

Midterm Reflections



by Bruce Bawer

Was there really a time when an American election didn't seem to be a matter of life and death—of choosing between a return to constitutional norms and continuing down a road of national suicide by ideology? Was there a time when a midterm election, for heaven's sake, didn't seem as vitally important as this one does—a time, moreover, when one was content to pay attention to the races in one's own state and city and not bite one's nails over any number of other races around the country?

One more question. Was there really a time when it wasn't anywhere near as maddening as it is now that the voters in certain jurisdictions seem not to get it? How on earth, for example, can 54 percent of New Yorkers plan to vote for the ruinous Kathy Hochul? How can as many as 43 percent of Texans support Beto O'Rourke? In the race for governor of Arizona (and when on earth did any of us ever care about a gubernatorial election in Arizona?), how can the remarkable Kari Lake be neck and neck with the execrable Katie Hobbs? How can anybody in Florida be thinking of voting against Ron

DeSantis? And however unpalatable Dr. Mehmet Oz may be, how could the Senate election in Pennsylvania actually be a toss-up between him and the psychologically debilitated basement radical John Fetterman?

Yes, there are predictions of a nationwide red wave, even a red tsunami. Maybe those prognostications are correct. But even if they are, sheer abominations like Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) will almost certainly remain in power. *Why?* Can anyone in Chicago be unaware of its current murder rate? How is it that the people living in the California cities most overrun with schizophrenic tent people and felonious illegals are the very voters most likely to pull the lever for Gavin Newsom, who's largely responsible for it?

On a podcast the other day, somebody recalled overhearing a comment at JFK Airport that went something like this: "Yes, Hochul is terrible, but I've never voted Republican in my life, and I won't start now." I spent most of my life in New York City, so I know plenty of people like that. But can even the most low-information, knee-jerk New York Democrat fail to understand that the two major political parties have undergone a drastic sea change?

"That isn't your grandfather's Republican Party," our beloved president keeps saying. He's right! But not in the way he implies. The party of country-club elites and evangelical Christians has morphed into the party of middle-class families—including a growing number of blacks and Latinos. Bye bye, Strom Thurmond and Jesse Helms; hello, Tim Scott and Mia Love. Meanwhile, the Democratic Party has been captured by radicals like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.), has a paramilitary wing in the form of Antifa and Black Lives Matter, and serves the interests of Silicon Valley, Hollywood, big media, Wall Street, and globalist corporations.

As the midterms approach, some facts seem clear. In 2022, most Americans don't want their country to be flooded with illegal aliens, especially criminal ones. Most don't want America to be dragged into foreign wars that not only serve no reasonable national objective but also threaten to erupt into global nuclear conflicts. Most Americans want a robust economy, low taxes, low inflation, cheap gas, and a secure energy supply. They want to see crime punished. They want to be judged as individuals, not as members of identity groups. They want equality, not "equity." They don't lose sleep at night over climate change. And they don't believe that a man can become a woman, that a woman can become a man, or that surgeons should remove healthy body parts from children who say they were born in the wrong body.

But on Tuesday, millions of them will vote against their own interests—some because they're not paying enough attention, some because they can't shake off decades-old party loyalties, and some because they get their "news" from the corporate media and hence really believe the post-Trump GOP is a gang of fascists, racists, and "election deniers" who threaten democracy and seek to suppress black votes.

These voters buy the supremely ridiculous and endlessly repeated claim that the people who wandered around the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, were engaged in an "insurrection." They "know," as well as they know their own names, that Trump called neo-Nazis "good people" and recommended drinking bleach to dodge COVID-19. They may even still consider Trump a Putin puppet—even as they refuse, in the face of all evidence, to accept that Biden is in any way beholden to China. And they may actually think that abortion is now illegal all over the United States.

If you told them that all of these things are lies, that they've been dining for years on a diet of sheer balderdash, and that the major news media that have fed them this diet are full-time Democratic mouthpieces, they'd call you paranoid. A

MAGA moron. A sucker for Fox News propaganda. A “conspiracy theorist.”

These are voters who, if they’ve heard at all about the Abraham Accords, or the record low levels of black unemployment under Trump, or Biden’s disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan, or the Antifa and BLM riots, or Anthony Fauci’s endless self-contradictions and ties to the Wuhan lab, or the transformation of the CIA, FBI, and Justice Department into Biden’s Gestapo, have long since forgotten about every bit of it because the news media they trust have ignored these topics or spun them out of recognition—all the while banging on hysterically about what an existential threat Trump and his followers pose to all creatures great and small. They may not even be aware that Biden is cognitively challenged, because the media they follow have deep-sixed every bit of the evidence.

None of this perfidy is totally unprecedented. Anti-constitutional progressivism goes back to the administration of Woodrow Wilson (who for the last year or so of his presidency, by the way, was, like Biden, so medically incapacitated that he should have been removed from office). And today’s mass-media lies are part of a grand tradition going back to the *New York Times* covering up the Holodomor, soft-pedaling the Holocaust, and whitewashing Castro—not to mention good old kindly Walter Cronkite selling the country a bill of goods about the Tet Offensive and thereby changing the course of history. And don’t forget the manifold mendacities of the *Washington Post*’s Watergate reporting, some of which have only recently begun to be exposed.

Yet it seems fair to say that not since Goebbels has the “Big Lie” been quite as big as it is now, when, in the days before the election, Barack Obama contends that “democracy as we know it may not survive in Arizona” if Kari Lake wins and historian Michael Beschloss tells MSNBC viewers that if the GOP sweeps the midterms, “our children will be arrested and conceivably

killed.”

How to understand the mind of a stubbornly loyal Democratic voter in 2022?

When Julie Powell, the real-life “Julie” of the 2009 film “Julie & Julia,” died unexpectedly the other day at age 49, I poked around her Twitter feed and discovered her to have been an ardent supporter of Beto O’Rourke and a Trump-hater of the first water. After her cat got stuck up a tree on August 18, she tweeted: “My Trumper neighbor is going to rescue my cat. Dammit.”

How much is there to unpack in that one word, “dammit”?

This is a woman who’s peeved because reality has once again rattled her ideology. How unpleasant to be beholden to people you despise—and to have your brain cells tickled by the alarming suspicion that you despise them unfairly! A fellow anti-Trumper commented: “When I think about Trumper doctors and firemen I get depressed. Then I get confused. Then I get even more depressed.”

Yes indeed: how to reconcile the *Times* and CNN propaganda that you imbibe religiously every day with your own everyday experience?

One positive way of looking at the present dark moment of American history is to appreciate the fact that a systematically deceitful press in the service of a [tyrannically inclined](#) Democratic establishment is nothing new. What’s new is that today we have alternative media, mostly online, that have helped us to realize, in real time, just how much we’re being lied to day by day.

Yes, for those of us who spent much of our lives thinking that we could more or less rely on the morning newspaper and the CBS Evening News, it can be traumatizing to realize just how deluded we were. But better to be red-pilled than blue-pilled,

and better late than never. And one thing to look forward to, if there is a red wave, is a series of House and Senate investigations that pull the curtain back, to at least some degree, on deep state duplicity—and that, with any luck, will swell the red-pill brigade and shrink the cohort of voters who are blindly loyal followers of the Clintons, Obamas, Bidens, and their whole sick totalitarian crew.

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