

The Last Word

Not deplorable. Not garbage

By Russell Mokhiber

Here in West Virginia, we live in 70/30 Trump country. My neighbors are not deplorables. Nor are they garbage. Nor are they stupid. They are, generally speaking, friendly, kind, decent Americans. My liberal Democratic friends are better educated but also generally more arrogant and presumptuous. It's the day after election day here in West Virginia and as a state, we have voted Donald Trump for President by a 70 percent to 28 percent margin. We have voted to send our Trump supporting Governor, Jim Justice, to the U.S. Senate to replace retiring Democrat Joe Manchin by the same margin – 70 to 28.

It was almost a complete wipeout of the Democrats in the West Virginia state legislature. Now, only two of the 34 state Senators are Democrats. Of the 100 member House of Delegates, only six are Democrats.

My lib Dem friends are despondent. "This is terminal," one told me. "It's over," said another. No, it's not. It ain't over 'til it's over. That of course is how famed New York Yankees' catcher Yogi Berra put it. And Americans know what that means. It's never over for you and me. On the other hand, it might be over for the Democratic Party. As it should be.

The Democrats portray themselves as the party of the people, as opposed to the Republicans who portray themselves as the party of big business.

But the Democrats are now rightly perceived as the party of highly educated corporate state bureaucrats and technocrats while the Republicans are misperceived as the party of regular people.

In reality, they are clearly both the party of big business, the military-industrial complex and now genocide.

There have been times in American history when a party is so inept, so corrupt, so deceitful and so ineffectual, that it is discarded and replaced by something new.

The early 1800s were dominated by Democrats and Whigs, with the Whigs electing William Henry Harrison in 1840 and Zachary Taylor in 1848.

But just like that, the pro-slavery Whigs were soon replaced by the anti-slavery Republicans and Abraham Lincoln, who won the White House in 1860.

Pro-slavery Whigs in the White House one year, then gone a few years later.

What if the pro-corporate, pro-genocide Democrats went the way of the pro-slavery Whigs?

Genocidal corporate Democrats in the White House today, then gone a few years later?

The Democratic Party brand has become so toxic, that regular people want



Nebraska Independent candidate for US Senate Dan Osborn

Photo from television ad – Osborn for Senate

nothing to do with it.

We have to stop looking to the Democratic Party to reform itself.

Just stop. As we do with the Republican Party, we have to accept that what we are seeing is not an illusion.

And we have to seek to displace them with something better.

Kamala (Holocaust) Harris was on the genocide train from the beginning. She kept green lighting Israel's slaughter in Gaza and Lebanon.

Up until the last week, Democratic party reformers were trying to get her off that train, because they saw the electoral crash coming.

But no. Kamala Harris lost Pennsylvania, Georgia and Arizona.

A poll published in August 2024 found that 34 percent of voters in those states said that they would be more likely to vote for Harris if the candidate came out for an arms embargo on Israel – while only 7 percent said they'd be less likely.

What might a displacement movement look like?

Let's take a look at the Nebraska U.S. Senate race, where a grassroots labor union leader, Dan Osborn, ran as an independent against an entrenched corporate Republican U.S. Senator,

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Deb Fischer. There was no Democrat in the race.

Osborn, an independent his whole life, is a working class guy, an industrial mechanic who led a successful strike against Kellogg's plant in Omaha in 2021.

As a first time statewide candidate, Osborn did quite well.

While Trump carried Nebraska by a whopping 22 percentage points (60 to 38), Fischer defeated Osborn by a mere 8 points (54 to 46).

How did Osborn get so close in such a conservative state?

He attacked the toxic Democrats and Republicans – and the corporations that fund them – head on.

"There are fifty-five multinational corporations that funnel their profits overseas," Osborn told a group of citizens in later October. "They park it there, they don't repatriate it back to the United States. So they don't pay any taxes. Amazon, goose egg, Nike, Apple, no taxes. It costs taxpayers a trillion dollars a year that we could use for programs and cutting taxes a trillion dollars a year. That's a tremendous amount of money. And then there is the Department of Defense, which is over 60 percent of our country's budget, has never passed an audit. Never."

In one of his most popular television ads, a woman dressed up as Senator Deb Fischer, wears a NASCAR style jacket, with corporate logos of corporate supporters – Goldman Sachs, Facebook, Northrop Grumman, Google – on the back of her jacket.

"The Senate is a bunch of millionaires controlled by billionaires," Osborn says in the ad. "My opponent, Deb Fischer, is part of the problem. She's taken so much corporate cash she should wear patches like NASCAR. She's gotten ten times richer in the Senate. She hasn't held a public town hall since 2017."

"I'm Dan Osborn, an industrial me-

chanic who actually works for a living, a Navy vet, Nebraskan, independent. You're going to hear a lot about me from Deb's donors. The truth is, I'm running for US Senate because people aren't getting a fair shake. Costs are too high. Border is a mess. People like Deb waste our tax dollars on handouts to billionaires and corporations. If you want someone who works for them, vote for Deb. If you want someone who works for you, consider me. I'm Dan Osborn. I approve this message because the only thing on the back of my jacket is Nebraska."

When asked whether if elected he would caucus with the Democrats in the Senate, Osborn said he would not – that he would instead stay independent and try and set up an independent caucus.

On election night, Osborn was inspired. "What's clear tonight is that across Nebraska and across the country people are angry," he said. "People are being failed by the status quo. I tell you what, we sure challenged the status quo, didn't we?"

Osborn said his team had shown that a working-class movement was possible nationwide – "regular people who are willing to take a stand against corruption and demand a seat at the table for working people."

So is it over?

For the corporate genocide Democratic Party? Yes.

For an independent movement against the corporate powers that be – no.

We just have to start over.

Osborn and other independents are showing the way.

The Democrats are decayed and in decline.

As Chris Hedges put the day after the election, "their smug, self-righteous 'moral' crusade against Trump stokes the national reality television show that has replaced journalism and politics."

"It reduces a social, economic and political crisis to the personality of Trump," Hedges wrote. "It refuses to confront and name the corporate forces responsible for our failed democracy. It allows Democratic politicians to blithely ignore their base – 77 percent of Democrats and 62 percent of independents support an arms embargo against Israel. The open collusion with corporate oppression and refusal to heed the desires and needs of the electorate neuters the press and Trump critics. These corporate puppets stand for nothing, other than their own advancement. The lies they tell to working men and women, especially with programs such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), do far more damage than any of the lies uttered by Trump."

Cut your ties from the two corrupt, genocidal corporate parties.

Rise up to take back America.

It ain't over 'til it's over.

CHC