

OPENING REMARKS May 31, 2026 Making Waves for Democracy (and intro to Brian Colker)

Welcome to the 88th monthly meeting of Making Waves for Democracy....

Well, I've been talking about the ECONOMIC DIVIDE for 20 years..... I used to carry around a chart which I kept in my wallet for many years. That chart showed a comparison between 1965-1979 and then 1980-the present, showing how since Reagan the income gap kept climbing. But that income gap is impossible to keep up with – it's gotten so big!

That chart was divided into quintiles, that is, fifths. It showed that before 1980, while there was inequality, the growth of the poor, the bottom quintile, kept up with the top quintile. Growth was spread evenly; the bottom grew as fast as the top. Then, everything changed in 1980 and the top grew much quicker than the bottom. I updated the chart regularly....THEN, they added a top 5%, then a top 1%, and then.... I couldn't keep up.... Boy, do we need an economic revolution! TODAY the poorer 50% of income earners make less than 2% of the total... the lowest 50% make less than 2%!

I can't wait until the primary is over! Just two more days until the dithering among Democrats in California over the Governor's race is over. I keep my eyes on the prize. I'm jazzed that the Democrats are poised to take back the House no matter what the Reps do in redistricting....(but we have Brian Colker to talk about that....)

And I'm so glad that the Democrats FINALLY learned all the lessons that the Republicans knew long before Redmap in 2010.....The Dems (who for years have focused on the 7 battleground states) are FINALLY running candidates in November in ALL electoral seats, in *purple and red* areas, no matter how small: the school board, state legislatures, etc. It's a longterm plan, not accomplished in one election....and we're doing itWe are competing everywhere for political power.....as Simon Rosenberg says, I'd rather be us than them!

Okay...new subject....

Don't bother to Google the American Right wing! You'll be disappointed....but in my book, Coming Home to America, published in 1996 (yes, 30 years ago!), I had a small section on the

Right wing that still holds true. (Much of the rest of the book seems really old now....)

The Right started organizing in 1971 – after the infamous Powell Memo to the National Chamber of Commerce came out complaining about the left and laying out their bold plan to take over the country. The Right bested their own 20-year plan with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980! And they’ve been on the ascendance ever since....It took more than 40 years but they have fostered the growing economic divide, and in 2024 found their perfect candidate in the billionaire, pro-oligarchy Orange Fascist. Because they had Congress after 2024, they have been able to implement the majority of the Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025 more rapidly than I ever thought was possible. It’s only been 1 ½ years!

But the Right wing represents the dying gasp of the patriarchal confederacy. They represent at most 1/3 of the country, which is anti-Black racist, misogynist and homophobic. The 2/3 of us are finally united now.

And the first true test of our new unity is in November, an election the Right/Republicans plan to steal -- through voter suppression, as in the recent SCOTUS decision that eliminated what was left of the Voting Rights Act....or sending ICE in to all cities....Much as they might want to, they cannot cancel the election;

states and counties handle elections. And we will fight them every step of the way. Remember, we are the VAST MAJORITY. I know I will volunteer for some sort of voter protection, and I hope you do too!

Again, I don't know when or how the Orange Fascist goes (or dies), and the Right gets replaced. But I believe we've turned a corner in the global war between autocracy and democracy. It's only uphill from here.

Looking back, I've been lucky to be a part of building several movements, most notably the LGBTQ movement, or what we used to call the GAY AND LESBIAN movement.....

It took a lot of work. It took a lot of years. It took AIDS and losing a lot of our foot soldiers in order to win. But win we did!!! The equality of gay and lesbians is upheld by the vast majority of Americans. And what I say today is: The Democrats must keep building: building coalitions, organizing. We must keep our eyes on the prize. We will win. Because we have community and caring for each other. And that builds the network.

SO I HAVE HOPE....

Here's another poem. This one is by Emily Dickinson...I knew the first stanza but not the whole thing....The poem is called

HOPE.

**Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops - at all,**

**And sweetest in the Gale is heard
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm.**

**I've heard it in the chillest land,
And on the strangest Sea;
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.**

And now on to our main event..... BRIAN COLKER

I LOVE THIS GUY!

**He's the smartest person I know –
if you aren't friends with him on Facebook, look him up.... I met him through
one of my Obama gals nearly 10 years ago and we've been working on the
Resistance as co-conspirators ever since.**

**I wrote last time I introduced Brian these 2 things -- that are even more
important today:**

- 1. He runs a small business that actually incorporated a new antiracist vision in 2020 after the George Floyd protests (remember those?) in order to expand Diversity – Equity – Inclusion there...**
- 2. And there is nobody else on earth I would TOTALLY trust to run a men's group – it's called Dudes for Democracy and it's still going...**

Here the reason you came today -- Brian Colker