

**T.O. Opening Remarks: MAKING WAVES FOR DEMOCRACY 6/26/2022**

**WELCOME TO THE 52<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Making Waves for Democracy** – I'm really proud of 5 ½ years of staying together, of building a coherent and effective political community. We done good, folks!

Well, Friday was a dark day for freedom, **and the first time ever a progressive constitutional right has been TAKEN AWAY by the Supreme Court....** And it was the most painful of a trio of Rightwing decisions this past week by SCOTUS that slashed at the very fabric of America: The decision that ruled in favor of using PUBLIC money for religious schooling (thus tearing down the wall between Church and State), the pro-gun decision, and then overturning Roe.

Last month you heard about my illegal abortion in 1969 – that event focused my own organizing work till Roe v Wade passed in January 1973. One friend I've known since we were 22 (Judy MacLean, who's a regular at these meetings!) pointed out that the 50-year stretch Roe was in place is about how long it had been when we were young since women got the right to vote in 1920! Now when I was young, the Suffragists' struggle seemed like ancient history; we totally took the right to vote for granted. Just like young women of today took the right to abortion for granted.

**I got the following text Friday from my niece Leah – a fairly unpolitical 30 year old Mom of two young kids – It brought tears to my eyes: “I’m so sorry so much of the hard work you’ve put in over the years has been undone, but there are a lot of people who will continue it even if we wish we wouldn’t have to....On Reddit, which is the social media site that skews youngest other than TikTok, they’ve set up an ‘auntie network’ and it’s flooded with people offering rides and lodging and support for women seeking abortions.”**

**Today my thoughts are jumbled by my grief and anger but I want to make three points:**

- 1) We must avenge this wrong; our job is clear.**
- 2) This is part of a larger playbook by the Right.**
- 3) Let’s focus our anger on the right targets, not on each other.**

**l.: We MUST make the Republicans regret this brutal misogynist act in November. As LEAH GREENBERG, co-ED of INDIVISIBLE emailed on Friday, “Today’s decision is not the end of the MAGA GOP’s rollback of our fundamental rights, but just the beginning: everything from marriage equality to contraception to civil rights is now at risk. The only way we stand against their assault is to ensure they are defeated at the ballot box this year. We need to make sure people understand exactly how dangerous their**

extremist agenda is, and then we need to make sure they pay a huge price for this attack on our freedom and dignity.”

2) My favorite historian, Heather Cox Richardson – who doesn’t have 1.7 million followers for nothing! – did a special 30-minute FaceBook video that is stunning and deserves watching – we will send the link to all of you with our follow up email.

To see the normally neutral, cool calm & collected historian on the verge of tears at the start was moving. And she said: “I urge you to think beyond Roe. This is the light of the oncoming train; this is part of a larger project of the Right: that is, to no longer have government defending democracy.” She goes on to talk about the three legs of the stool – ALL of which this new extremist Republican party is HELLBENT on eliminating: (1) business regulation – the next likely SCOTUS decision will be against environmental regulations, eviscerating the EPA; (2) the social safety net – like Medicare, Social Security, the ACA; (3) and, civil rights – women, people of color, VOTING rights.

Economic rights; the social safety net; civil rights: they want them gone.

The bottom line is that the current Republican party is a RADICAL MINORITY that wants to create a white-supremacist Christian theocratic

oligarchy, to roll back everything progressive since the New Deal, so that the very idea of democracy – that MAJORITY RULES -- is struck down.

Richardson says: NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD! (and when the usually objective historian puts out a call to action, you know it's not business as usual!) And she talks eloquently about how the Right tries to advance its antidemocratic agenda through FEAR! They want you to be thinking about inflation in November (or Critical Race Theory or LGBTQ rights)...Not Roe!

AND by the way I'm convinced that OIL PRICES are up because of PRICE GOUGING by the oil companies – who with record PROFITS showing -- want Republicans to win so they get more tax cuts and less regulation....

3) My third and final point is this: The vitriol ON OUR SIDE – unleashed by this SCOTUS ruling – is disturbing. On my own FaceBook page, I had one very feisty local feminist leader unleash her rage against the Democrats – I was reminded of 2008, when the anti-gay-marriage Prop 8 passed in the same election Barack Obama won, and the LGBT community splintered into fingerpointing.

In fact, in my 50 years of activism, I've seen horrific infighting and what we used to call “horizontal hostility” surge WHENEVER a Rightwing

victory occurs. I GET IT, how anger spills over....BUT, STOP IT FOLKS!

My favorite quote about this is from Karl Marx: Infighting is the luxury of the powerless, he said! DO NOT TURN AGAINST DEMOCRATS. That's exactly what the Reps want. Remember, the Nazis took over in part because the moderates and the left splintered into infighting! WE ARE IN a united front moment!

Heather Cox Richardson said, through her tears at the start of her amazing video Friday "At least we're all together..." So, REMEMBER to build activism! Remember the "Three As": Analysis, Allies, ACTION. This is a teachable moment. This is a time to understand what is going on, and educate others This is a time to collect our ALLIES... And TO TAKE ACTION!

WHATEVER YOU DO – DO NOT DESPAIR! That's just what they want! As the great John Lewis said and Senator Raphael Warnock reminds us: There is always a way out of no way....

We have the perfect counterpoint in the Jan 6<sup>th</sup> Hearings. They are telling the truth. As the most conservative and most respected jurist on the Right, Judge J. Michael Luttig (who I NEVER thought I'd ever quote!) --- said in his powerful testimony: "The former president and his party are today a clear and present danger for American democracy."

**WE ARE THE VAST MAJORITY – it's time to wake up EVERYONE to  
what's going on --AND Remember, the Road to Holding the House Runs  
through California this November.....**

**And that's our ACTION!**

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