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Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 If only we had an opposition party

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 The concept of a disciplined, unified Democratic Party
3 was always going to be a stretch, at best. But the current
4 Democratic part has never been willing to unify the party around
5 saying no to Donald Trump’s agenda.

####END SUBHED####

6 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

7 ONE OF THE major reasons we are have watched the
8 remains of American democracy slip through the hourglass with
9 barely an obstruction is the fecklessness of the Democratic Party.
10 As the Republicans have spinelessly united behind the
11 policy of siccing the barely trained, heavily armed, masked

12 Gestapo force into our previously peaceful cities and attacking
13 citizens and non-citizens alike with no legal framework and
14 certainly no humane limitations, the Democrats have been far
15 from a unified opposition.

16 Once we understood the magnitude of the attacks on our
17 own people, as first exhibited in the Los Angeles area in June
18 2025 — only nine months ago — the Democrats should have
19 gotten together immediately and demanded the end to masked,
20 nameless, violent military-style attacks in our streets.

21 Sure, a few congressional Democrats have joined the
22 millions of unpaid, unelected citizens who have spent parts of the
23 past nine months organizing in every way we know how to keep
24 our immigrant friends and neighbors safe and as secure as
25 possible in the face of a constant threat.

26 These Democrats have been out in the streets and have
27 been speaking forcefully for immigrant rights. They have been
28 demanding real investigations into the murders of dozens of
29 victims of ICE, culminating with the executions of Renée Nicole
30 Good and Alex Pretti.

31 Where are the others?

32 * * *

33 BRAZIL IS A LESSON in what opposition parties looks like.

34 When Jair Bolsonaro attempted to remain in office after
35 losing an election — as did Donald Trump on Jan. 6, 2021 — the
36 result was far different.

37 From [Time magazine](#), which cited “the robust
38 mobilization of Brazil’s civil society.”

39 “It incorporated opposition political parties, the trade
40 unions, human rights organizations, professional associations
41 such as the Brazilian Bar Association, major newspapers, LGBTQ
42 groups, the heads of universities and cultural institutions, and the
43 Brazilian Conference of Bishops. These groups called out
44 Bolsonaro’s [false claims](#) about a stolen election. More
45 importantly, they have made the case that Bolsonaro deserved to
46 be held accountable for having endangered democracy. That

47 means a lot in Brazil given the country's recent political history; it
48 lost democracy to a military coup in 1964, with democracy
49 restored in 1985 and a brand-new democratic constitution
50 enacted three years later."

51 Kind of different, right?

52 Had the Democrats, under the weak Joe Biden and his
53 missing attorney general, Merrick Garland, done their jobs,
54 Trump would have been prosecuted under the Insurrection Act,
55 and we would be in a very different country right now.

56 * * *

57 THE CONCEPT OF a disciplined, unified Democratic Party
58 such as existed under a strong leader was always going to be a
59 stretch, at best, but those in the current Democratic party, led by
60 weak and unpopular Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries, have
61 never been willing to unify the party around saying *no* to Donald
62 Trump's Project-2025-inspired agenda, knowing full well where
63 the antidemocratic and fully fascist programs were leading.

64 Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and
65 "Homeland Security" (who is this making feel secure?) were
66 being run like all Donald Trump's departments: with no-bid
67 contracts going to cronies, flouting the law in pretty much every
68 endeavor, using government private jets for personal fun and
69 games, and making a mockery of the job title they have been
70 honored with.

71 Education secretary? Dismantling the Education
72 Department. Health and Human Services? Thanks for the measles
73 epidemic. And the list goes on.

74 Kristi Noem may have gone too far in her ego trip as
75 secretary of cruelty and sadism toward anyone Black or Brown,
76 as well as those pesky white people who got in the way.

77 Or it may have been her audacity as a woman to think
78 she could play with the big boys — the macho dudes who really
79 *run things* — like our anabolic-steroid-pumped "secretary of
80 war."

81 * * *

82 FOR WHATEVER REASON, Noem is being replaced by
83 Oklahoma senator and mixed martial arts fighter Markwayne
84 Mullin.

85 Some of the lowlights I was able to find:

86 • Upon entering Congress, Mullin responded to the
87 notion that as a public official, the public pays his salary.

88 “Bull crap, I paid for myself,” he told a town meeting of
89 his constituents. “I paid enough taxes before I ever got here and
90 continue to through my company to pay my own salary.”

91 He still collects \$174,000 per year in congressional pay.
92 And the man is a multimillionaire, like almost every other
93 senator.

94 • He voted against the reauthorization of the Violence
95 Against Women Act.

96 • He wants to override a very important court case: the
97 Flores Settlement, a legal agreement that limits the time
98 immigrant children can spend in detention camps (or
99 concentration camps, my preferred term).

100 • Last, this is Mullin’s take on the cold blooded murder
101 of Renée Good:

102 “The fact is that Renee Good was interfering with police
103 activity. There’s no question about that right now. Once she
104 blocked the ICE agents from doing their job, they exited the
105 vehicle. Gave her a verbal command, she wasn’t listening, and
106 then she purposely tries to accelerate and run over.”

107 I guess he didn’t take the time to watch the actual video
108 — seen by millions of us.

109 * * *

110 SO, IN SPITE of the above, or because of it, my senator
111 from Vermont, Peter Welch, stepped into the limelight on March
112 6:

113 “Senate Democrat Fawns Over Trump’s Pick to Replace
114 Kristi Noem,” read the [headline](#) from [Mediaite](#). “Markwayne
115 Mullin is ‘Respected...Honest and... Competent.’”

116 Thanks, Peter. If we only had an opposition party.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

117 **NANCY BRAUS** , a retired independent bookseller, is a
118 longtime activist.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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VIDEO:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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