

The Pass Democrat

Newsletter of the Pass Democratic Club—February 2021
Visit the Pass Democratic Club website: www.passdems.org
and the Pass Democratic Club on Facebook and Twitter (@DemocraticPass)

We're sending postcards to voters who live in the districts of the Sedition Caucus members, starting with the seven Californians - House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy and Congressmen Mike Garcia, Doug LaMalfa, Jay Obernolte, Devin Nunes, Ken Calvert, and Darrell Issa. These men betrayed their oath to defend the U.S. Constitution against enemies foreign and domestic. Voters in these districts need to know how extreme their representatives have become. <https://www.mobilize.us/flipthewest/event/370202/>



President Biden's Executive Actions
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/>

BUT OTHER THAN THAT...A LITANY OF TRUMP SINS
<http://passdems.org/2021/02/but-other-than-that/>

**YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE.**

Decent Americans
out number Trump
supporters 3 to 1.

Religious persecution
is when you're prevented
from exercising your beliefs,
not when you're prevented
from imposing your beliefs.

Don't forget to pay your 2021 Membership Dues
Please pay your dues at www.passdems.org
or mail check now to P.O. Box 724, Banning 92220



Democrats of the Desert are pleased to announce that **Dr. Raul Ruiz, 36th Congressional District**, will join their virtual meeting this Saturday, February 27. They are inviting all Democrats in this region to join them. Register here: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/OnZoom-Meeting-this-Saturday.html?soid=1103123348260&aid=5EjDH6DlfM8>

**America's Next Authoritarian Will Be Much More Competent
Trump was ineffective and easily beaten. A future strongman won't be.
NOVEMBER 7, 2020, Zeynep Tufekci**

Now that Joe Biden has won the presidency, we can expect debates over whether Donald Trump was an aberration (“not who we are!”) or another instantiation of America’s pathologies and sins. One can reasonably make a case for his deep-rootedness in American traditions, while also noticing the anomalies: the early-morning tweeting, the fondness for mixing personal and government business, the obsession with ratings befitting a reality-TV star—the one job he was good at.

From an international perspective, though, Trump is just one more example of the many populists on the right who have risen to power around the world: Narendra Modi in India, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Jarosław Kaczyński in Poland, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey, my home country. These people win elections but subvert democratic norms: by criminalizing dissent, suppressing or demonizing the media, harassing the opposition, and deploying extra-legal mechanisms whenever possible (Putin’s opponents have a penchant for meeting tragic accidents). Orbán proudly uses the phrase *illiberal democracy* to describe the populism practiced by these men; Trump has many similarities to them, both rhetorically and policy-wise.

He campaigned like they did, too, railing against the particular form of globalization that dominates this era and brings benefit to many, but disproportionately to the wealthy, leaving behind large numbers of people, especially in wealthier countries. He relied on the traditional herrenvolk idea of ethnonationalist populism: supporting a kind of welfare state, but only for the “right” people rather than the undeserving others (the immigrants, the minorities) who allegedly usurp those benefits. He channeled and fueled the widespread mistrust of many centrist-liberal democratic institutions (the press, most notably) —just like the other populists. And so on.

But there’s one key difference between Trump and everyone else on that list. The others are all talented politicians who win elections again and again.

In contrast, Trump is a reality-TV star who stumbled his way into an ongoing realignment in American politics, aided by a series of events peculiar to 2016 that were fortunate for him: The Democrats chose a polarizing nominee who didn’t have the requisite political touch that can come from surviving tough elections; social media was, by that point, deeply entrenched in the country’s politics, but its corrosive effects were largely unchecked; multiple players—such as then-FBI Director James Comey—took consequential actions fueled by their misplaced confidence in Hillary Clinton’s win; and Trump’s rivals in the Republican primaries underestimated him. He drew a royal flush.

It’s not that he is completely without talent. His rallies effectively let him bond with his base, and test out various messages with the crowd that he would then amplify everywhere. He has an intuitive understanding of the power of attention, and he played the traditional media like a fiddle—they benefited from his antics, which they boosted. He also clearly sensed the political moment in 2016, and managed to navigate his way into the presidency, though that probably had more to do with instinct than with deep planning.

Luck aside, though, Trump is not good at his job. He doesn’t even seem to like it much. He is too undisciplined and thin-

skinned to be effective at politics over a sustained period, which involves winning repeated elections. He seems to have been as surprised as anyone else that he won in 2016. While he hates the loser branding that will follow him now, he's probably fine with the outcome—especially since he can blame it on fantastical conspiracies involving theft or ballot-stuffing or the courts—as long as he can figure out how to escape the criminal trials that are certainly coming his way. (A self-pardon? A negotiated pardon? He will try something.)

Trump ran like a populist, but he lacked the political talent or competence to govern like an effective one. Remember the Infrastructure Week he promised? It never happened. Remember the trade wars with China he said he'd win? Some tariffs were raised here and there, but the jobs that would bring relief to America's decimated manufacturing sector never resurged. In Wisconsin in 2018, the president announced "[the eighth wonder of the world](#)"—a Foxconn factory that was supposed to employ 13,000 in return for \$4.5 billion in government subsidies. However, going into this election, the [building remained empty](#), and the president lost Wisconsin in the Electoral College. (Foxconn hired people in the final weeks of 2019 to fulfill quotas for the subsidies, and laid off many of them right [after the new year](#).) Most populists globally deploy wide patronage networks: state spending that boosts their own supporters. Trump's model remained attached more to *personal* graft: He encouraged people to stay in his hotels and have dinner at Mar-a-Lago in exchange for access, rather than develop a broad and participatory network that would remain loyal to him for years. And when the pandemic hit, instead of rising to the occasion and playing the strongman, rallying the country through a crisis that had originated in China—an opportunity perfect for the kind of populist he aspired to be—he floundered.

Erdoğan has been in power nationally since 2003. After two decades, he has arguably lost some of his political magic, evinced by increasing missteps and a deteriorating situation around democratic rights. Still, he is among the most talented politicians in Turkey's history. He has been able to navigate multiple challenges, including a previous global financial crisis. In Russia, Putin has won many elections, even managing to subvert term limits. In India, Modi has also been reelected. One could argue that these elections were far from perfect, but they were elections. Brazil's Bolsonaro has bungled his country's response to the pandemic but is giving the poor emergency aid [and increasing his popularity](#). The CARES Act did the same thing, providing a significant subsidy to businesses and improving household finances, especially for people with low incomes, but it ended right before the election; Trump erratically [tweeted](#) about [having nuked a new deal](#).

I suspect that the Republican leadership is sanguine, if not happy, about Trump's loss. It's striking how quickly Fox News called Arizona for Biden, and how many Republican leaders have [condemned](#) the president's rage-tweeting and attempts to stop the count. They know that Trump is done, and they seem fine with it. For them, what's not to like? The Supreme Court is solidly in their corner; they will likely retain control of the Senate; House Republicans won more seats than they were projected to; and they are looking at significant gains in [state Houses](#) as well, giving them control over redistricting for the next decade. Even better for their long-term project, they have diversified their own coalition, gaining more women candidates and more support from nonwhite voters.


And they have at their disposal certain features that can be mobilized: The Electoral College and especially the Senate are anti-majoritarian institutions, and they can be combined with other efforts to subvert majority rule. Leaders and parties can engage in voter suppression and break norms with some degree of bipartisan cooperation across the government. In combination, these features allow for players to engage in a hardball kind of minority rule: Remember that no Republican president has won the popular vote since 2004, and that the Senate is structurally prone to domination by a minority. Yet Republicans have tremendous power. This dynamic occurs at the local level, too, where gerrymandering allows Republicans to inflate their representation in state legislatures.

The situation is a perfect setup, in other words, for a *talented* politician to run on Trumpism in 2024. A person without the eager Twitter fingers and greedy hotel chains, someone with a penchant for governing rather than golf. An individual who does not irritate everyone who doesn't already like him, and someone whose wife looks at him adoringly instead of slapping his hand away too many times in public. Someone who isn't on tape boasting about assaulting women, and who says the right things about military veterans. Someone who can send appropriate condolences about senators who die, instead of angering their state's voters, as Trump did, perhaps to his detriment, in Arizona. A norm-subverting strongman who can create a durable majority and keep his coalition together to win more elections.

Make no mistake: The attempt to harness Trumpism—without Trump, but with calculated, refined, and smarter political talent—is coming. And it won't be easy to make the next Trumpist a one-term president. He will not be so clumsy or vulnerable. He will get into office less by luck than by skill. Perhaps it will be Senator Josh Hawley, who is writing a book against Big Tech because he knows that will be the next chapter in the culture wars, with social-media companies joining “fake news” as the enemy. Perhaps it will be Senator Tom Cotton, running as a law-and-order leader with a populist bent. Maybe it will be another media figure: Tucker Carlson or Joe Rogan, both men with talent and followings. Perhaps it will be another Sarah Palin—she was a prototype—with the charisma and appeal but without the baggage and the need for a presidential candidate to pluck her out of the blue. Perhaps someone like the QAnon-supporting Representative-elect Lauren Boebert of Colorado, who first beat the traditional Republican representative in the primary and then ran her race with guns blazing, mask off, and won against the Democratic candidate, a retired professor who avoided campaigning in person. Indeed, a self-made charismatic person coming out of nowhere probably has a better chance than many establishment figures in the party.

What can be done? First and foremost, we need to realize the nature of the problem and accept that elite failure cannot be responded to with more of the same. A good deal of the Democratic Party's messaging has been wrapped in nostalgia. But populism's resurgence is a symptom of the failures of the past. Pearl-clutching for the good old days will not get us out of this. Yes, it's important to highlight the value of norms and call for the restoration of democratic institutions. But what we need in order to move forward goes beyond more politeness and the right rhetoric. The failures of the past aren't to be yearned for. They're to be avoided and, crucially, understood and fixed. There will be arguments about how to rebuild a politics that can appeal to the moment, and how to mobilize for the future. There should be. Our American crisis cannot be resolved in one sweeping article that offers easy solutions. But the first step is to realize how deep this hole is for democracies around the world, including ours, and to realize that what lies ahead is not some easy comeback.

At the moment, the Democratic Party risks celebrating Trump's loss and moving on—an acute danger, especially because many of its constituencies, the ones that drove Trump's loss, are understandably tired. A political nap for a few years probably looks appealing to many who opposed Trump, but the real message of this election is not that Trump lost and Democrats triumphed. It's that a weak and untalented politician lost, while the rest of his party has completely entrenched its power over every other branch of government: the perfect setup for a talented right-wing populist to sweep into office in 2024. And make no mistake: They're all thinking about it.



It takes a special type of stupid to think the left would dress up like the right and raid the Capitol to change the outcome of an election they just won.

The average rent in the U.S. at the end of 2018 was \$1419/month.

For rent to be approximately one-quarter of income, as recommended, would require an income of \$5676/month.

At 40 hours per week, that's \$35.47/hour.

The federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25/hour (for non-tipped employees; for tipped employees it's \$2.13/hour).

Food for thought.

OK. ALL these programs "disappeared" during the Trump administration. If this doesn't bother YOU, maybe you need to re-evaluate your vision of the future. Most of these cuts were done quietly, while we were distracted by other atrocities, hoping no one would notice. (Number 7. Really?)

1. The National Environmental Policy Act
2. The Endangered Species Act
3. The Clean Water Act
4. The National Historic Preservation Act
5. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act
6. The Migratory Bird Conservation Act
7. The Clean Air Act
8. The Archeological Resources Protection Act
9. The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act
10. The Federal Cave Resources Protection Act
11. The Safe Drinking Water Act
12. The Noise Control Act
13. The Solid Waste Disposal Act
14. The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
15. The Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act
16. The Antiquities Act
17. The Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act
18. The Farmland Protection Policy Act
19. The Coastal Zone Management Act
20. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act
21. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act
22. The National Fish and Wildlife Act
23. The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
24. The Administrative Procedure Act
25. The River and Harbors Act
26. The Eagle Protection Act
27. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
28. The American Indian Religious Freedom Act

Liberalism is a political and moral philosophy based on liberty, consent of the governed and equality before the law.^{[1][2][3]} Liberals espouse a wide array of views depending on their understanding of these principles, but they generally support free markets, free trade, limited government, individual rights (including civil rights and human rights), capitalism, democracy, secularism, gender equality, racial equality, internationalism, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of religion.^{[4][5][6][7][8][9][10]} Yellow is the political colour most commonly associated with liberalism.^{[11][12][13]}

Join or Renew Invite a Friend

Pass Democratic Club
PO Box 724
Banning CA 92220

Name(s) _____
Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Employer Name _____
Employer Address _____

Must be a registered Democrat.
Enclose \$30 individual
or \$50 for two at same address

Important Contacts:

Senator Diane Feinstein: DC Office (202) 224-3841
L.A. Office (310) 914-7300
Senator Kamala Harris: DC Office (202) 224-3553
San Diego Office (213) 894-5000
Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz (D-36) DC Office (202) 225-5330
Palm Desert Office (760) 424-8888
CA State Senator Mike Morrell (R-23) State Capitol Office (916) 651-4023
Rancho Cucamonga Office (909) 919-7731
CA Assembly Member Chad Mayes: (R-42) State Capitol Office
(916) 319-2042 Rancho Mirage Office (760) 346-6342
Riverside County Supervisor Jeff Hewitt (5)
Riverside Office 951-955-1050 Perris Office (951) 210-1300

PASS DEMOCRATIC CLUB Wednesday, March 3rd via Zoom, 7PM

Executive Board Members:
PRESIDENT - Sylvia Carrillo, syllycarr@verizon.net
1st VP MEMBERSHIP - Sharon Geiser
2nd VP VOTER REGISTRATION AND
POLITICAL ACTION - Jim Mercado
RECORDING /CORRESPONDING SECRETARY -
TREASURER - Leeann McLaughlin

Committee Chairs:
COMMUNICATIONS—Leeann McLaughlin, casakel@msn.com
PROGRAM—DeniAntoinette Mazingo
PARLIAMENTARIAN - Pelton Teague
SCHOLARSHIPS - Blanche Teague, Margaret Coleman