

T.O. Opening Remarks 6/22/25

Happy Pride Month!

WELCOME TO THE 80th Meeting of Making Waves for Democracy!! My two favorite signs at the NO KINGS RALLY I attended were: “The only orange monarch I like is a butterfly”... and: OMG.GOP.WTF!

That seems like a year ago now...

I HAVE WHIPLASH!

As pollster and Hopium Chronicles founder Simon Rosenberg said this morning: “Trump’s Presidency is failing and unpopular... Elon attacked and emasculated him...Global leaders are not bending the knee, and there has been no 90 trade deals in 90 days. Putin is treating him like a coffee boy, and Zelensky has made him look like a clown. His economic policy is slowing the economy down in every country in the world, including the US, has caused our credit rating to go through an unprecedented downgrade, and the American people have figured out this budget bill will make their lives much worse.... All across the country local news organizations are reporting on how his cuts ... will harm their communities. He keeps losing in court, badly. The Vatican elected as Pope an American cardinal who has been very critical of his Administration. He had to bring Kilmar Abrego Garcia home. ...His ugliness has

spawned what appears to be the biggest protest movement in American history. His immigration enforcement escalation has backfired....His poll numbers have crashed...” UNQUOTE

SO HE BOMBED IRAN!!!

I have whiplash....And I bet you do too.... To quote Rebecca Solnit, whose newsletter “Meditations in an Emergency” I read daily and whose book Hope in the Dark (written over 20 years ago) is great! QUOTE “....Under Trump, the eruptions and the news stories about them stumble over each other, dogpile, shove each other aside, crowd each other out of our attention, shout each other down..... (they are) distraction from the distraction from the distraction from the stupid or corrupt or failed thing he just did or just backed off from doing....which is how he recently earned the acronym TACO....and which is why life under him is continuous whiplash” UNQUOTE.

I guess he didn’t like the fact his birthday party military parade was a bust so he bombed Iran -- against 60% of Americans’ wishes....

OY.....

This is a change of subject!

SO.....I want to share what I've learned this week:

ICE is like the Klan: violent vigilantes, random, masked, inspiring FEAR wherever they go. I am enraged constantly. They picked up two nannies at a park near my house two days ago; yesterday a friend told me that they held a kid – a 12 year old US Citizen -- for 3 weeks without telling his family where he was....My own undocumented housekeeper and her whole family of 5 are living in terror...And do NOT think ICE has gone away....

BUT.... WE -- the Dems, the Resistance – are WINNING the narrative war on immigration...California's new heroes are LA's Mayor Karen Bass and Governor Newsome – (Go figure!) Wasn't his press conference a few days ago awesome? America hates ICE.

As a white friend who visited me yesterday (thank you gods!) put it, we have such an intimate relationship with the immigrant parental caretaker, or the gardener, or nanny, or housekeeper – or the clerk at the grocery store – that folks will rise up against anyone who threatens that relationship. Look at the small Trump-voting towns that have brought their beloved immigrants home, or fought off ICE TOGETHER.....

(New topic....)

I've also become a fan of the historian and expert on Fascism, Ruth Ben-Ghiat – our new RBG! -- again, subscribe to her daily column on Lucid.... She says everything I agree with:

- that we are experiencing MORAL COLLAPSE, and**
- that Democracy is all about elections, and**
- that ALL strongmen head up Criminal Enterprises that use the government to enrich themselves and their friends in the oligarchy. As she says, “Corruption is EVERYTHING” and crypto is the newest form of corruption....**

The world we want – where liberty and justice for ALL exists -- is patiently waiting; it's got next. Where trans and BIPOC folks and immigrants are NOT afraid. A kinder, gentler Canada where there are no billionaires – and the tax system is fair and the American Dream thrives.

I know it's gonna get worse before it gets better and life will be disrupted for the middle class and political violence like that in Minneapolis will be more common. Alas....

But, although I don't know when or exactly how, WE WILL WIN.

Meanwhile, DO NOT LET THEM TAKE YOUR JOY away! Their goal is to make you cynical or afraid or exhausted....

On a personal note, these times tap into my own trauma. Although I am privileged now, when I was 4 to 6 years old, in the mid 1950s, I lived in Madrid, in fascist Spain under the dictator Franco and I saw military police on every street-corner and felt fearful and powerless....

My visiting friend yesterday suggested that I gently share my own experience with my 5-year-old grand-nephew and 3-year-old grand-niece who are just becoming aware of Trump and US creeping fascism – Bridget and Liam were out there lining the street with their signs at their first demonstration on June 14 – Bridget’s was just a big purple heart that she drew.... And Liam was pleasantly surprised by the number of cars that honked in solidarity with his handmade sign: “HANDS OFF OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!”

And there were LOTS of kids out on June 14! For them, for us all, let’s remember that WE are the fighters and organizers and truth-tellers!

Remember, ALL TYRANTS FALL.

Keep fighting. Sue. Protest. Vote. Disrupt. Organize!

**Now onto our main event. I get to introduce my ex- and Best Friend
in the Universe – for over 40 years.....**