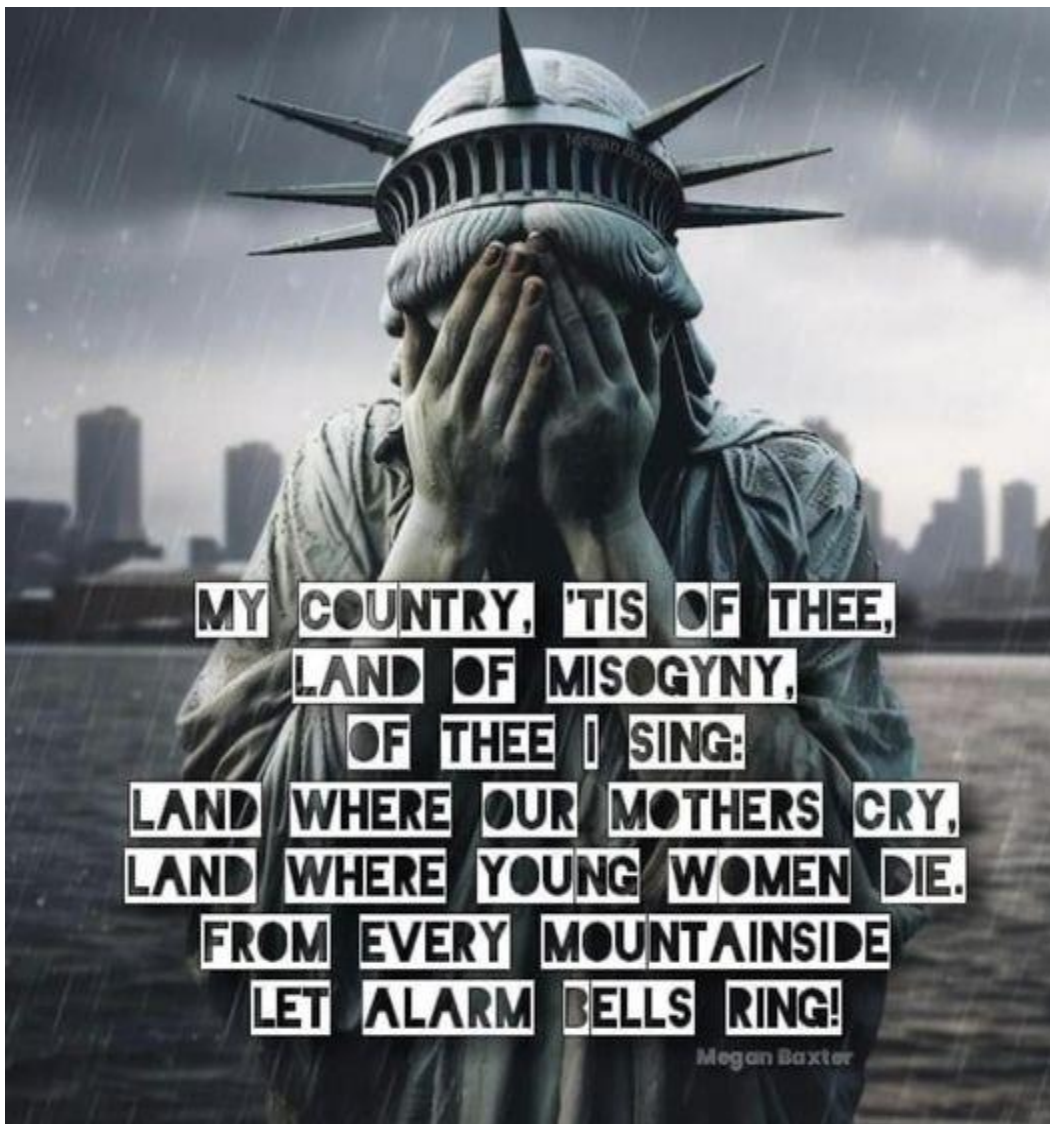
Goodbye student debt relief;  
Goodbye teaching history;  
Goodbye to the truth,  
And banned books they call  
"pornography."

Goodbye to diversity;  
Goodbye to voting rights;  
Goodbye to clean energy;  
Welcome to Mango Mussolini's  
free speech blight.

Goodbye to overtime;  
Hello to tariffs on every nation;  
Goodbye to taxes for the rich;  
While the middle class suffers  
inflation.

Goodbye Democracy;  
You had a pretty good run;  
Achieving so much good;  
But, by ignorance, undone.





Here is a transcript of what Vice President, Kamala Harris said in her concession speech:

*Good afternoon. Thank you all. Thank you. So let me say, and I love you back, and I love you back.*

*So let me say, my heart is full today. My heart is full today, full of gratitude for the trust you have placed in me, full of love for our country and full of resolve. The outcome of this election is not what we wanted, not what we fought for, not what we voted for,*



*but hear me when I say, hear me when I say, the light of America's promise will always burn bright, as long as we never give up and as long as we keep fighting.*

*To my beloved Doug and our family, I love you so very much. To President Biden and Dr. Biden, thank you for your faith and support. To Governor Walz and the Walz family, I know your service to our nation will continue. And to my extraordinary team, to the volunteers who gave so much of themselves. To the poll workers and the local election officials. I thank you. I thank you all.*

*Look, I am so proud of the race we ran and the way we ran it. Over the 107 days of this campaign, we have been intentional about building community and building coalitions, bringing people together from every walk of life and background, united by love of country, with enthusiasm and joy in our fight for America's future, and we did it with the knowledge that we all have so much more in common than what separates us.*

*Now, I know folks are feeling and experiencing a range of emotions right now. I get it, but we must accept the results of this election. Earlier today, I spoke with President-elect Trump and congratulated him on his victory. I also told him that we will help him and his team with their transition, and that we will engage in a peaceful transfer of power.*

*A fundamental principle of American democracy is that when we lose an election, we accept the results. That principle, as much as any other, distinguishes democracy from monarchy or tyranny, and anyone who seeks the public trust, must honor it. At the same time in our nation, we owe loyalty not to a president or a party but to the Constitution of the United States, and loyalty to our conscience and to our God.*

*My allegiance to all three is why I am here to say, while I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fueled this campaign.*



Vice President Kamala Harris delivered a concession speech on Wednesday.

*The fight, the fight for freedom, for opportunity, for fairness and the dignity of all people. A fight for the ideals at the heart of our nation, the ideals that reflect America at our best. That is a fight I will never give up.*

*I will never give up the fight for a future where Americans can pursue their dreams, ambitions and aspirations. Where the women of America have the freedom to make decisions about their own body and not have their government telling them what to do. We will never give up the fight to protect our schools and our streets from gun violence.*

*And America, we will never give up the fight for our democracy, for the rule of law, for equal justice, and for the sacred idea that every one of us, no matter who we are or where we start out, has certain fundamental rights and freedoms that must be respected and upheld.*

*And we will continue to wage this fight in the voting booth, in the courts and in the public square. And we will also wage it in quieter ways: In how we live our lives; by treating one another*

*with kindness and respect; by looking in the face of a stranger and seeing a neighbor; by always using our strength to lift people up to fight for the dignity that all people deserve.*

*The fight for our freedom will take hard work, but like I always say, we like hard work. Hard work is good work. Hard work can be joyful work. And the fight for our country is always worth it. It is always worth it.*

*To the young people who are watching. It is OK to feel sad and disappointed, but please know it's going to be OK. On the campaign, I would often say, when we fight, we win. But here's the thing, here's the thing, sometimes the fight takes a while. That doesn't mean we won't win. That doesn't mean we won't win.*

*The important thing is, don't ever give up. Don't ever give up. Don't ever stop trying to make the world a better place. You have power. You have power. And don't you ever listen when anyone tells you something is impossible because it has never been done before.*

*You have the capacity to do extraordinary good in the world. And so to everyone who is watching, do not despair. This is not a time to throw up our hands. This is a time to roll up our sleeves.*

*This is a time to organize, to mobilize and to stay engaged for the sake of freedom and justice and the future that we all know we can build together.*

*Look, many of you know, I started out as a prosecutor. And throughout my career, I saw people at some of the worst times in their lives. People who had suffered great harm and great pain, and yet found within themselves the strength and the courage and the resolve to take the stand, to take a stand, to fight for justice, to fight for themselves, to fight for others.*

*So let their courage be our inspiration. Let their determination be our charge.*

*And I'll close with this. There's an adage an historian once called a law of history, true of every society across the ages. The adage is, "only when it is dark enough can you see the stars." I know many people feel like we are entering a dark time, but for the benefit of us all, I hope that is not the case.*

*But here's the thing, America, if it is, let us fill the sky with the light of a brilliant, brilliant billion of stars, the light of optimism, of faith, of truth and service.*

*It's you. And may that work guide us even in the face of setbacks toward the extraordinary promise of the United States of America. I thank you all. May God bless you and may God bless the United States of America. I thank you all.*



When your candidate lost in 2020 and thousands of people were dancing in the streets in celebration across the nation and all across the world, with bells ringing from the Eiffel Tower...

and then your candidate wins in 2024 and there isn't one public celebration anywhere, not one —that's a good indication you're on the wrong side of history. And definitely not “the majority” of anything.

@adgirlMM



# Buck Up

By Lucian K. Truscott IV

It's what my father used to say to me when I was complaining about something I couldn't control and felt sorry for myself. It always happened at the dinner table. I sat next to my brother and across the table from my three sisters. We ate dinner at that table nearly every night of my childhood, until my last couple of years in high school when I had jobs that ended after dinner time, and I would either eat alone in the kitchen or at the dinner table across from my father, who also often came home late.

Dinner was the hour when we had "family talk." What happened today in school? How did track or football go? How was your riding lesson, Susan? How did you do on that – *insert class name* – test?

We weren't allowed to mumble one syllable answers. We had to actually say what had happened that day in school or at practice or Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts or whatever activity we took part in.

My brother Frank and sister Susan would dutifully recount their day, my father or mother inserting questions if they had them. Then it was my turn. I was the complainer. Nothing ever went the way it should have in my estimation. Looking back on it, I was already a baby Democrat. I wanted people to act fairly and reasonably, and I got mad when they didn't. In English class, Mrs. Crossetto made no secret of her dislike for me. In retrospect, I don't blame her. I was an arrogant little prick who thought he knew everything because sometimes, he did know a



few things. Mrs. Crossetto would consistently mark my essays or poems or book reviews or spelling and definition tests with a B+, even when she knew and I knew and practically everyone in class who had sat there and listened to me recite a poem I had written knew that my work deserved an A.

*Buck up.* He would boom from the end of the table.  
*But Dad, you don't understand,* I would bleat from my seat.  
*I don't need to understand, boy. Buck up. Now is your chance to learn that the world isn't fair and things are not always going to go your way.*

But I told you! Even when I work harder, it doesn't count.

*It's not the grade. It's your attitude about it. If you deserve an A, buck up and give yourself an A in your mind, and stop whining.*

It didn't work, of course. I was 14, or I was 16, and everything was so *unfair*. The football coach in 9<sup>th</sup> grade wouldn't put me in the game even though I bested my competition at tight end because the father of the guy I beat invited the coach to go golfing at the post golf course and they had beers together at the Officers Club afterwards.

*Buck up.*

The Boy Scout Troop master denied me a couple of merit badges, one of them for leadership, because at a camp out, I took the other guys out giggling frogs after lights out at 9 p.m.

*Buck up.*

But dad, it's a campout! Nine o'clock is ridiculous.

*They're his rules. Your job is to follow the rules or try to get them changed. Stop complaining. Buck up.*

\* \* \*

This is where we're at. We followed the rules. Kamala Harris and

Tim Walz ran a great campaign. You could count the number of “mistakes,” in quotes, they made on one hand. They appealed to the better nature of the American people. The last week of the campaign, they had tens of thousands of volunteers out in the battleground states, many of whom paid their own travel expenses, knocking on doors and writing post cards and staffing phone banks. They did every single thing a well-run campaign operation should do at the same time the Trump campaign’s GOTV operation was in shambles or nonexistent.

Kamala did three rallies a day non-stop. They ran excellent positive ads. They ran perfectly crafted attack ads pointing out all Donald Trump’s flaws, if they can be called that – felony convictions, sex assault judgements, felony indictments for attempting to overturn the last election, his incessant lying. They went after the decline in his mental capacity. In one ad, they had audio of Trump, bragging about how his rallies were sold out and nobody ever left his rally, playing over images of completely empty sections of sports stadiums and people flowing through exits with Trump still speaking in the background.

The question Democrats have today is, we had a great candidate, we did everything right, what happened?

There are dozens of postmortems I could quote from, including those from former Republicans like George Conway and Steve Schmidt and a good one in the New York Times by Daniel McCarthy, identified as editor of “Modern Age: A Conservative Review.” The former Republican pundits, I guess you could call them, get something about Trump voters that we Democrats have had a hard time with. Trump’s voters’ hatred of the Washington D.C. establishment is so powerful it overcame any reservations they had with Donald Trump, if they indeed had any reservations at all. Their hatred was greater was a more powerful force than the love we Democrats had for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz, who were thrust upon us late in the game by a party leadership and a president who had problems with age and mental decline that became unavoidably obvious only during and

after the June debate.

We could look upon the whole manner of Harris' elevation to be the Democratic candidate as a mistake, but that misses the point that this campaign wasn't about hits and misses, bullseyes and mistakes, or who had the most money, or ran the best ads, or had the superior GOTV effort, or put on the best-attended rallies.

It wasn't even about who could convince that tiny sliver of the electorate who were supposedly undecided. And it certainly wasn't a campaign about who was better qualified and suited to become the next President of the United States.

If it was a turnout election, as I said yesterday, the question isn't even why Democrats couldn't get enough people to go to the polls, or why people who had voted Democratic before changed their votes this time. They were all given plenty of reason to vote for Harris and not to vote for Trump. There are legions of experts parsing those numbers who will tell us who this, why that, and as much as we should know all that stuff and understand it, this election didn't turn on numbers and reasons and certainly not logic.

Campaigns for president as we have known them are over. All the technical stuff, the expertise of the so-called political professionals, didn't matter. Even James Carville, who has as sharp a political mind as anyone I've ever encountered, was left dumbstruck: "I don't know what percent of this defeat is because we didn't embrace the change message or we kept something too long — you know, there was some flaw in our strategy and our presentation," Carville said this morning on his podcast, lamenting the "tens of millions of people who fell for this shit. I'll have to reevaluate. I'm sure I'll come up with something to make me feel good again, but right now, today, it's hard."

The problem with this kind of political thinking is that it's over, too. Our loss is nobody's fault. Trump's win was not even his personal accomplishment. We are living in an entirely new landscape, not just in our politics, but in ourselves. You can't fix

what went wrong – the election of Donald Trump – without coming to grips with something within us that we don't yet understand.

Remember Jimmy Carter's "national malaise?" We are living through a national anxiety that hasn't even been diagnosed, much less treated. You want to know why four million Democrats didn't turn out to vote? Because they didn't have the sense that their vote would fix how they felt.

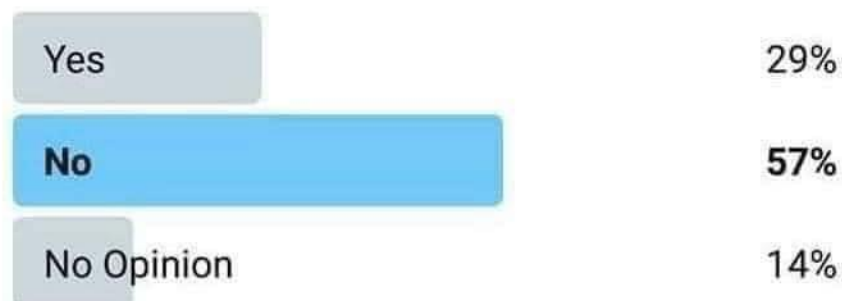
Trump's voters turned out because they believed him when he stood up there at his rallies and claimed that he would fix all their problems, whatever they were. For them, it was what passed for leadership, so they followed him. He won't fix things, he doesn't even know what their problems are, and he doesn't care. But that doesn't matter right now.

What matters for us is that the time for complaining is over. Here is how my father told me to get over myself:

*Buck up.* There are things to figure out and work to do. We have the tools; we're smart; we can do it.

[luciantruscott@substack.com](mailto:luciantruscott@substack.com)

## Should American schools teach Arabic Numerals as a part of their curriculum?

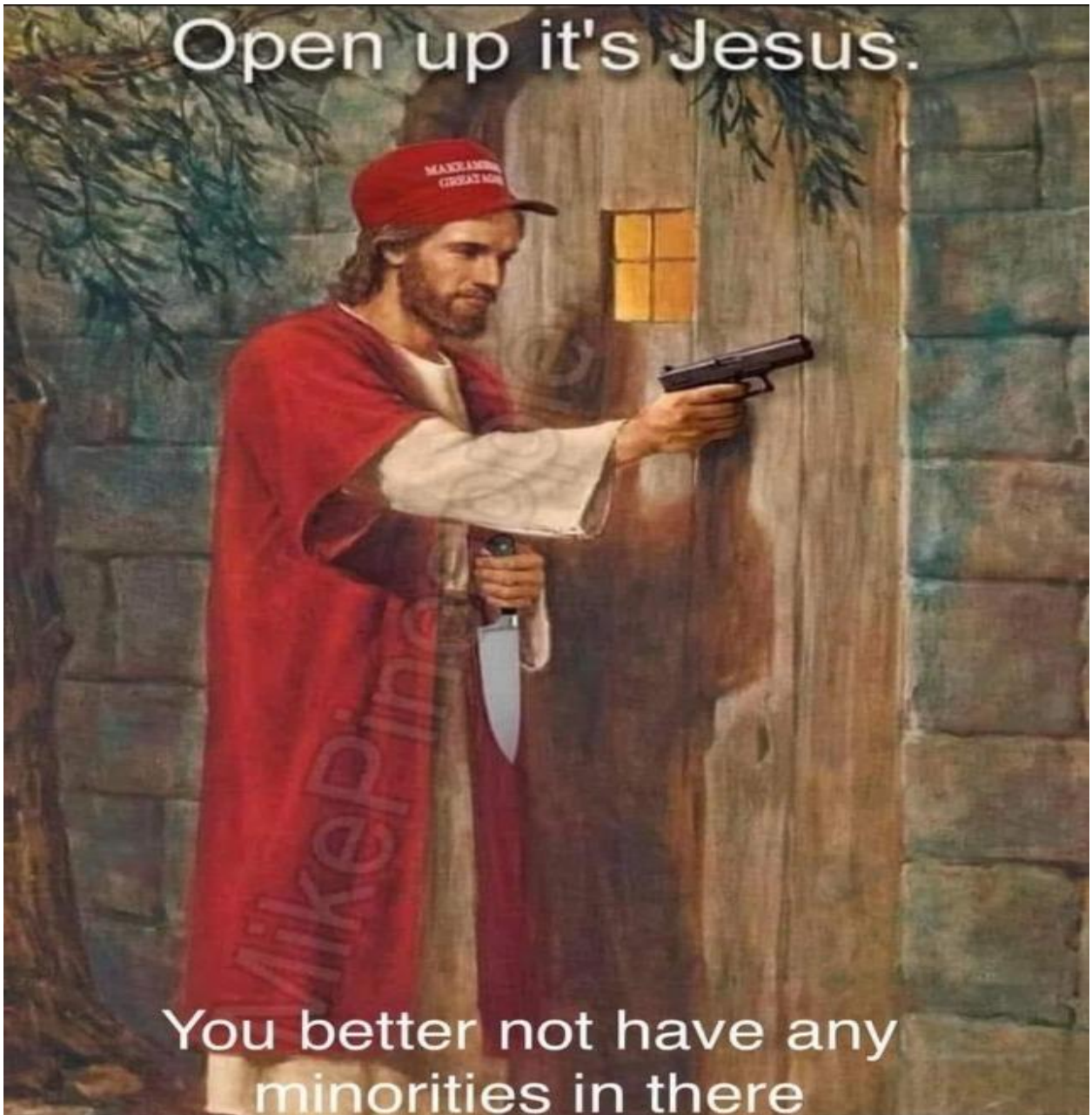


2,313 votes • Final results

## My kinda people

- 1 You read books and don't burn them
- 2 You embrace science
- 3 You are willing to change your mind when new information becomes available
- 4 You understand that most issues are not black and white
- 5 You believe in true equality for all people
- 6 You have empathy
- 7 You embrace cooperation
- 8 You respect others' rights
- 9 You believe culture and the arts have value
- 10 You care for the planet





BE SEEING YOU