

**T.O. Opening Remarks –
Making Waves for Democracy NOVEMBER 24, 2024**

WELCOME TO THE 75th meeting of MAKING WAVES FOR DEMOCRACY since our founding in January 2017! We door-knocked our hearts out and both our candidates won, George Whitesides and Dave Min, -- in CA-27 and 47 – and it looks like Democrat Derek Tran will be declared the winner in CA 45. Our year-round talking to voters made a HUGE DIFFERENCE.

Well for the record, I did NOT see the Dems’ defeat coming – as I had in 2016....I was caught up in the bubble of Kamala JOY....And since the election I have NOT been able to watch the news – along with lots of others -- MSNBC has seen a 39% decline in viewership! The finger-pointing and facile punditry drives me nuts...and it ignores the truth as I see it: we need to be humble and admit we know little.

The bottom line is Kamala Harris and Tim Walz ran an AWESOME campaign -- They had no primary and only 105 days -- and our ground game was far superior, proven by the fact that the turnout was 4 pts better in swing states than others.

AND YES the orange fascist did NOT get 50% of the vote. The “red mirage” was a thing again this year.

But ultimately JOY does not win over ANGER. And anger is the basis of their organizing, of their unholy alliance between the rich and the white working class.

BUT here I’m gonna say something that’s controversial: I believe the reason for the Democrats’ defeat is BOTH racism and misogyny AND the lack

of economic populism. As my favorite TV pundit Eddie Glaude said, “This is who America is” – We saw the worst of the patriarchal confederacy. But, for once I agree with Bernie Sanders in his Nov 10 Boston Globe op ed “Democrats Must Choose: The Elites or the Working Class”. This is vital in a country where 60% of the people live paycheck to paycheck while corporate profits soar -- the rich are getting richer – the 813 billionaires own 50% of U.S wealth. And meanwhile wages remain stagnant. It’s disgusting!

WHEN WILL WE LEARN THAT THE REAL ISSUE IS THE ECONOMIC DIVIDE? – it’s greater than in 1929. The Right-wing in this country has been organizing for corporate POWER since 1971 when The Powell Memo came out. If you haven’t read it recently, Google it!

It’s time for a Big Reset. YES Gaza made a difference and YES she got 7 million fewer votes and he got 2.5 million MORE votes than Biden in 2020 and YES they out-organized us – Alas, in our society, a sense of BELONGING is paramount. I thought MAGA was just a CULT before the election. But it’s more than that....it’s a CLUB, with a uniform and swag, and music, and rallies, and its own form of joy....Yep, it’s autocratic and top down but it provides a sense of belonging to those in it....It’s time to – gulp – learn from them so we can WIN IN THE FUTURE....As Anne Lamott says in her long post that gave me some comfort the day after the election: Grace bats last.

First, we REST, then when we are ready, we regroup. And we ORGANIZE! We are NOT in the same place as the first time in 2017. DO NOT LET THEM TELL YOU that the measurement of our strength is Big Protests like the Women’s March. Or the numbers of groups. WE ARE FAR

BETTER OFF THAN WE WERE 8 YEARS AGO...We are hardened warriors. We must each find our Path....I suggest the following:

- 1. REST!!! Trust yourself. Make or enjoy ART and MUSIC.**
- 2. Find your community! DO NOT BE ISOLATED!!**
- 3. Go to the Waging Nonviolence website and Read 10 Ways to be Prepared and Grounded....by Daniel Hunter. (I'd never heard of him either!)**
- 4. FIND your path. Maybe it's DIRECT SERVICES, helping those who will be targeted, immigrants or trans people or young women forced to give birth. Or maybe it's DISOBEDIENCE and DISRUPTION – As suggested in 10 Ways, I wear this innocuous paperclip in honor of the early Norwegian Resistance to the Nazis.....Maybe you already know what your path is....**
- 5. ABOVE ALL, DO NOT ENGAGE in FINGERPOINTING! We need to be UNITED NOW. The problem with ALL the social movements I've ever been involved with has been PURISM; we're really good at circling the wagons and firing inward.**
- 6. Remember the “3 As” -- Analysis, Allies, Action.....**

If you need ANALYSIS, Join SISTER DISTRICT and INDIVISIBLE if you haven't already. And there are LOTS of daily online newsletters to choose from but I suggest you make Heather Cox Richardson one of them. As for ALLIES – you are here today. This is a time for LEARNING, not arrogance....And vow to ACT in January if not before.

***Making Waves for Democracy* is regrouping ourselves....but know this, my friends:**

It bears repeating: We are WAY better off than we were eight years ago. AND, 2026 is not far away.... We'll be ready! And there are lessons....

SO I WANT TO PIVOT NOW to the first iteration of Making Waves for Democracy's learnings, and bring up Brandon Zavala....

We couldn't be more different in age, gender, class background, temperament, place we come from. BUT we want to learn from each other, so for the next 25 minutes, Brandon and I will toss questions out to one another, following by Q & A in the Chat which Barrie will facilitate...

Here's my go-to guy in CA 27, Brandon Zavala.....