

T.O. Opening Remarks April 13, 2025

Happy Passover or Palm Sunday to those who celebrate.....AND...Welcome to the 78th monthly meeting of Making Waves for Democracy since Jan 2017.

I LOVE that the Bernie/AOC rally yesterday in LA was the biggest ever, at 36,000! I had a conflict but I'm thrilled many of you went....I agree with them on everything: YES to a government and an economy that works for all of us, and not just the billionaires! YES to raising the minimum wage, YES to expanding Social Security (especially raising the cap to fully fund it forever!), YES to universal health care, YES to paid family and medical leave, YES to more affordable housing, YES to making childcare and higher education affordable to all, YES to taking on climate change.

I've seen two movies recently that are sadly too relevant – “I'm Still Here” about Brazil and “The Penguin Lessons” about Argentina – GO SEE THEM BOTH! Both deal with those dissidents who are DISAPPEARED by their country's fascist/military regimes. I just saw “The Penguin Lessons” yesterday and Steve Coogan's face is imprinted in my mind -- as his character stood by and watched his young working-class woman friend grabbed on a busy street corner by military men, stuffed in a car and disappeared --

Some 30,000 people were disappeared in Argentina during the military regime. It was a while ago but it's too close for comfort now...

*****NEW TOPIC**

I like LOTS of demonstrations. Let 1000 flowers bloom! Check out TeslaTakeDown. Or: show up on any street corner with a handmade sign

April 19th. Or April 27th. Or MayDay. Or May 10th. Especially if you did NOT attend one last week, find or create one and GO. You'll be glad you did. The artistry of the signs, mostly handmade, will bring joy into your heart, and the sense of belonging to a political community is terrific.

I loved the signs at the April 5th "Hands Off" demo; my three favorites were: "INTROVERTS ARE SO PISSED OFF WE LEFT HOME TODAY!" -- "FIGHT TRUTH DECAY" with a huge ugly picture of the orange fascist, and "PUT YOUR PERIMENOPAUSAL RAGE TO GOOD USE....FIGHT BACK!"

Saturday, April 19 is the 250th anniversary of "The shot heard Round the world...", made famous by the poem "Concord Hymn" by Ralph Waldo Emerson. That battle of Lexington and Concord started the first American Revolution. Yes the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were imperfect, but c'mon -- we know we do NOT WANT A KING!

And we certainly do not want tariffs!

Tariffs started the first American Revolution. And now a second American Revolution sounds like a good idea to me.

Remember the Boston Tea Party where 90,000 pounds of tea were tossed overboard into Boston Harbor? (By the way, 16 of the 100 or so participants were teenagers....).

We threw off the yoke of colonialism because of the TARIFFS on tea, paper and more -- because it was unfair. The Revolutionists' motto then was "No taxation without representation." This is all too relevant today. Stop the oligarchs who are stealing from the rest of us. The rich pay NO TAXES and hate the delivery system for the American Dream: like it or not, that would be the government! But instead Trusk has already in 80 days cut over 250,000 federal workers.

The Republican budget plan is to enrich wealthy folks by \$7 trillion dollars. And that requires cutting Medicaid and Social Security. We old folks are tough though; we've been fighting for our rights all our life and we won't stop now!

Based on attending other groups and talking to friends, I'm concerned about our tendency toward disunity. Remember that one of the main reasons the Nazis came to power was divisions in the left!

In the LGBTQ movement when I was a leader – then called the Gay and Lesbian movement – we developed a Code of Ethics: one item was "if you're gossiping about someone more than 25%, it's called TRASHING".

This is a United Front moment in history. For good or bad, we live in a two-party system! DO NOT WASTE your time on who is the leadership of the Democratic Party! Focus on that which you can control.

IF you put constant pressure on your elected reps, they will change their positions. SHAME or PRAISE works!

Keep your eyes on the prize, folks; unity now is paramount!

New topic:

I've always been a small business booster. Many of my Irish ancestors were small-business people, store owners. The Right has often used Small Businesses as a screen, a Front Group for Big Business, for Corporations who are part of the 1% whose interest they serve.

But these tariffs will hit small businesses hard -- and threaten to blow up the unholy alliance between corporate and small businesses.

So all of you who are involved with the small business sector, spread the word! Especially since so many in the Latino and Asian immigrant communities strive to own their own small businesses and the ethnic Chambers of Commerce that represent them are such fixtures in our world....

Another reason to launch the next American Revolution....

Today's topic is IMMIGRANT RIGHTS. We are a nation of immigrants and LA is a city of immigrants. As of 2023, there were 920,000 "unauthorized" or undocumented immigrants in LA County, 30% of whom lives with at least one citizen. And, did you know that ASIA is the leading source of recent immigrants in CA?

I'm thrilled to introduce Angelica Salas to you.

She's a longtime leader of the immigrants' rights movement --

This year she marks 30 years at CHIRLA -- the Coalition for Humane

Immigrant Rights in LA -- with 51,000 members -- 26 of those years Angelica

has been CHIRLA's Executive Director. Angelica is a national figure who's been called the "most important moral voice" of immigrants. She was born in Durango, Mexico and came to LA as an unaccompanied child at age 5 to join her parents....This woman is a true leader....and we welcome her today:

Over to you, Angelica....

30-30-30