

Operation Wildfire: Good Things Happen When YOU Vote

April 24, 2025

The Democrats' Dilemma

Dilemma: A situation that requires a choice between options that are or seem equally unfavorable or unsatisfactory - American Heritage Dictionary

Following the devastating loss in the 2024 general elections, the Democratic National Committee members and elected officials have encountered a level of disarray that some say will change the party and its future forever. The challenges involve finding a face of the party that will appeal to the electorate; choosing issues that will resonate; forging a "resistance". All geared toward regaining the blue-collar voters that they have appeared to have lost to the strong populist message of President Trump and other Republican leaders at the national and state levels.

FINDING A LEADER

With the repudiation of the Harris/Walz ticket and the loss of the incumbent to apparent dementia, no strong individual has advanced to the front to provide leadership. The Democratic National Committee hasn't helped matters with the selection of David Hogg as its Vice Chairman. Even former President Obama, who is a logical leader/caretaker, has maintained radio silence. In part because he too is caught up in the revelations of party leaders who in the past have sounded rather Trumpian in their views on immigration, tariffs, and waste, fraud and abuse.

The *Washington Post* columnist Aaron Burke wrote an article in early 2025 on the subject of potential leaders, "But the team blue is acting like the one that got destroyed and has no idea what to do next."¹

He goes on to identify the 12 Democrats, who in his view make the most sense for 2028. He identifies them in ascending order from least to most likely. The first is Minnesota Governor Tim Walz. Based on what he writes, Burke includes Walz only as a courtesy. Walz is garnering a lot of press these days; most of it lukewarm to negative. It is fascinating that he includes a strange gaggle in the middle of the pack. They include Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear; U.S. Senator Raphael Warnock and Maryland Governor Wes Moore. At the top of the list, we find Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, followed by Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Keep in mind that there will be much water under the bridge and a great deal of jockeying before the next presidential campaign officially begins after the 2026 midterms.

To amplify that statement, the *Post* is giving a great deal of ink to U.S. Representative Rho Khanna (CA). An entire piece on April 16 was dedicated to his efforts to "rev up Democrats".²

Finally, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders and U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez ("AOC") continue to garner murmurs on their "Fighting the Oligarchy" tour, subtitled "Where Do We Go from Here?" Both are heavily discounted by both Democrats and conservatives.³

CHOOSING ISSUES

The Democrats have a particularly difficult challenge choosing issues to address for two crucial reasons. First, they are dealing with a new administration operating at breakneck speed. The first one hundred days of the new administration bring to mind the famous quote attributed to Mark Zuckerberg. "Move fast and break things." President Trump and his administration recognized that it was essential to move with lightning speed (by bureaucratic standards) and massively disrupt the entrenched processes and methods.

¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/01/25/2028-democrats-whitmer-shapiro-harris-buttigieg/>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/04/16/ro-khanna-rallies-engage-democrats/>

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fighting_Oligarchy_Tour

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Second, many in the Democrat leadership have “talked” about immigration, tariffs, and curbing waste, fraud and abuse but now appear to be in opposition to those efforts.

- Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders said that he “would use tariffs as a negotiating tool if he wins the White House but slammed President Donald Trump’s latest maneuvering in his trade war with China.”⁴
- Addressing the U.S. House of Representatives, Representative Nancy Pelosi said, “On this day, your member of Congress could have drawn the line to say to the President of the United States, do something about this US-China trade relationship that is a job loser for the United States.”⁵
- On immigration, President Barack Obama said, “Even as we are a nation of immigrants, we are also a nation of laws. Undocumented workers broke our immigration laws, and I believe that they must be held accountable – especially those who may be dangerous.”⁶

Many Democrats have tried to raise fears about the traditional issues such as Social Security, Medicare and taxation without getting any traction outside of the mainstream media. At the same time, Democrats appear to be consistently on the wrong side of so-called 80/20 issues. Those are issues in which a majority of the electorate holds a position while the Democrats maintain the opposite, minority position. As reported in the press the Democrats are on the wrong side on billions for USAID; keeping boys out of girls’ sports; and immigration and deportation to name a few.⁷

This disconnect is magnified by U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen traveling to El Salvador to “rescue” Kilmar Abrego Garcia the “Maryland man” and purported MS-13 gang leader. It appears that this stunt has backfired massively.

THE RESISTANCE

Here the party continues to face a dilemma. Much of the so-called resistance is fragmented and disjointed. One special dilemma is that the Democrat leadership has not condemned the lawless vandalism and destruction of millions of dollars of Tesla automobiles. Some efforts of unaligned groups such as 50501 (Fifty Cities, Fifty States, One Day) and HANDS OFF have conducted “days of rage” against everything Trump, are not involving members of Congress and party leadership.

That is not to say that Democrat leadership is not resisting. In Congress the Democrats have had success obstructing the Trump administration agenda from the beginning. However, a new phenomenon has emerged in the form of a “Shadow Government”. This concept first saw the light of day in an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* a few days after the November election. Written by U.S. Representative Wiley Nickel (D-NC) it provided a detailed description of a shadow cabinet mimicking the British parliamentary model. Nickel went so far as to populate the proposed shadow government with Democrat members of Congress. For example, he proposed U.S. Senator Adam Schiff as shadow Attorney General; U.S. Representative Greg Meeks as shadow Secretary of State; U.S. Representative Jahana Hayes as Secretary of Education; and so on. According to Nickel the shadow cabinet “...(is) democracy’s insurance policy, and it strengthens government too.”⁸

SUMMARY

The Democrat Party is confronted with a veritable morass of perplexing and unsatisfactory choices. Their only hope is to get straightened out before the 2026 midterms to derail the Trump administration. At the present time it does not look favorable.

⁴ <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/25/politics/bernie-sanders-tariffs-trade-war-sotu-ccntv/index.html>

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LayOiPkvKBw>

⁶ <https://www.ibtimes.com/president-barack-obama-speech-immigration-full-text-1727286>.

⁷ <https://nypost.com/2025/03/17/opinion/how-federal-judges-trump-hate-is-harming-the-courts/>

⁸ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/11/11/shadow-cabinet-democrats-opposition-trump/>