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# Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Is Leading and Following at the Same Time

NY Times January 23, 2019

*The Democratic electorate has shifted sharply to the left, taking many politicians along with it — willingly and unwillingly.*

By [Thomas B. Edsall](#)

Mr. Edsall contributes a weekly column from Washington, D.C. on politics, demographics and inequality.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ayanna Pressley in Boston on Oct. 1 during a rally protesting the Supreme Court nomination of Brett Kavanaugh. Credit: Mary Schwalm/Associated Press

The most active wing of the Democratic Party — the [roughly 20 percent of the party's electorate](#) that votes in primaries and wields disproportionate influence over which issues get prioritized — has moved decisively to the left. With all the attention that is being paid to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, Rashida Tlaib and other new progressive voices in Congress, this may not seem like news, but we are only just beginning to realize the full significance of this shift.

The Primaries Project at the [Brookings](#) Institution conducted extensive polling of 7,198 Democratic voters in the 2018 primaries and found that 60.4 percent described themselves as liberal, including 26.4 percent who said they were “very liberal.”

In its most recent analysis, [Gallup](#) found that from 1994 to 2018, the percentage of all Democrats who call themselves liberal more than doubled from 25 percent to 51 percent.

Over the same period, the percentage of Democratic moderates and conservatives fell steadily, with the share of moderates dropping from 48 to 34 percent, and of conservatives dropping from 25 to 13 percent. These trends began to accelerate during the administration of George W. Bush and have continued unabated during the Obama and Trump presidencies.

In recent years, the internal pressures to hew to the left, driven largely by Democratic primary voters, have steadily gained strength.

They include the determination to oppose all things Trump, especially his [anti-immigrant policies](#), his racism and his religious bigotry; the [rise](#) of outspoken, well-educated liberals, many of them young; the [#MeToo](#) movement and Trump's [disrespect](#) for women; the [Occupy](#) movement; the [mobilization of anti-establishment voters](#) by Bernie Sanders during the 2016

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primaries; and the [consistent exodus of more conservative white voters](#) from the Democratic Party, supplanted by more [politically liberal minority voters](#).

The anti-establishment faction contributed significantly to the large turnout increases in Democratic primaries last year. [Pew found](#) that from 2014 to 2018, turnout in House primaries rose from 13.7 to 19.6 percent of all registered Democrats, in Senate primaries from 16.6 to 22.2 percent and in governor primaries from 17.1 to 24.5 percent.

Isabel Sawhill, a senior fellow at Brookings, agrees with the analysis that core voters and activist leaders within the party are “moving leftward”:

Medicare for All, free college, a universal jobs guarantee, a \$15 minimum wage, an expansion of the EITC to the entire bottom half, workers on boards of directors, ending ICE, raising marginal tax rates to 70 percent are all big, bold leftist ideas and appear to be gaining currency.

These “big, bold leftist ideas” pose a strategic problem for liberals and the Democratic Party, Sawhill, who published “[The Forgotten Americans: An Economic Agenda for a Divided Nation](#)” last year, wrote in an email:

In my view, it’s a trade-off between exciting the base thereby insuring higher turnout vs. broadening the base to include independents and Republicans that don’t like Trump.

Sawhill argues that if the goal of Democrats is victory, as opposed to ideological purity, they must focus on general election swing voters who are not die-hard Democrats.

One key Democratic target, Sawhill observes, is the “well-educated, suburban women, many of them Republican, who voted for Democrats in the midterms.” Once Trump is gone, she continued, “they could easily return to their natural home in the Republican Party.”

“Over the longer-term,” Sawhill continued,

as millennials and minorities become an ever-larger proportion of the party, it will have a natural constituency that supports a new and bolder agenda, but the concentration of those voters in urban areas that are underrepresented in our electoral system will be a continuing drag on the party’s prospects.

The extensive support among prospective Democratic presidential candidates for [Medicare for All](#), government-guaranteed jobs and a higher minimum wage reflects the widespread desire in the electorate for greater [protection](#) from the vicissitudes of market capitalism — in response to “increasingly incomplete risk protection in an era of dramatic social change,” as the political scientist Jacob Hacker put it in “[Privatizing Risk without Privatizing the Welfare State: The Hidden Politics of Social Policy Retrenchment in the United States](#).” Support for such protections is showing signs of becoming a litmus test for candidates running in the 2020 Democratic presidential primaries.

Polling by the [Pew Research Center](#) shows sharp movement in a progressive direction on key issues among many Democrats.

Take liberalized attitudes on immigration as an example. From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of Democrats who said the government should create “a way for immigrants already here illegally to become citizens if they meet certain requirements” grew from 29 to 51 percent, while the share who said “there should be better border security and stronger enforcement of immigration laws” fell from 21 to 5 percent.

Similarly, the percentage of Democrats who agreed with the statement that “racial discrimination is the main reason many blacks can’t get ahead these days” rose from 28 to 64 percent from 2010 to 2017.

Paul Starr, a sociology professor at Princeton, warns against putting too much stock in the ascendance of progressive Democrats. In an essay in the [American Prospect](#), Starr argues that there were “two distinct developments” in the 2018 elections:

While progressives have gained ground in long-held Democratic areas, more centrist candidates have won the more competitive districts. This second development will limit how far to the left the party can go. The more the party expands into the suburbs, the more dependent it will be on those relatively centrist votes — and that dependence will become a constraint on the policies that Democrats are able to agree on.

In addition, while acknowledging the rise of the progressive wing, Starr pointed out that a separate [December 2018 Gallup survey](#) found that 54 percent of Democratic voters would prefer their party to become “more moderate,” while 41 percent said they would like the party to become “more liberal.”

Along similarly cautionary lines, David Graham [wrote in the Atlantic](#) last November:

There’s clear leftward movement among Democratic voters on a range of issues, and there are more progressive candidates running than ever. But this doesn’t amount, at least yet, to the socialist groundswell that advocates pine for and critics fear. The actual policy positions, and number of leftist officeholders, will remain limited — at least for now. What happens in 2020 could be more telling.

Graham’s conclusion:

The Democratic Party is moving left, but it might not be clear quite how far left for two or even six years. The revolution is coming more slowly than its champions hope and its critics fear.

Matt Grossmann, a political scientist at Michigan State, noted in an email that the leftward movement is across the board on policy, ideological identification, and values, but remains furthest left on specific policy. The public movement seems to be strongest on race and gender issues as well as any proposal tied to Trump.

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Women, according to Grossmann, “are becoming a bigger part of the Democratic electorate and more supportive of women primary candidates.”

The 2018 primary elections revealed the deepening strength of an anti-establishment insurgent faction, largely young, white and minority urban voters who [turned out in droves](#) in Democratic primaries from Omaha to Tallahassee and from the Bronx to Boston.

Michael Capuano, a former mayor of Somerville, Mass. and a ten-term member of the House, learned the hard way how much the Democratic electorate has changed. As mayor in the 1990s, Capuano presided over the [gentrification](#) of the once scruffy, working class town. Initially, the city was grateful.

When Capuano first won election to Congress in 1998, he owed his victory in the 10-candidate Democratic primary to his hometown. He carried Somerville with 7,852 votes, more than the total vote for all nine opponents, 6,253, while losing to other candidates in Boston, Belmont, Cambridge, Chelsea and Watertown.

The impact of gentrification is striking.

[By 2017](#), 61.2 percent of Somerville’s residents 25 or older had at least a bachelor’s degree, compared with 30.9 percent [nationwide](#). The median household income was \$84,722, compared with \$57,652 nationally.

Somerville had moved from downscale to upscale, not to the level of Brattle Street in Cambridge or Boston’s Beacon Hill, but still many steps up the ladder.

In the process, Somerville left Capuano, a white working class Democrat in the mold of Tip O’Neill, behind.

In 2018, twenty years after first winning his House seat, Capuano could no longer count on Somerville. Despite his deep roots — his father had been mayor before him — the vote there was a wash. Capuano [received 8,423](#) to 8,286 for his opponent, Ayanna Pressley, an African-American Boston city councilwoman.

Pressley swept Cambridge and Boston to crush Capuano, 60,046 to 42,430 districtwide.

The same pattern emerged in the widely publicized defeat of Joe Crowley, another 10-term incumbent, by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the Democratic primary in a House district that straddles the Bronx and Queens.

[Steven Romalewski](#), who runs the mapping service at the CUNY Center for Urban Research, wrote me by email that “Ocasio-Cortez did best in areas such as Astoria/Steinway and Sunnyside, which happen to be more white than other parts of the district,” a point he elaborated upon in a story quoting him [posted on The Intercept](#):

You can also see that most of her votes, the strongest vote support, came from areas like Astoria in Queens and Sunnyside in Queens and parts of Jackson Heights that, number one, were not predominantly Hispanic, so they're a more mixed population, and are areas where — this is kind of a term of art — are in the process of being gentrified, where newer people are moving in,

Grace Segers, writing in July on the [City & State website](#), noted that Crowley

fell victim to gentrification and that force may upend expectations in Democratic primaries throughout Manhattan and western Brooklyn and Queens. And the rise of younger voters who are newer to their districts and unattached to incumbents could power insurgent candidates throughout New York City.

David Freedlander, writing in [Politico Magazine](#), captured the unanticipated voting patterns that gave rise to Crowley's defeat. "Ocasio-Cortez's best precincts," Freedlander wrote, were

highly educated, whiter and richer than the district as a whole. In those neighborhoods, Ocasio-Cortez clobbered Crowley by 70 percent or more.

Conversely, Crowley did best in "the working-class African-American enclave of LeFrak City, where he got more than 60 percent of the vote." In fact, Crowley

pulled some of his best numbers in Ocasio-Cortez's heavily Latino and African-American neighborhood of Parkchester, in the Bronx — beating her by more than 25 points on her home turf.

Jerry Skurnik, a New York political consultant, [describes](#) gentrifying communities outside Manhattan as experiencing an influx of "people who really want to live in Greenwich Village but can't afford to."

This younger, well-educated constituency — predominately but not exclusively white — is hostile to cautious establishment Democrats, especially to older white men, and they are determined to engineer an intraparty cultural and ideological insurgency.

The emergence in force in 2018 of these insurgent Democrats grows in part out of the Sanders presidential campaign. Sanders mobilized millions of voters, many of whom did not want the Democrats to nominate a candidate with deep ties to party regulars and to the major donor community.

[Maps of primary voting patterns](#) in 2016 and 2018 produced by CUNY's Graduate School of Journalism and the Center for Urban Research show that Sanders beat Clinton in just a handful of New York City neighborhoods. Many of those Sanders neighborhoods are in Ocasio-Cortez's district and they are the communities that provided her biggest margins of victory.

Sanders also carried Somerville in 2016, 12,247 to 9,016, where support for Capuano imploded two years later.

If the turnout patterns in the Ocasio-Cortez and Pressley districts are even modestly predictive, the Democratic Party may be changing in significant ways.

Tom Kiley, who conducted polling for Capuano, described in an email the shifting makeup of the Democratic electorate in the Seventh District of Massachusetts:

Mike did best among older, white, non-college educated Democrats who, for the most part, still described themselves as liberals or moderate liberals.

Pressley's base, Kiley wrote,

was overwhelmingly made up of liberal, college-educated, white voters, especially those under 45 who did not have a history of voting in off-year elections. We were expecting what we considered a robust turnout of 75,000 for the day after Labor Day. In fact it ballooned to over 100,000, largely on the strength of this younger white cohort.

While the Boston-Cambridge-Somerville district is far more liberal than the national average, Kiley argued that trends there are likely to be replicated in many regions of the country. "These new voters will have a major impact in the Democratic nomination process in many states," he wrote:

The desire for change in general is huge, and Trump is a powerful accelerant. I have to believe these new voters aren't going to just retreat after electing new members of Congress; they'll come out in droves in the primaries next year. And they'll be voting for change.

While primary voters are normally predominately committed partisans with a long history of voting, in the Pressley-Capuano contest more than half of the voters had no record of previous primary voting (24 percent) or were recorded as voting in only one previous primary (29 percent).

"If the Pressley campaign was banking on turnout, they certainly cashed in," [wrote](#) Maeve Duggan, research director at the MassINC Polling Group, in an article posted on the website of WBUR, Boston's NPR news station.

"Some 106,556 voters in the 7th Congressional District cast ballots in the 2018 Democratic primary, compared with just 61,725 in 2014," she continued, "and among the district's 2018 primary voters, only 37 percent had also voted" in 2014 primaries, according to voter file analysis.

Duggan and the MassINC Polling Group analyzed the demographics of the first-time voters and found:

They were predominantly women and young people: Fifty-five percent were women, and 66 percent were age 44 or younger (including 34 percent who were 18 to 29 years old).

The surge of young voters had a powerful impact, increasing

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the overall proportion of voters 44 or younger from 25 percent in 2014 to 42 percent in 2018. Combining age and gender, women ages 18 to 29 made up the largest group of new voters, at 20 percent.

The new voters, she found, “were more likely to be Asian or Hispanic, compared with the 7th’s repeat voters,” but, she noted, the state’s only majority-minority congressional district “[still has a predominantly white voting base.](#)”

A [July 2018 pre-election survey](#) of voters in the Capuano-Pressley district conducted by WBUR-MassINC makes clear the importance of growing political participation among young voters. The survey found striking generational differences not only on the candidates but on issues.

18-to-29-year-olds favored Pressley over Capuano 41-23 while those over 60 backed Capuano 59-28. Asked if they would be more or less likely to support a candidate who “made abolishing ICE a major priority,” young voters said “more likely” by 48-18 while older voters said it would make them “less likely” by 25-23.

Both young and old supported a national health care program, but the margin of support versus oppose was larger (90-2) among young voters than among their elders (71-16).

In a postelection analysis of the Ocasio-Cortez-Crowley contest, the Global Strategy Group found:

White gentrified liberal areas went big for AOC and surged. Younger, white liberal areas contributed heavily to the margin of Ocasio-Cortez’s victory. Ocasio-Cortez won Hispanics.

At the same time, according to their analysis, voters Crowley thought he could depend upon — “expected people, especially older primary voters — did not show up.”

Joshua M. Zeitz, a historian whose most recent book is “Building the Great Society: Inside Lyndon Johnson’s White House,” argues that contemporary Democratic progressives are not insurgents, but in full accord with party tradition.

In an essay in Politico, “Democrats Aren’t Moving Left. They’re Returning to Their Roots,” Zeitz argued that

What pundits today decry as a radical turn in Democratic policy and politics actually finds its antecedents in 1944. With the country fully mobilized for war, President Franklin Roosevelt called for “a second Bill of Rights ... an economic Bill of Rights” that would entitle all Americans to a “useful and remunerative job,” “the right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation,” the “right ... to a decent home,” “the right to adequate medical care” and the “right to a good education.”

Sawhill looks at the ideological shifts in the Democratic electorate less from a historical perspective and more as a response to contemporary economic and social dislocation. Among both conservatives and liberals, Sawhill argued, there is “an intellectual awakening about the

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flaws of modern capitalism” — a recognition of the failings of “neoliberalism, the idea that a market economy with a few light guardrails is the best way to organize a society.” This intellectual climate may result in greater receptivity among voters to more radical proposals.

The willingness of voters to support Democrats who are pushing initiatives like these will depend in large part, however, on the ability of candidates to assure the general electorate that their agenda is beneficial to all and not just to favored liberal constituencies. This will be difficult, given the fact that what is being proposed is a much larger role for government, and that those who are most in need of government support are in the bottom half of the income distribution and disproportionately minority — in a country with a long racist history. As a presidential candidate, Barack Obama was able to overcome this barrier twice, but the challenge should not be minimized.

## Reader Comments

The column drew 846 Reader Comments. In turn, many of those comments received endorsement by other readers. The top in the list received 946 reader endorsements and drew 38 replies.

The following, arranged from most to least endorsements, were all of the Comments that drew at least two endorsements, and all of the replies to those comments. version of this which includes the original column and all Reader Comments and all replies to those comments.

Michael

Rochester, NY Jan. 23

Times Pick

These “big, bold leftist ideas” pose a strategic problem for liberals and the Democratic Party,”

(sigh). Here we go again.

I am an older guy (Caucasian). I attended Texas A&M University from 1978 to 1982.

My tuition payments during that entire time was \$4 per credit hour. Same for every Texas resident during that time.



Roughly \$128 per year.

Had Texas A&M not offered education at this modest entry point financially, I would still be working in the Holiday Inn kitchen washing dishes. Like I was in high school.

So, I don't understand why older guys who went to school on the cheap, like me, and probably like Mr. Edsall, are writing articles about "radical" proposals like "free" or at least "affordable" education for Americans.

We could achieve this very easily if America refocused on domestic growth and health and pulled itself out of its continuous wars. America has spent \$6 Trillion dollars on war since 2001. For what? Nothing. Imagine how much college tuition we could have paid instead. Imagine how that would change America.

What is radical is killing people of color in other countries for no goal and no reason.

Let's refocus on domestic USA issues that are important. Like how to get folks educated so they/we can participate in the US economy.

Mr. Edsall, what did you pay to go to school per year?

Was that "radically" cheap?

For me, it was not radical to pay \$128 per year. It was a blessing.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

[www.remember-to-breathe.org](http://www.remember-to-breathe.org)

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

New EnglandJan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middleJan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

Blackmamba commented January 23

B

Blackmamba

11Jan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America' s proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

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The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

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magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propoganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

BrooklynJan. 23

@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

BronxTeacher commented January 23



B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

Allentown commented January 23

A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

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Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

Steve commented January 23

S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Rochester, NYJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no ford plant nearby.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYCJan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@Michael I'm glad you said that because yes, tuition USED TO BE much, much cheaper. Guess why? No one is against "affordable" tuition, or student loans that get PAID BACK. We are against greedy colleges and universities and their professors making megabucks but claiming to be philanthropists and egalitarian. They would have you believe they are about sharing and altruism when in reality they are plain greedy. Think about your taxes and how much you have to EARN to pay these folks these salaries. Many of them produce exactly zero. Art teachers who have never SOLD a piece of art yet they make a six figure salary. I'm not against people who produce but even "Leonardo" had a benefactor who paid for it all.

Craig G commented January 23

C

Craig G

Long IslandJan. 23

@Michael Education is mostly (not entirely) run and operated by liberals. If their ideas ran up the cost of a college education to an unbearable level, what makes people think that allowing their ideas on a national level won't do the same? Lack of State Funding isn't why prices are so high. State Schools are a bargain compared to most Private Colleges.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@C Wolfe yes, but soaring tuition is a direct result of salaries and benefits i.e. greed, these folks receive. Moreover, many of them keep two sets of books. They don't tell you

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about their hidden revenues. Like broadcast channels that are allocated to "educational" uses that they then lease to private concerns. Land they own, patents they receive benefits from, etc., etc. Further, what, exactly, do they produce? I have no issue with departments that produce tangible, marketable, and even research oriented results that benefit us. However, I have a huge issue with their socialized, affirmative action, diversity, agenda to promote many "disciplines" that do little or nothing. I am totally uninterested in sponsoring, and do not sponsor, even though they ask me, these activities. They are not being paid to "change" the world, or promote themselves, they are being paid to teach - period.

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23

@Chris Young, It seems you only approve of departments that teach what you consider "productive." If schools become an adjunct to the marketplace, then only the material, quantifiable results will be the metric by which the value of education is measured. This will leave us, as in some ways we are already becoming, a population that emulates robots, and has no use for critical thinking, ethics, or art.

The profit in education is in the quality of the students it turns out into the world, not on a corporate balance sheet.

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

Linda Miilu

Chico, CAJan. 23

@Odo Klem

If UC is now costing \$30,000/yr. that is a significant leap from when I went, and when my daughter went. Why the big increase? Check out the salaries of administrators; check out the number of administrators really needed for a campus with a defined student body of 27,000. Administrators petition the State for increases in their salaries; they set the stage for tuition increases to pay themselves. UC had one Ad bldg. when I attended; it managed quite well. Department counselors were enough to help manage course planning and enrollment. This is bureaucracy writ large. Students do not need administration overload; professors do not need it. The use of "adjunct" teachers is

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going to lower standards of pay and professional skills. I was fortunate to attend when one of my professors taught at Berkeley and at Oxford. Starting in Jr. year, we had grad students in our classes; competition was tough. We had law school professors who also taught undergrad constitutional law. We had TA's who were very good as well. Books were affordable, especially used on Telegraph Ave. The emphasis was on education and teaching. It was not a for profit business. Is UC modeling itself on PG&E now? Investors and rentiers?

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen, likewise, public education is funded largely by property taxes, even on those who do not have children in school, or whose children are out of school. This is not "someone else's" money! It is all our money, and this is the way we choose to employ it – to educate all our children, realizing, I hope, that educated children are a major asset of a developed country.

Letitia Jeavons commented January 23

L

Letitia Jeavons

PennsylvaniaJan. 23

@Tom Diversity doesn't hurt college and immigrants and refugees are often younger than native born Americans and more likely to be 18-64 and able to work and shore up social security.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Thank you. People somehow believe these government agencies, schools, police, churches, etc., etc. are not somehow a business. They are. Only they

have decided to shove their increases, training, new initiatives down the throats of the taxpayers. It time to stop it.

M.S. Shackley commented January 23

M

M.S. Shackley

AlbuquerqueJan. 23

@Michael I agree, in part. and I'm 69 and first voted in 1970. I paid about \$90 per semester at SDSU in the 70s and was on the GI Bill.

I agree that education should be affordable for all. There is a big but on the Democratic Party however. Remember when President Obama suggested that the first two years of college, essentially a community college degree, should be free paid for by a very small tax on the rich? Well, the DINO Democrats in San Francisco told their Congresswoman Pelosi that they were not going to pay for college for "those people". You can look it up in the SF Chronicle. These were relatively young and insanely rich Democrats, not the old guys like you and I. Democrats are closet racists, as many of my African-American colleagues attest.

Urko commented January 23

U

Urko

27514Jan. 23

@Ken

In 1985, China's Cultural Revolution had ended, and there were no Chinese highways.

That the case now? I don't think so. Things change over time. Really.

Richie by commented January 23

R

Richie by



New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael You are right.

Funding someone's education is one of the best investments you can make. I lived in NYC during the 70s, at the time when City University was free for anyone. I was able to get my education for free, and since then I have worked in higher paying jobs and paid taxes to NYC that have exceeded to cost of my tuition at least 100 fold.

smc1 commented January 23

s

smc1

DCJan. 23

@mj I don't know what rents were in 1976 in Ann Arbor, but I remember a student house with 4 real bedrooms (as well as a substandard basement room) that sold for \$20,000 (\$80 k today) when the landlord evicted us in order to sell it. Very close to campus.

The University of California's tuition I could have paid with HS 12/hour week after school job. I spent it instead of records and whatnot. That didn't include food or housing, but Michael's point is absolutely correct.

fast/furious commented January 24

f

fast/furious

the new worldJan. 24

@Michael

In the 1970s I got a graduate degree from the University of California for about \$2000.

That ended as soon as the GOP decided to defund UC by picking a rightwing fight about property values and other ways UC got funding they could get rid of.

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UC is a great school but it'll never be as affordable as it once was.

The GOP wanted it that way.

Bruce Rozenblit commented January 23

B

Bruce Rozenblit

Kansas City, MO Jan. 23

Times Pick

To the conservative, liberal means socialist. Unfortunately, they don't know what socialism is. They think socialism is doing nothing and getting paid for it, a freeloader society.

Socialism is government interference in the free market, interference in production. Ethanol is socialism. Oil and gas subsidies are socialism. Agricultural price supports are socialism. Tax breaks and subsidies are socialism. The defence industry is socialism.

All of these socialist policies greatly benefit big business. What liberals want is socialism of a similar nature that benefits people. This would include healthcare, education, public transportation, retirement, and childcare.

Currently, people work their tails off to generate the profits that pay for corporate socialism and get next to nothing in return. Daycare costs as much as many jobs pay. Kids graduate from college \$50,000 in debt. Get sick and immediately go bankrupt. They have to work past 70.

Pursuing these policies is not some far out leftist agenda. They are the norm in most industrialized nations. It's hard to live free or die if you don't have anything to eat. It's easy to be a libertarian if you make a million bucks a year.

Liberals are not advocating getting paid for doing nothing. They want people to have something to do and get paid for it. That is the message that should be pushed. Sounds pretty American to me.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Thea commented January 23

T

Thea

NYJan. 23

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@Bruce Rozenblit Wish I could like this many more times. What you are saying is what is the truth.

David Walker commented January 23

D

David Walker

Limoux, FranceJan. 23

Bruce, a succinct summary of your post is this:

What we have now is socialism for the wealthy and corporations (who, as SCOTUS has made clear, are people, too) and rugged individualism for the rest of us.

What we're asking for is nothing more than a level playing field for all.

And I hope that within my lifetime SCOTUS will have an epiphany and conclude that, gosh, maybe corporations aren't people after all. We can only hope.

H. G. commented January 23

H. G.

H. G.

Detroit, MIJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit And don't forget the biggest socialist project of our time - the wall! And withholding 800k employee checks to do so? That's socialism at gun point.

BE commented January 23

B

BE

Lawrence KSJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Once again reader comments are better than the editorial! This is the most concise explanation I've seen on these pages.

Jessica Summerfield commented January 23

J

Jessica Summerfield

New York CityJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Thank you; as others have commented already, this is so well said. To build on your point: just yesterday, a commenter on a NYT article described AOC as a communist. Incredible. The extent to which decent, pragmatic and, in a bygone era, mainstream, ideas are now painted as dangerous, extreme, and anti-American is both absurd and disturbing.

David G. commented January 23

D

David G.

WisconsinJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit You mix up the term socialism with welfare.

Socialism means government ownership of the means of production and distribution. Economically, socialism has always failed--see Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, Chavez, Maduro and sundry others. And socialism has always lead to violence and repression.

Welfare means unearned benefits. Like corporate welfare. Welfare for the needy may also be unearned but is a different matter, a matter of kindness and compassion, and can be structured to encourage people to become productive.

G James commented January 23

G

G James

NW ConnecticutJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Bruce, spot on. The point of the New Deal was not to replace capitalism with socialism, but to save capitalism from itself by achieving the balance that would preserve a capitalist economic system but one in which the concerns of the many in terms of freedom from want and freedom from fear were addressed. In other words, the rich get to continue to be rich, but not without paying the price of not being hung in the public square - by funding an expanding middle class. A middle class that by becoming consumers, made the rich even richer. But then greed took over and their messiah Saint Reagan convinced this large middle class that they too could be rich and so cutting taxes for the wealthy (and in the process redistributing the wealth from the expanding middle class to the wealthy) would one day benefit them - when they were wealthy. Drunk on the promise of future wealth, and working harder than ever, the middle class failed to notice whose ox was being gored and voted Republican. And now finally, the pendulum swings. Amen.

Our road to hatred commented January 23

Our road to hatred

Our road to hatred

NjJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Unfortunately, the hot button on fox is the word socialism. so undo the negative press there and have a chance of implementing fairer policies.

bdfreund commented January 23

b

bdfreund

OttawaJan. 23

@David G.

I would also say that many people think a cooperative economic enterprise, such as a worker owned factory, is Socialism. But this is blatantly wrong and is pushed by the rich business and stock owners to denigrate these types of businesses. Cooperatives have often proven themselves quite successful in navigating a free market system, while simultaneously focussing on workers rights and ownership. We need more if this in North America.

Maryellen Simcoe commented January 23

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M

Maryellen Simcoe

Baltimore Jan. 23

@Our road to hatred "Russia" used to be a no go among conservatives...not so much now. Anything can happen if the right people back it.

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@mrfreeze6 Bruce, I agree with mrfreeze6, you are quite insightful.

FXQ commented January 23

F

FXQ

CincinnatiJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Well put.

As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "We all too often have socialism for the rich and rugged free market capitalism for the poor."

Erik commented January 23

E

Erik

Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

This is. Spot. On.



The socialism of: Privatize the profits, socialize the losses.

It's defined American economic and social policy for the last 30+ years and we can see the results today.

Odysseus commented January 23

Odysseus

Odysseus

Home AgainJan. 23

@David G.

You mean like Scandinavia, right?

Odysseus commented January 23

Odysseus

Odysseus

Home AgainJan. 23

@Jessica Summerfield

..."article described AOC as a communist." And I saw an article describe Ross Douthat as a "columnist"... equally misleading. Will the calumny never cease?

Rich commented January 23

R

Rich

St. LouisJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

This is completely correct.

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

Linda Miilu

Chico, CAJan. 23

@David G.

See Norway, Denmark, Germany, England and Finland. Citizens have jobs and health care; education is affordable and subsidized. Not all young people attend universities; many go to vocational schools which prepare them for good jobs. We could do the same.

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit, at the end of a long line of commenters, I add my congratulations for a well-articulated overview of our political dilemma. Both "trickle-down" economics and "neo-liberalism" have brought us to this pass, giving both Democrats and Republicans a way of rewarding their corporate masters.

I believe both Clinton and Obama believed they could find a balance between the corporate agenda and a secure society. We see with hindsight how this has failed to materialize, and are rightly seeking a more equitable system – one that addresses the common sense needs of all of us.

I, for one, am overjoyed that the younger generation has found its voice, and has a cause to support. My recollection of demonstrating against the Viet Nam war (and the draft), marching for civil rights, and even trying to promote the (then largely inchoate) women's rights movement, still evokes a passionate nostalgia. We have witnessed an entire generation that lacked passion for any cause beyond their individual desires. It's good to have young men and women reminding us of our values, our aspirations, and our power as citizens.

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As the bumper sticker says, "If you think education is expensive – try ignorance."

Thanks again for a fine post.

Barry Moyer commented January 23

Barry Moyer

Barry Moyer

Washington, DCJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

What is exceedingly strange to me is that those who rail against socialism completely misread socialism at it's very roots; Family.

Kathy commented January 23

K

Kathy

OxfordJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit The Republicans great skill has been selling lies to the socially conservative to get their greedy financial agenda through. They have never cared about their voters other than how best to spin their rhetoric.

Shirley0401 commented January 23

S

Shirley0401

The SouthJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

You really ought to run for office, Bruce.

Noke commented January 23

N

Noke

ColoradoJan. 23

@David G., I'm imagining you as perhaps one of those unicorn-level-rarities, a "compassionate conservative."

I would agree that government ownership of the means of production, or really the centralized coordination of an economy is a really bad idea. What I'm afraid of is not "socialists" capturing government and then taking over the means of production; I'm much more worried about the apparently-imminent capture of government by the "means of production," or the current oligarch class who suddenly appear to own everything. Centralized control of our economy by those folks would be a very, very bad idea. Diversity and pluralism are undoubtedly a stronger path forward, but they need a strong government to allow the conditions necessary (human rights enforcement) to flourish.

So, I agree with you regarding the threat, but not the direction the threat is coming from.

Finally, back to the needy: the only thing I disagree with what you had to say there was the "become productive" part. Who defines what is productive? It seems pretty clear that with advances in technology, human labor is becoming less and less valuable. I believe we can either let this realization destroy us (if we cling to primitive views that we always must be producing for some internalized parental figure), or it can usher in the most revolutionary era of human peace, healing, and flourishing in history (if we stop fighting imaginary demons and let evidence guide us).

April commented January 23

A

April

SF Bay AreaJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Right On!

Deb commented January 24

D

Deb

Jan. 24

@Linda Miilu

\$50,000 for a degree in communications, sociology, human relations, liberal arts or anything that will not pay for itself within 5-10 years is a USA phenomenon and we have only ourselves to blame.

Ronny commented January 23

R

Ronny

Dublin, CAJan. 23

Times Pick

This old white (liberal) man regrets that I was born too late for the FDR New Deal era and too early to be part of this younger generation taking us back to our roots. I lived in America when we had a strong middle class and I have lived through the Republican deconstruction of the middle class, I much preferred the former.

Economic Security and FDR's second bill of rights is a very good place for this new generation to pick up the baton and start running.

4 Replies

FJS commented January 23

F

FJS

Monmouth Cty NJJan. 23

@Ronny Respectfully, President Clinton had a role in the deconstruction of the middle class. My point is many of the folks in the news today were in congress that far back. Say what you will about President Trump and Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez, I believe they both have exposed the left, the right, the press for what they are. Please choose your own example. I don't agree with all of her positions, but I can't express how I enjoy her making the folks that under their watch led us to where we find ourselves today squirm and try to hide their anger for doing what she does so well. I've been waiting 55 years for this. Thank you AOC.

Rob commented January 23

R

Rob

CalgaryJan. 23

@Ronny I agree with you - have a subsidized education - (rather I prefer to say equal access to education) as well as health care guarantees to a greater extent equality of opportunity - which is what all democratic societies should strive for. It's not equality of outcome but equality of opportunity. Children should not be punished for have parents of lesser means or being born on the wrong side of the tracks...

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Ronny

Too bad we've DOUBLED our population since the 1960s, and not with the educated, stable and well-employed of the world who value, build and live side by side in democratic prosperity.

Jp commented January 23

J

Jp

MichiganJan. 23

@Ronny: "I lived in America when we had a strong middle class and I have lived through the Republican deconstruction of the middle class,."

I also grew up in post-war America. You are conveniently ignoring or forgetting that the middle class started losing wealth in 1973.

During your golden age we had a manufacturing based economy that provided well paying jobs to semi-skilled or even unskilled labor.

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Those days are gone. This has been driven in part due to our choices we are free to make - automation notwithstanding.

I grew up less than 2 miles from Dodge Main. We lived in our near east side neighborhood well into the 1980s. By that time all the white liberals were long gone to safer pastures. My family and friends remained where we learned how to be Republicans. And we've done just fine, moving from the bottom 20% to the top 10% of the income scale. Privileged ill-gotten intergenerational real estate wealth? I still own the empty lot on which our house once stood. It's assessed at \$101.

That golden age you remember isn't coming back and the FDR coalition was blown up by the Democratic Party of the 1960s and 1970s.

The new wave of Democrats are eager to tackle supposedly social justice issues. To get things started let's see the NYT OP-ED writers and AOC marching down 5th Avenue, arm in arm, chanting for an end to racially segregated schools in NYC. When that's completed they can focus on righting flyover country's injustices.

Matthew D. commented January 23

M

Matthew D.

GeorgiaJan. 23

Are these really moves to the left, or only in comparison to the lurch further right by the republicans. What is wrong with affordable education, health care, maternal and paternal leave, and a host of other programs that benefit all people? Why shouldn't we have more progressive tax rates? These are not radical ideas.

6 Replies

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Matthew D.

Actually, her ideas are to the left of Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. So yes, they really are to the left.

A thoughtful green new deal is a great idea. Her particular green new deal, not very well thought out, would bankrupt the country and bring about more internal and global chaos than Trump.

Increasing the top marginal tax rates to the extent that is economically necessary is a fine idea. Increasing these rates to a percentage that “feels good “ is sloppy and could bring about the opposite results of what people would like.

These are radical ideas.

Urko commented January 23

U

Urko

27514Jan. 23

" .. This will be difficult, given the fact that what is being proposed is a much larger role for government, and that those who are most in need of government support are in the bottom half of the income distribution and disproportionately minority — in a country with a long racist history .."

Inconvenient fact, Mr. Edsall -- "government role" costs \$\$\$.

USA taxpayer debt is 2x what it was in 2008. Even the USSR had debt limits -- look up their old bond records.



Money isn't "racist" -- it just is.

You're welcome, sir.

John B commented January 23

J

John B

St Petersburg FLJan. 23

@Cass Her ideas are not the only ideas, they are a starting point for a discussion. You even appear to agree with this.

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@Cass

She doesn't have a particular green new deal. She proposes that we find a way to follow the scientific consensus that we address climate change in an urgent way. There is nothing "radical" about it.

Urko commented January 24

U

Urko

27514Jan. 24

" .. She proposes that we find a way to follow the scientific consensus .."

Those who deeply understand science -- not political gas-bags -- know that science is \*always\* challenged.

Einstein challenged Issac Newton, who had the "consensus." So much for that "consensus."

AoC is not scientist. She's provide no math proofs for her statements. Why should non-Democrats care, what she says?

Urko commented January 24

U

Urko

27514Jan. 24

@Cass

AoC clearly does not understand "effective tax rates" and legal tax deductions. The multi-millionaire walled-in vineyard owner, Nancy Pelosi, surely does.

"High marginal rates" are really a farce, because legal tax deductions turn them into effective tax rates -- per the 1986 Tax Reform Act.

AoC was born in 1989 -- she'll actually have to read some books, on the TRA. Happy to give her an exam, on the topic .. and hope she can pass.

And until AoC passes that exam -- IMHO, adults should refuse to listen to a word AoC says, on this topic.

MIMA commented January 23

M

MIMA

heartsnyJan. 23

Times Pick

As a senior, who has been a healthcare provider for decades, I hope that people will not be afraid if they get sick, that people will not fear going bankrupt if they get sick, that they do not have to fear they will die needlessly if they get sick, because they did not have proper access to healthcare treatment.

If a 29 year old woman from Queens, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, can fulfill my hopes and dreams, and alleviate these fears, just to get humane healthcare - then I say "You Go Girl!"

What a wonderful world that would be.....

9 Replies

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MA Jan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtp Jan. 23

@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed

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messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UTJan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subjection indicates the opposite is true.

AutumnLeaf commented January 23

AutumnLeaf

AutumnLeaf

ManhattanJan. 23

@MIMA

She will continue to offer you pie in the sky, and watching you cheerfully vote for her, and at the end nothing will change.

Your leader Obama failed to change things in 8 years and a congress and senate on his side.

But one single delusional talking head will do that?

Her voters are just as delusional as her if they fall for it, and it seems they do.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@JRS I'm all for free healthcare as soon as the healthcare providers, which I used to be, start rendering the care for free. What you are leaving out is the COST of healthcare and the PROFITS being made. There is nothing "free" about healthcare when the hospital charges you \$50 for a bandaid.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@MIMA Yeah, you mean Utopia which we can't afford.

Independent commented January 23

I

Independent

the SouthJan. 23

@Chris Young

There is nothing free in life.

Government provided health care, say Medicare for all, would be paid for by paying Medicare what we currently pay to insurance companies.

Add to that, your point of big profit margins by health care providers.

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

Linda Miilu

Chico, CA Jan. 23

@AutumnLeaf

Mitch McConnell blocked Obama at every turn; he denied him the appointment of a moderate respected Judge to the SC, a Judge the GOP had voted for on the Superior Court. Congress wasted time with 40 attempts to declare the ACA unconstitutional; the Plan was modeled on a Romney Plan in MA. Scalia's Citizens United Decision declared that corporations are people; Scalia knew that he was using a Superior Ct. Decision with a transcription error: word spoken: corporation; word transcribed: individual. Scalia spent a lot of time at corporate lodges, "hunting"; mainly eating until he finally ate himself to death. McConnell spends his time with mine owners. Trump spends his time with lobbyists for Israel and Saudi Arabia.

sharon commented January 23

s

sharon

worcester county, ma Jan. 23

@Independent

Why should we have insurance companies at all? Have a medical fund that everyone pays into that pays for your health care costs as needed. I'm 60 years old. I get a yearly physical, am on no medication, don't have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or any other health issues. My husband has slightly elevated blood pressure and we pay for the meds ourselves since they're less than our co-pay would be. In a year he will qualify for Medicare. Between him and myself we use about \$300 worth of healthcare a year. Yet my husband's payment for his employer provided insurance is \$140 a week. And that's just his portion. His employer pays even more than this! We have a \$7000 deductible and a \$500 out of pocket before our insurance pays for

anything not mandated by the ACA. That's \$14780.00 a year in out of pocket expense before our "insurance" kicks in. What a bargain!

chele commented January 23

c

chele

ctJan. 23

Times Pick

Moving to the left??? I'm 64 years old. I started out on the left and haven't moved leftward in all these years. I'm just as far left now as when I registered to vote as a Democrat when I was 18. We called it being liberal and the Democratic Party reflected my beliefs.

The Democratic Party, thanks largely to the Clintons and their DLC nonsense, has certainly moved to the right. So far right that I haven't been able to call it the Democratic Party. So far right that I have seriously considered changing my party affiliation.

Right now, the only think keeping me in the party is this influx of vibrant new faces. One thing that will make me leave is any ascendancy of the corporate lapdog "New Democrat Coalition" attempting to keep my party in thrall to the Republicans.

No. The electorate has not shifted sharply leftward. We've been here all along. Our party went down a wrong path. It had better get back on track or become a footnote.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2

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Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

jk commented January 23

j

jk

NYJan. 23

@Derek Flint



There was a reason for the DLC's decision to be more center left. The Democrats were losing and this gave them a chance to win, which they did with Clinton, almost Gore, and Obama.

Keith commented January 23

K

Keith

TexasJan. 23

@chele I'm an "elder millennial" in my 30s. The first US election I really paid attention to was in 2000. Remember how all of the Democrats would gripe about, "oh I really \*like\* Nader, but the Green Party candidate is never going to win..."

It's a party in dire straights when the ideological base doesn't even particularly love its candidates on the issues. Repeat in 2004 with Kerry. Obama managed to win based on charisma and the nation's collective disgust with the neocons, but then we did it again with Hillary.

G. Slocum commented January 23

G

G. Slocum

AkronJan. 23

at 63, I was there. I don't want second Trump administration either, but the route to a Democratic victory is not cozying up to the corporations and the wealthy, but by stating clearly, like FDR, "they are unanimous in their hate for me, and I welcome their hatred." We need people who are willing to say that the rich deserve to be taxed at a higher rate, because they have benefited more from our society, that no income deserves to be taxed at a lower rate than the wages paid to working people, and that vast wealth needs to be earned, not inherited.

Emmanuel Saez makes persuasive arguments, but they need to be made in the language of the working people.

Shirley0401 commented January 23

S

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Shirley0401

The SouthJan. 23

@Quiet Waiting

That was FIFTY YEARS AGO. People who fought in the Spanish-American War were still casting ballots, for heaven's sake.

McGovern has been used by Third Way apologists as a cautionary tale to provide cover for doing what they clearly wanted to do anyway.

The other reality is that the McGovern/Nixon race took place in a time when there was broad consensus that many of the social programs Republicans are now salivating over privatizing weren't going anywhere.

Ole Fart commented January 23

O

Ole Fart

La,In, Ks, Id.,Ca.Jan. 23

@Quiet Waiting: if voters believe republicans are helping them economically then follow them off the cliff. Hopefully enough voters will try a more humane form of capitalism.

RedRat commented January 23

RedRat

RedRat

Sammamish, WAJan. 23

@chele Amen to you! I too am old guy (79) and think Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is a savior of the Democratic Party! She is young and has great ideas. I agree with you about the Clintons, they led the party down a sinkhole. I agree with just about everything I have heard Alexandria espouse. She is refreshing. Glad she is kicking the butts of those old guard Democrats that have fossilized in place--they are dinosaurs.

Trebor commented January 23

T

Trebor

USAJan. 23

@chele Right on. I expect there is a very large contingent of us. It is disheartening to be associated by age and ethnicity with the corporatist financial elite power mongers who control both parties and the media. But we can still continue vote the right way and spread the word to fight corruption and corporatism.

Eschew New Democrats like ORourke. The first commitment to find out about is the commitment to restore democracy and cut off the power of the financial elite in politics. All the other liberal sounding stuff is a lie if that first commitment is not there. Because none of it will happen while the financial elite are controlling votes. There will always be enough defectors against, for example, the mainstream support for medicare for all national health care to keep it from happening if New Democrats aren't understood as the republican lite fifth column corrupters they really are.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Keith

It (the Democratic Party) is a party in dire straits, as you say, when "we" are told to stay in line, hold our noses, and vote for someone who gives talks to Wall Street executives, takes the big checks, and won't tell us what was said. Or when we get a president who was a good orator but who stuffed his cabinet with people from Goldman Sachs and bailed out Wall Street during the meltdown, forgetting about Main Street. In addition, both supported our vast Military Industrial Complex over domestic needs such as universal healthcare. And nothing has changed, at least so far. It's worth looking at FDR's cabinet picks to see the array of individuals he chose back in the day of the New Deal and worth reviewing the alphabet soup of agencies he created to provide honest work.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Quiet Waiting, the DLC was officially formed after Mondale's loss, in '85. the DLC's main position is that economic populism is not politically feasible. But I don't recall either McGovern or Mondale's losses being attributed to being too pro-worker, too pro-regulation of capitalism, or making tax rates progressive again.

Further, the idea that economic populism has no political value was just disproved by a demagogue took advantage of it to get elected. The RP's mid-term losses and other data points show that people in the middle are realizing Trump's not really a populist. Those economic Trump voters, some of whom voted for Obama twice, are up for grabs. Why would you be afraid that the DP's shift to raising taxes on the wealthy and being pro-worker will result in a Trump victory?

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

This paragraph caught my eye: "One key Democratic target, Sawhill observes, is the "well-educated, suburban women, many of them Republican, who voted for Democrats in the midterms." Once Trump is gone, she continued, "they could easily return to their natural home in the Republican Party."

What constitutes the "natural home" for women in the republican party? Do women (or men for that matter) believe that republicans/conservatives want them to have affordable health care, child leave and child care, equal pay, and may I add, respect? Will republicans protect Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid? Anyone paying attention knows that women are second class citizens in Republoville. There it doesn't take a village, no. It's every man, woman and child for him/herself.

3 Replies

In the know commented January 23

I

In the know

New York, NYJan. 23

@mrfreeze6 I'm a woman who's also a registered Republican because at one point I felt that the Democratic party lost me on issues regarding foreign policy and support for business. While I'm not on board w the GOP's ideology on social issues (or Trump), the traditional Republican party tends to have more practical ideas around economic growth.

And the GOP doesn't "own" corporate welfare. For example, insurance companies lobbied heavily for the Affordable Care Act, which was pushed through Congress without input from across the aisle. Many Republicans were against ACA, not because they didn't feel that people should have healthcare, but that it doesn't address the reasons for driving up costs. Ask anyone who's been on one of these plans (not including Medicaid), and you'll understand why some people voted for Trump.

Mercury S commented January 23

M

Mercury S

San FranciscoJan. 23

@In the know I'm formerly Republican, and female. I'm on the ACA, and while premiums were going up slowly, they've exploded in the past two years due to Republican sabotage. They are certainly no reason to vote for Trump.

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@In the know, Your party invented the fundamental ACA program. It was the brainchild of the Heritage Foundation that started this fiasco that you'd like to blame on Dems. Also, you simply cannot argue that the Republicans attempted to implement the program in good faith. They have done everything they can to sabotage it. In the end, Republicans don't want people to have affordable health care. It doesn't fit their "family-unfriendly" philosophy. Furthermore, the only real business-friendly ideas Republicans embrace are a) eliminate taxes, b) remove regulations, c) pay employees nothing. If you

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as a woman believe these are notions that strengthen you or your family, I'm at a total loss in understanding your reasoning.

Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJ Jan. 23

Americans are much more liberal than they have historically voted, thanks to the nefarious Grand Old Poison that destroys the judgement of voters when they turn on FOX News, hate radio and other Grand Old Propaganda outlets of disinformation, fear and loathing.

Most Americans supported the details of the ACA while Obama was President, but that support dropped significantly when the ACA was called 'Obamacare', which is a term that is a low-grade racial slur in the minds of America's Whites R Us voters.

77% – including 69% of Republicans – favor allowing people to buy health insurance through Medicare once they turn 50.

75% – including 64% of Republicans – favor allowing people who aren't covered by their employer to buy insurance through their state's Medicaid program.

74 % – including 47% of Republicans – favor a national government plan like Medicare that is open to anyone, but also would allow people to keep the coverage they have.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/01/23/medicare-for-all-support-kaiser-poll/2645166002/>

The majority of Americans favor progressive policies but many don't vote for them due to Pachyderm Spongiform Encephalopathy that gives them Mad Republican Cow disease in the voting booth.

What Edsall fails to mention is that America has been radically hijacked to the right for 39 years by gun nuts, religious nuts, science-deniers, corporate supremacists and the radical rich.

It's well past time for a leftward lurch to the center.

9 Replies

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@C Wolfe

Wow. Funky Irishman has been, for many months, writing about and presenting excellent data showing that the US is actually a center-left (if not strongly progressive) country. I used to present this evidence to Richard Luetzgen (where has he gone??) who kept insisting we are center-right (but never, as was his custom, presented any evidence for this).

your example is the best I've ever seen. I'm a member of a 4000-strong Facebook group, the "Rational Republicans" (seriously - a local attorney with a decidedly liberal bent started it and almost beat regressive Patrick McHenry here in Asheville). I've been making this point on the FB page for the past year and people are stunned when they see the numbers.

I'm going to post your example as well. Excellent!

Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJJan. 23

@don salmon

Richard Luetzgen expired Dec. 1 2018 at age 63.

Here is his NYT obituary.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

Claire Elliott commented January 23

Claire Elliott

Claire Elliott

EugeneJan. 23

@Socrates

I was wondering where he went, too. Thanks for the info.

don salmon commented January 23

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d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm so sorry to hear that. Thank you for letting us know.

Peter commented January 23

P

Peter

ChicagoJan. 23

@Socrates

The center is a chimera and has been since the 1930s. Democracy is a bad joke and has never really existed in the West and never will. The baby boomers will succeed in destroying not only America but the entire West. Look at the insane reaction to fifteen year old Catholics, black Israelites, and a Native American beating his drum. That is the America the super intelligent baby boomers have bequeathed the millennials. This country is doomed and circling the drain. But let's move left as the automation pauperizes not only working class but white collar middle class as well. What could possibly go wrong?

mecmec commented January 23

m

mecmec

Austin, TXJan. 23

@don salmon, Richard Luetzgen passed away in the fall. See the NYT tribute below.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

Robert Strobel commented January 23

R

Robert Strobel

IndianaJan. 23

@don salmon Richard L. passed away late last year.

James Karkheck commented January 23

J

James Karkheck

Hawai`iJan. 23

@Socrates

Thank you than you, O Socrates with a sense of humor!

Rich Pein commented January 23

R

Rich Pein

La Crosse WiJan. 23

I work with young adults in a university setting. The university I work for used to be really inexpensive. It is still realatively inexpensive and still a bargain. Most of the students have student loans. They can not make enough money in the summer or during the term to pay for tuition, fees, housing, and food. They need jobs that will pay enough to pay for those loans.

They also need portable health care. As the employer based health insurance gets worse, that portable health care becomes a necessity so they can move to where the jobs are.

So if a livable wage and universal health care are far left ideas then so be it. I am a leftist.

1 Reply

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Urko commented January 24

U

Urko

27514Jan. 24

@Rich Pein

" .. So if a livable wage and universal health care are far left ideas then so be it. I am a leftist."

Those who "really care" about young people's wages, why don't they start businesses and hire them? Y'know -- walk the talk, not just talk-talk-talk?

What are those "leaders" waiting for? C'mon, do it "for the people," like Ms. Harris says! Now! Yes!

stuart commented January 23

s

stuart

glen arbor, miJan. 23

Times Pick

Every Democrat should sign on to FDR's 1944 Economic Bill of Rights speech. It is hardly radical, but rather the foundation of the modern Democratic Party, or at least was before being abrogated by the "new Democrats." Any Dem not supporting it is at best one of the "Republican-lights" who led the Dem party into the wilderness. It would also behoove the party to resurrect FDR's Veep Henry Wallace's NY Times articles about the nature of big businesses and fascism, also from '44. Now that was a party of the people.

7 Replies

Glenn Ribotsky commented January 23

G

Glenn Ribotsky

QueensJan. 23

@stuart

They used to call it the "Democratic wing of the Democratic party".

I was glad when Thomas Edsall finally got around, in this piece, to mentioning that what is often thought of as a radical leftist turn today, due to just how far to the right our general political discussions had gone, was actually pretty much mainstream Democratic policy for much of the middle 20th century.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@stuart I agree to some extent but you must realize things have changed from that time to now, a lot. Education for example has become unaffordable for many due to the greed of these institutions. Students are left in debt for years if not decades. Professors and instructors making six figure incomes when THEY produce little or nothing of commercial value. I live near a major university for example where I'd be willingly to bet we have at least twenty professors of art each making over \$100,00 dollars annually that couldn't SELL a piece of their art if their lives depended on it. Moreover, we even provide loans to students now and like healthcare costs we need to investigate where and why this money is being made. They've turned it into a massively profitable business for them and government officials which WE get to pay for. It's ridiculous.

stuart commented January 23

s

stuart

glen arbor, miJan. 23

@Chris Young Briefly: CUNY, FDR. etc.

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Tired commented January 23

T

Tired

USAJan. 23

@Chris Young

You said, "Professors and instructors making six figure incomes when THEY produce little or nothing of commercial value"

Education is not of commercial value, and it shouldn't be. Mentoring is not of commercial value. Raising children is not of commercial value. Teaching is not of commercial value. Helping a new generation learn to think critically, exposing them to new ideas, sharing with them a lifetime's worth of your hard-won expertise is not of commercial value.

Why do you cheapen some of the most amazing things humans do by reducing it to market value? Did you ever consider that some things we do are MORE valuable than mere dollars and cents?

P.S. "I'd be willing to bet" is not evidence, or even logic, and in no way whatsoever supports your assertion. If you had spent more time listening to your professors, you might have learned that by now.

San Ta commented January 23

S

San Ta

North CountryJan. 23

@stuart: A fitting epitaph for Hilary - and hopefully for the "New Democrats." The Clintons actually were co-conspirators" with Wall Street and multinational corporations to inflict "hyperglobalization" on the country and the world. At least China and India have benefited, with tens of million raised from abject poverty, but look from where they

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started. The US has experienced the same domestic maldistribution of income, but none of the alleviation of poverty. Great job, Bill, Hilary and the DLC: leadership to where?

Custis "Buck " Langhorne commented January 23

C

Custis "Buck " Langhorne

Nor CalJan. 23

@stuart Yes, one of FDR's tenets was freedom from unfair competition...It is a disgrace that political corruption has allowed uber/lyft to roll over the taxi and livery industry ruining hundreds of thousands of American workers financially. These Silicon Valley racketeers have no regard for law or regulation or public safety. Only the mayors of London and NYC have the guts to stand up to them.

Urko commented January 24

U

Urko

27514Jan. 24

@stuart

"1944?" Germany, Japan and China were bombed-out shells.

What are they like, today? They still subordinate to the USA?

I don't think so.

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington IN Jan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Bruce Shigeura commented January 23

B

Bruce Shigeura

Berkeley, CA Jan. 23

A majority of Americans, including independent voters and some Republicans favor Medicare for all, a Green New Deal, and higher taxes on the rich. While Trump has polarized voters around race, Ocasio-Cortez is polarizing around class—the three-fourths of Americans working paycheck to paycheck against the 1 percenters and their minions in both parties. Reading the tea leaves of polls and current Democratic Party factions as Edsall does, is like obsessing about Herbert Hoover's contradictory policies that worsened the Depression. If Ocasio-Cortez becomes bolder and calls for raising the business taxes and closing tax incentives, infrastructure expansion, and federal jobs guarantee, she'll transform the American political debate from the racist wall meme to the redistribution of wealth and power America needs.

1 Reply

617to416 commented January 23

617to416

617to416

Ontario Via MassachusettsJan. 23

@Bruce Shigeura

AOC in some ways is doing what Bernie was doing—mobilizing people around class as you say—but the difference is that AOC doesn't shy away from issues of racial justice. Bernie seemed to want to unite people by ignoring issues of race, as if he was afraid that mentioning race too much might drive Whites away. AOC seems able to hold whites on the class issue while still speaking to the racial justice issues that are important to non-Whites. She's an extraordinary phenomenon: smart, engaging, articulate and with personal connections to both the White and Non-White worlds, so she threatens neither and appeals to both.

Stu Sutin commented January 23

Stu Sutin

Stu Sutin

Bloomfield, CTJan. 23

Labels such as 'liberal' fail to characterize the political agenda articulated by Bernie Sanders. By style and substance, Sanders represented a departure from the hum-drum norm. Is something wrong about aspiring to free college education in an era when student debt totals \$1.5 trillion? His mantle falls to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her followers.

One hundred years ago, American progressivism was spawned by Robert La Follette. As governor and senator from Wisconsin, and as failed third party candidate for president, La Follette called for laws to protect youth from horrendous labor practices. He called for laws to protect civil rights. In time, many of La Follette's positions became mainstream. Will history repeated itself? Maybe.



The rise of “liberalism” in the Democratic Party is therapeutic, as evidenced by youthful audiences who attended the Sander’s rallies. Increasing voter turnout will take back government from a minority that undermines the essence of a democratic system. A Democratic counterbalance to the Republican “Freedom Caucus” may appear divisive to some. To others, it offers a path to the future.

4 Replies

Billy commented January 23

Billy

Billy

from BrooklynJan. 23

@Stu Sutin

I agree, "Liberal" is too broad a term, as so-called liberals do not agree on everything, especially the degree. We can be socially liberal, while economically moderate--or vice versa. Some believe in John Maynard Keynes economics, but oppose abortion. Some want free college tuition, while others support public schools but do not support the public paying for higher education. Our foreign policy beliefs often differ greatly. What joins us is a belief in a bottom up economy, not top down--and a greater belief in civil liberties and a greater distribution of wealth. Beyond that, our religious and cultural beliefs often differ.

harpla commented January 23

harpla

harpla

Jan. 23

@Stu Sutin

"Is something wrong about aspiring to free college education in an era when student debt totals \$1.5 trillion?"

Yes. If you're the Congressperson who gets his/her funding from the lenders.

Stu Sutin commented January 23

Stu Sutin

Stu Sutin

Bloomfield, CTJan. 23

@Billy Thank you, Billy, for your thoughtful comments. I agree 100% with your view.

Stu Sutin

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Billy

Actually, to judge from comments seen here in the New York Times comment section at least, "our" foreign policy views do not differ greatly. The majority by far want to see an end to endless "wars" and the funds given over to meet our pressing domestic needs. It's only the Military Industrial Complex and all the politicians it has bought that disagree.

shstl commented January 23

shstl

shstl

MOJan. 23

Times Pick

I have a friend who lives on the West Coast and is constantly posting on social media about "white privilege" and how we all need to embrace far left policies to "even the playing field" for minorities.

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I always bristle at this, not because I don't support these policies, but because this person chooses to live in a city with actually very few minorities. She also lives in a state that's thriving, with new jobs, new residents and skyrocketing real estate values.

I, by contrast, live in a state that's declining....steadily losing jobs, businesses and residents....leaving many people feeling uneasy and afraid. I also live in a city with a VERY high minority crime rate, which also makes people uneasy and afraid.

Coastal liberals like my friend will instantly consider anyone who mentions this a racist, and hypocritically suggest that our (assumed) racism is what's driving our politics. But when I look around here and see so many Trump supporters (myself NOT included), I don't see racists desperately trying to retain their white privilege in a changing world. I see human beings living in a time and place of great uncertainty and they're scared!

If Dems fail to notice this, and fail to create an inclusive message that addresses the fears of EVERYBODY in the working/middle class, regardless of their skin color, they do so at their own peril. Especially in parts of the country like mine that hold the key to regaining the WH. Preaching as my friend does is exactly how to lose.

5 Replies

Ron Cohen commented January 23

Ron Cohen

Ron Cohen

Waltham, MA Jan. 23

@shstl

Right on!

Deb commented January 23

D

Deb

Jan. 23

@shstl

I agree and as a moderate Democrat, I already feel like an outsider, so imagine what independents are thinking.

AOC stated that she wants to primary Hakeem Jeffries, who is a moderate. With statements like these, made before spending a day in congress, who needs the GOP to tear apart the Democratic party?

Sanders didn't even win the primary and his supporters claim the primary was stolen. We lost the house and senate all by ourselves.

I already have AOC fatigue and my rejoice for the blue wave is still there but fading.

UTBG commented January 23

UTBG

UTBG

Denver, COJan. 23

Best comment in some time. I work and live too much in the 'big flat'. I am a very hard core Chicago Democratic Liberal from birth, but the distressed towns and small cities are facing extinction.

then what?

Bill commented January 23

B

Bill

from HonorJan. 23

@shstl

The answer is to help people to understand that they should not be captive to fear. That is the strategy of those in power who manipulate people's emotions so that they can easily override their ability to think rationally. When people are able to use their intellects to make decisions true solutions are possible.

nicola davies commented January 24

n

nicola davies

new hampshireJan. 24

@shstl

Thank you for your comment . I too weary of the immediate response of those who live in "coastal liberal areas" as "racist".....I begin to understand those who did vote for Trump.

I am not one of these voters.

I just see their point of view on "some" days, others, not so much at all.

Anyway, I am no longer reflexively a DEM. further to the left, Every  
....Single.....Day...

Tracy Rupp commented January 23

T

Tracy Rupp

Brookings, OregonJan. 23

Times Pick

I am so proud of our youth today. They are the hope. I am a lifetime ashamed of my own demographic: Old white men. We really suck.

6 Replies

John Patt commented January 23

J

John Patt

Koloa, HI Jan. 23

@Tracy Rupp I am a senior citizen heterosexual white male. I do not apologize for my race, gender, etc. In fact, I am proud of our accomplishments. I do apologize for my personal wrongs, and strive to improve myself.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NY Jan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Don't be so quick to condemn. The really old white men of today defeated Germany and Japan.

Then those same old white men went into Korea and then Vietnam. Ok so maybe you have a point.

DSS commented January 23

D

DSS

Ottawa Jan. 23

@John Patt I am an American living in Canada and I call myself an American.

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, Idaho Jan. 23

@John Patt

Everybody over the age of 50 should apologize for giving our young people catastrophic climate change, endless wars, broken healthcare, crumbling infrastructure, ever widening income and wealth disparities, unaffordable post-secondary education, rampant gun violence, no voice for labor. We over 50 didn't care enough to vote and to make enough political noise to keep these things from happening. We over 50 all have personal responsibilities for this messed up world we're leaving the young.

Tom Daley commented January 23

T

Tom Daley

SFJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Those Covington teenagers made their parents proud too which is just one example of why I blame Republicans of all ages for the state we're in.

A therapist is sometimes quite helpful with an individual's lack of self esteem. But unfortunately older more experienced medical professionals are generally harder to find because people tend to value those characteristics when their life depends on it.

Tintin commented January 23

Tintin

Tintin

MidwestJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp The problem with blaming a group based on demographics, rather than behavior or ideology, is that you are likely to be disappointed. There are a lot of people who are not old white men who are just as seduced by money, power, and local privilege as was the old guard. Feminists writing letters to condemn a male student who made charges of being sexually harassed by his female professor; African American activists who refuse to reject the antisemitism of charismatic cult leaders. Human beings in charge will be flawed, regardless of their race, gender identity, or sexual orientation. As the balance of power changes hands, corruption too will become more diverse.

tom commented January 23

tom

tom

midwestJan. 23

Ok, from the perspective of a rural white midwest retiree independent with post graduate education, the issues weren't the democrats moving to the left, it was the Republican party turning right (and they show no signs of stopping). Who is against an equal opportunity for an equal quality education for everyone? My college costs years ago could be met with a barely minimum wage job and low cost health insurance provided by the school and I could graduate without debt even from graduate school. Seeing what years of Republican rule did to our college and university systems with a raise in tuition almost every year while legislative support declined every year, who is happy with that? Unions that used to provide a majority of the apprenticeships in good jobs in the skilled were killed by a thousand tiny cuts passed by Republicans over the years. The social safety net that used to be a hand up became an ever diminishing hand out. What happened is those that had made it even to the middle class pulled the ladder up behind them, taking away the self same advantages they had in the past and denying future generations the opportunity. The young democrats and independents coming along see this all too clearly.

1 Reply

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

@tom, I was a 60's/70's kid. So I know the glories of the middle class as well as you do. I for one did not pull the ladder up behind me-- I have voted for every tax I could to benefit the many, since my first election, then at age 21. I volunteered in local public schools to make them best in class-- not for MY kid only, but for ALL kids. As far as these younger people, where was the leading edge of them as the GOP and then Obama launched us into disastrous wars in the middle east? Silent bystanders as their peers rushed off into a fool's mission, wasting our (THEIR) blood and treasure. Please recall it was US-- the baby boomers-- who brought down the disastrous Vietnam policy and kept us out of a draft and wars of choice for a long time to follow. So let's not over-congratulate those "coming along" until we see them actually accomplishing something.

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Ashley commented January 23

A

Ashley

MarylandJan. 23

These so-called liberal and progressive ideas aren't new. They work now in other countries and have so for many, many years, but the rich keep screaming capitalism good, socialism bad all the while slapping tariffs on products and subsidizing farmers who get to pretend that this is somehow still a free market. It's fun to watch my neighbors do mental gymnastics to justify why subsidizing soy bean farmers to offset the tariffs is a strong free market, but that subsidizing solar panels and healthcare is socialism AKA the devil's work.

All of this underscores the reality that, much like geography, Americans are terrible with economics.

JABarry commented January 23

J

JABarry

Maryland Jan. 23

The tensions between progressive and moderate positions, liberal and conservative positions in the Democratic Party and in independents, flow from and vary based on information on and an understanding of the issues. What seems to one, at first glance, radically progressive/liberal becomes more mainstream when one is better informed.

Take just one issue, Medicare for all, a progressive/liberal objective. At first glance people object based on two main points: costs and nefarious socialism.

How do you pay for Medicare for all? Will it add to the debt? Will socialism replace our capitalist economy?

People who have private medical insurance pay thousands in premiums, deductibles, co-pays each year. The private insurance is for profit, paying CEO's million dollar salaries and returns to stockholders. People paying these private insurance premiums would pay less for Medicare and have more in their own pockets.

Medicare for all is no more nefariously socialistic than social security. Has social security ended capitalism and made America a socialist country? I think not.

Is social security or Medicare adding to the national debt? Only if Congress will continue to play their tribal political games. These programs are currently solvent but definitely need tweaking to avoid near term shortfalls. A bipartisan commission could solve the long term solvency issues.

The more we know and understand about progressive/liberal ideas, the less radical they become. The solution is education.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system were as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

JABarry commented January 23

J

JABarry

Maryland Jan. 23

@José Franco

I will not dig out social security trustees' projections of future funding requirements or the possible solutions bandied about by politicians (google them), but one single tweak would eliminate any projected shortfalls.

Currently the FICA contribution is limited to earnings of \$132,900. Those who earn over that amount pay no FICA tax on the earnings above that level. The person earning a million dollars in 2019 will stop paying FICA on his earnings by mid-February. Applying FICA to all earnings of all earners would keep social security solvent. No raise in retirement age, no reduction in benefits, no insolvency.

As to Medicare's solvency and public benefits, see the excellent comments of Len Charlap.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

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@Len Charlap

That number bears repeating so let me make it bigger: \$1,500,000,000,000 - per year every year.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@José Franco - More data

All other industrialized countries have some form of universal government run health care, mostly single payor. They get better care as measured by all 16 of the bottom line public health statistics, and they do it at 40% of the cost per person. If our system were as efficient, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each year.

[www.pnhp.org](http://www.pnhp.org) & [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org) & especially [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/data/oecd-health-statistics\\_health-data-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/data/oecd-health-statistics_health-data-en)

Here are the per capita figures for health care costs in 2016 in PPP dollars:

US - 9507.2

Austria - 5227.3

Belgium - 4839.8

France - 4500.4

Germany - 5550.6

Luxembourg - 7462.8

The Netherlands - 5385.4

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Switzerland - 7919.0

Sweden - 5487.5

Denmark - 5199.3

UK - 4192.5

Canada - 4643.7

OECD Average - 4003

Let's compare some bottom line statistics between the US and the UK which has real socialized medicine.

Life expectancy at birth: UK - 81.1 US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (Deaths per 1,000): UK - 3.8 US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): UK - 9 US - 14

As Einstein said,

"The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits."

David J commented January 23

D

David J

NJJan. 23

@Fourteen, business is the operative world. In Canada caring is the operative word.

Jim commented January 23

J

Jim

Los Angeles Jan. 23

@Len Charlap Saving \$1.5T on medical bills doesn't gain that much for the government - it would gain the normal taxes if that money were spent on things other than medical insurance, but that's only a fraction of the total. To claim it all, the government would have to raise taxes (gasp!).

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San Diego Jan. 23

@Len Charlap

Canada can also more easily afford universal healthcare and a stronger social safety net because it doesn't have the outsized military budget that we do.

Bob Laughlin commented January 23

Bob Laughlin

Bob Laughlin

Denver Jan. 23

@JABarry

People don't seem to realize that the health insurance premiums they pay are a tax. Taxation without representation, I might add.

Take the premiums paid to for profit insurance out of the equation and the added tax will be a windfall for most of US.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

Boston Jan. 23

@Ellen

Always a good point to remember. Our military is killing us slowly but surely like a chronic disease.

M. McCarthy commented January 23

M

M. McCarthy

S F Bay AreaJan. 23

@Fourteen

My hip replacements in the US, one on Medicare, were performed as soon as I wanted them done. This is not true in the UK or Canada. Joint replacements have long waiting lists.

Relatives in the UK have waited for more minor surgeries only to turn up on the appointed date and be told it has been cancelled. My social media page is full of complaints of this nature.

I have far better care on Medicare than they do and I never have to wait more than a week or two. When you age and have more complex needs they do not perform well. Luckily I was young when I lived in the UK and Canada and rarely needed to visit a doctor except for routine matters.

Many seniors who like what they have now would not be happy with what happens .

M. McCarthy commented January 23

M

M. McCarthy

S F Bay AreaJan. 23

@Len Charlap I suspect lower life expectancy rates in the US are at least somewhat influenced by deaths from gunshots and our much higher rate of death due to automobile accidents.

Our problem is one of unfairness by not ensuring everyone has coverage, not that the auS has poor medical care.

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If you are covered, American medicine is the best. For one thing our cancer survival rates are higher than in the UK.

A friend there kept an online diary of chemo appointments and it was a discouraging read.

M. McCarthy commented January 23

M

M. McCarthy

S F Bay Area Jan. 23

@Len Charlap

I have lived on Canada & the UK. I still have friends and relatives in both countries. Americans with private employer insurance or a medicare are not going to love these.

A friend on Regina can barely walk one block but after a year still has no date for a knee replacement. Friends in the UK have gone abroad and paid for hips and knees

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Princeton NJ Jan. 23

@M. McCarthy - Some actual data instead of the anecdotes you mention:

1. Canadians mostly live near the border and have some familiarity with our system. In a Globe-Mail & Canadian Broadcasting poll 91% preferred their health care system over ours.

2. 0.5% of Canadians receive health care in the United States a year, but only 0.11% come here for the purpose of obtaining health care. The rest get sick or in an accident while in the US. Practically all of the Canadians who come here for care are sent here by the Canadian system because they have some rare condition we see more frequently since we have 13 times as many people.

3. You mention "cancer survival rates." Survival rate is entirely the wrong statistic to use here. It depends on two events. First the disease must be detected, then the patient must survive 5 years. If the disease is not diagnosed, even though the patient has it for 20 years, she will not count as a survivor. Clearly any system (such as ours) that does a lot of testing will have a better survival rate than one that does less testing even if we kill more people by unnecessary treatment than we save by treating the disease earlier. The correct statistic is mortality rate, how many people per thousand die from the disease each year. Canada and the US have about the same cancer mortality rate.

I have also lived in London. I found the health fine. Since you seem to like anecdotes, I'll post one in a different comment.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@M. McCarthy

The US is good only for acute care medicine such as surgery and that represents 25% of healthcare. The 75% is chronic care and the MDs are idiopathic with that - cancer, diabetes, neurodegenerative diseases, heart disease...completely clueless so they manage or "treat" with drugs but never cure. Medical errors (primarily correctly prescribed pharmaceutical side-effects and not operating room or natural deaths) kill about 250,000 people every year (but don't worry, they have insurance).

Canada does better for everyday care than the US and at a lower cost. But many Canadians come to the US for specialty care. In fact rich people all over the world fly in for that.

The best doctors in the US are cash-only and can think outside the conventional medicine echo chamber. The Malpractice Doctors are those that take insurance and merely obey their pharmaceutical masters.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San Diego Jan. 23

@Fourteen

I agree with your analysis of our medical care "system" that is so infected by BigPharma. Many journal articles are ghost written and busy doctors in corporate medicine haven't the time to separate the wheat from the chaff as far as prescription drugs go. Wise to follow Public Citizen's advice - wait until a drug has been on the market for at least seven years when its true side effect profile becomes clear.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

c harris commented January 23

c

c harris

Candler, NCJan. 23

Its ok for a far right bigoted clown to be elected to the president and a tax cut crazy party that wants to have a full scale assault against the environment and force more medical related bankruptcies to be in charge? The safe candidate protected by 800 superdelegates in 2016 was met with a crushing defeat. The Democratic establishment wants a safe neo con corporatist democrat. Fair taxation and redistribution of wealth is not some far out kooky idea. The idea that the wealthiest Americans getaway with paying tax at 15%, if at all, is ruinous to the country. Especially since there is an insane compulsion to spend outlandish trillions on "national security". Universal health care would save the country billions of dollars. Medicare controls costs much more effectively than private insurers. As with defense the US spends billions more on health care than other countries and has worse medical outcomes. Gentrification has opened fissures in the Democrats. The wealthy price out other established communities. The problems of San Francisco and Seattle and other places with gentrification need to be addressed before an open fissure develops in the party.

2 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

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Printceton NJJan. 23

@c harris - Hillary received almost 4 million more primary votes than Bernie.

Tom W commented January 23

T

Tom W

WAJan. 23

I guess you skipped the part about gentrified districts voting progressive in 2018.

David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

Michelle Teas commented January 23

M

Michelle Teas

CharlotteJan. 23

One could argue that many of these ideas are not that far left - rather it's a result of more and more Americans realizing that WE are not the problem. Clean water and air, affordable health care and affordable education are not that radical.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa Barbara Jan. 23

Times Pick

Can we please, please stop talking about AOC?

Sure, she's young and energetic and is worthy of note, but what has she accomplished?

It's easy to go to a rooftop- or a twitter account- and yell "health care and education for all!"

But please, AOC, tell us how you are going to not only pay for these ideas but actually get them through Congress and the Senate?

It's just noise, until then, and worse, you're creating a great target for the right that will NOT move with you and certainly can label these ideas as leftist nutism- which would be fine, if we weren't trying to get Trump out of office ASAP..

Dreams are great. Ideals are great. But people who can get stuff actually done move the needle...less rhetoric, more actual plans please..

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USA Jan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we

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need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

She's been in office less than a month. You want to shut down the conversation that is finally bringing real hope & passion to average people, & is bringing a new set of goals (& more integrity) to the Democratic Party? Paying for single-payer has been rehashed many times; just look at all the other 'civilized' countries who have it. For once, try putting the savings from ending co-pays, deductibles, & premiums into the equation. Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

I understand what you are saying, but please remember- half of this country thinks- rightly or wrongly- that AOC and many of her ideals are unobtainable and socialist.

Whether they are or are not is NOT the point.

We need ideas that are palatable to the mainstream, average American- not just those of us on the liberal wings. And I AM one of those.

Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

GAO commented January 23

G

GAO

Gurnee, IL Jan. 23

@Samuel

To pay for universal health care you capture all the money currently being spent for the health care system. That includes all the employer insurance premiums, VA medical care costs, military medical costs, all out-of-pocket expenses, everything. That provides plenty of money for our health care needs as exemplified by the costs in other advanced countries with better systems.

Also re-activate parts of the ACA that were designed to control and reduce costs but that have gone unfunded. Reduce hospital and hospital administration costs, which are exorbitant and provide little real health care benefit. There will be plenty of funds for actual provider salaries (physicians, nurses, technicians, pharmacists, etc).

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

California Jan. 23

@Samuel

"It's easy to go to a rooftop- or a twitter account- and yell "health care and education for all!"

Its not easy to get anyone to listen. The moral impetus precedes the "actual plans," which come out of the legislative process,

Why would you be against this getting attention? Unless, of course, you oppose health care and education for all.

beberg commented January 23

beberg

beberg

Edmonds, WA Jan. 23

@Samuel

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez has sponsored or co-sponsored 18 bills in the House, including original co-sponsor with Rep. Pressley of H.R.678 — 116th Congress (2019-2020) To provide back pay to low-wage contractor employees, and for other purposes.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa Barbara Jan. 23

@RoRoger-

I'm an Emergency Physician in your state, and a product of the public school system, and I graduated with 250K in debt- I'm the least opposed person to this you have ever met, trust me.

I think the point of what I am trying to say here is being blurred- we are experiencing (arguably) the most divisive and acrimonious time in our country's history.

We are suffering under (arguably) the worst president of all time. We need to focus on the bigger picture and get him out- and AOC's politics and ideas- again, right or wrong- are deeply polarizing and will NOT be accepted outside of the liberal portions of our country. Don't believe me? Drive 100 miles East and talk to anyone you meet. It's a different country there. I LIKE her. I LIKE her ideas. But try to get them to bear fruit when their promotion won't cause further rifts in the marginalized/swing voters we so desperately need to get Trump out.

All I am saying is please- not now.

You will say... when, then..?

And I will say WHEN WE ARE NOT SUFFERING UNDER TRUMP.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Samuel. how well did that work out? Better than anyone expected, which caused the DNC to limit the amount of debates and schedule them during NFL games, to prevent Bernie from getting his message across. Even with all that, all polls showed Bernie beating Trump. So why do you believe America isn't ready for Bernie's common sense ideas? What, we need more time for the workers to suffer while the rich continue their spending spree, and then we'll be ready?

GBR commented January 23

G

GBR

Jan. 23

@Samuel

I completely agree! I had the [admittedly outlandish] thought yesterday that AOC is really a Russian bot, placed to dissuade all the moderates and independents out there from voting at all..... Seriously though, priority #1 is getting Trump out of the White House, and to do that, we need a moderate with wide appeal.

Mark Shyres commented January 23

M

Mark Shyres

Laguna Beach, CAJan. 23

@Roger

It's attention for attention's sake. We have enough childish behavior in Washington, we don't need more.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

[www.remember-to-breathe.org](http://www.remember-to-breathe.org)

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington IN Jan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Amanda Jones commented January 23

Amanda Jones

Amanda Jones

Jan. 23

Finally, the left came out of its hibernation. We have spent the last decade or more either sleeping or hiding, while at the same time, the Tea Party, the Freedom Caucus, Trump, and his minions were taking over our government---It is such a breath of fresh air to finally listen to airwaves filled with outrage over CEO's making millions of dollars an hour, of companies that have become monopolies, of tax plans that bring back the middle class---it took us a while, but we are back.

2 Replies

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Amanda Jones

Hope you are correct. Still there are the 40% of Democrats who are not Liberals, are they secret Republicans? and the 80% of Democrats who are not progressive.

If you're not progressive you just sit there and that's regressive when the Republicans are marching for the alt-Right.

Sharon commented January 23

S

Sharon

Leawood, KSJan. 23

@Fourteen, I have been a Democrat for all of the 30 years I have been voting. I consider myself “progressive’ish.” I think there are some good ideas coming out but I think there are some lousy (impractical) ideas, too. This “you’re either 100% with us, or your against us” attitude is going to alienate many other Democrats like myself who are not far left on the spectrum but sure as heck would never identify anything close to resembling a Republican. So go ahead, alienate us. Many will still vote Democrat but don’t put your hand out asking for campaign contributions when you tell us to go to the other side because we are not 100% progressive or liberal.

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

For so long (40+ years) the political spectrum has been pulled wildly and radically to the right across so many issues.

The Democratic party has for the most part "triangulated" their stances accordingly to essentially go along with republicans and corporate interests for a bargain of even more tax/corporate giveaways to hold the line on social issues or programs.

It has now gotten to the point that continuous war has been waged for two (2) decades and all the exorbitant costs that go along with that. There has been cut, after cut after cut whereas some people and businesses are not paying any taxes at all now.

Infrastructure, social spending and education are all suffering because the cupboard is now bare in the greatest and most richest country in the world.

It just came out the other day that ONLY (26) people have as much wealth as the bottom half of the entire world's population. That amount of wealth in relation to dwindling resources of our planet and crushing poverty for billions is abjectly obscene on so many levels.

Coupled with all of the above, is the continued erosion of human rights. (especially for women and dominion over their own bodies)

People are realizing that the founding fathers had a vision of a secular and Progressive nation and are looking for answers and people that are going to give it to them.

They are realizing that the Democratic party is the only party that will stand up for them and be consistent for all.

Matt Williams commented January 23

Matt Williams

Matt Williams

New YorkJan. 23

You are studying this like it represents some kind of wave but in fact it is just a few districts out of 435. These young women seem extraordinarily simply because the liberal media says they are extraordinary. If the media attention on these new



representatives were to cease, no one except their families, their staff, and maybe Stephen Colbert would notice.

9 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@Matt Williams - You are ignoring the many statistics in the article that apply to the Democratic party as a whole.

For example:

"From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of Democrats who said the government should create "a way for immigrants already here illegally to become citizens if the meet certain requirements" grew from 29 to 51 percent, while the share who said "there should be better border security and stronger enforcement of immigration laws" fell from 21 to 5 percent."

There are many others.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Matt Williams

But they are extraordinary, relative to their bought and paid for colleagues. That came first and the media is reporting it.

Their authenticity is naive, but it shouldn't be, and that's the story. It's a glimmer of hope for democracy that may be extinguished - let's celebrate this light in the darkness, while it lasts.

James Mullaney commented January 23

J

James Mullaney

Woodside, NYJan. 23

@Matt Williams Without the undue media attention we wouldn't be saddled with this cartoon character masquerading as a president.

s.whether commented January 23

s.whether

s.whether

montJan. 23

@Matt Williams

Just like the Right wing media introduced Trump. The difference is honesty.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Matt Williams

Exactly. I'm a Democrat in a conservative area, and all my Democrat friends think this woman is nuts. Our Senator Jon Tester is wonderful. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez? Hard pass.

DaveD commented January 23

D

DaveD

WisconsinJan. 23

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@Fourteen Let's wait until the Marvelous Ms Ocasio-Cortez is a bit drier behind the ears, shall we?

elaine farrant commented January 23

e

elaine farrant

BaltimoreJan. 23

@Matt Williams

If media attention to the Donald would cease--oh what a blessing that would be for everyone! (except DT)

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Matt Williams, did you really read past the headline? This article analyzes data from three large national polls, quotes from writers at in-depth news analysis sites, authors with expertise in social and economic policy, and university professors, all providing their analysis of the trends in the polling that demonstrate the demographic wave that you apparently don't believe in.

And Reps AOC and Pressley are not used as primary evidence of these trends as you suggest, but rather as examples within the larger trend whose districts are diverse enough to further dissect and analyze. It's a great piece of writing with references that can be pursued lots of varied opinions to think about. But of course you have to actually read it to get anything out of it.

Len Charlap commented January 24

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 24

@Matt Williams - I notice that you and most of the others replying are reduced to purely ad hominem attacks on AOC. Not one person has any criticism of her policies--not one.

dudley thompson commented January 23

d

dudley thompson

marylandJan. 23

Times Pick

Democrats just don't like to win presidential elections. Go ahead. Move left. But remember, you are not taking the rest of the country with you. As a NeverTrump Republican, I'll vote for a moderate Democrat in 2020. No lefties. Sorry. Don't give the country a reason to give Trump four more years. Win the electoral college vote instead of complaining about it. The anti-Trump is a moderate.

5 Replies

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@dudley thompson, if you are one of those elite moderate liberals against the "lefties" concern about college and medical costs, protections for workers and the environment, and progressive taxation, then in the end getting your vote isn't worth sacrificing the votes of all the other people who do care about those things.

Your "moderate" way may calm those swing voters who fear change, and allow them to vote for the Democrat, but it also demoralizes and disappoints the much larger group of potential Democratic voters that craves change.

bored critic commented January 23

b

bored critic

usaJan. 23

actually, the anti leftist progressive is pro trump.

The Captain commented January 24

T

The Captain

St Augustine, FLJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Dear Dudley, please note the following:

The one and only way the United States will eventually improve for a very large and abused group of Americans on the dismal state of wages, ridiculously high health care- and prescription drug costs, exorbitant costs for education, racism/neo-nazizum, more equality, sensible immigration/justice/tax laws, the right of women for equal pay and their right to choose (to name only a few) can and will only be achieved via a leftist government.

For the average American being a socialist or lefty is like being a stupid, bad and unpatriotic person.

The Alexandrias, Ayamas and Rashidas are leading the way.

I hope you will get old enough to enjoy the good things coming and re-read your today's comment at that time.

Kind regards.

ML commented January 24

M

ML

BostonJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Do you consider Eisenhower leftist? (highest tax rates ever). How about Nixon? (established the EPA).

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We have lurched so far right in this country that the middle looks left. I'm sick of the labels -- listen to what these leaders are actually proposing. If you don't understand how the marginal tax rate works, look it up. If you don't realize we once didn't accept mass homelessness and mass incarceration as a fact of life in America, learn some history. We're living in a myopic, distorted not-so-fun-house where up is down and center is left. We need to look with fresh eyes and ask what our communal values are and what America stands for.

Roger commented January 24

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Vote your conscience. If you think another term of Trump is somehow preferable to another candidate, that's on you.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

"These "big, bold leftist ideas" pose a strategic problem."

No they don't. The Real Problem is the non-thinking non-Liberal 40% of Democrats and their simpatico Republicans who are programmed to scream, "How will we pay for all that?"

Don't they know all that money will just be stolen?

They were silent when that money was stolen by the 0.1% for the Tax Giveaway (they're now working on tax giveaway 2.0) and by the military-industrial complex (to whom Trump gave an extra \$200,000,000,000 last year), various boondoggle theft-schemes like the Wall, the popular forever Wars (17 years of Iraq/Afghanistan has cost \$2,400,000,000,000 (or 7 times WW2)), and the Wall Street bailouts.

Don't those so-called Democrats realize whose money that was?

First of all, it's our money. And second, our money "spent" on the People is a highly positive investment with a positive ROI.

Compare that to money thrown into the usual money pits which has no return at all - except more terrorists for the military, more income inequality for the Rich, and Average incomes of \$422,000 for Wall Street.

When the People's money is continually stolen, how can anyone continue to believe that we're living in a democracy?

David Walker commented January 23

D

David Walker

Limoux, France Jan. 23

Bruce, a succinct summary of your post is this:

What we have now is socialism for the wealthy and corporations (who, as SCOTUS has made clear, are people, too) and rugged individualism for the rest of us.

What we're asking for is nothing more than a level playing field for all.

And I hope that within my lifetime SCOTUS will have an epiphany and conclude that, gosh, maybe corporations aren't people after all. We can only hope.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Loren Guerriero commented January 23

L

Loren Guerriero

Portland, ORJan. 23



Edsall writes with his normal studious care, and makes some good points. Still, I am growing weary of these “Democrats should be careful and move back to the center” opinions. Trump showed us that the old ‘left-right-center’ way of thinking is no longer applicable. These progressive policies appeal to a broad majority of Americans not because of their ideological position, but because so many are suffering and are ready to give power to representatives who will finally fight for working families. Policies like medicare for all are broadly popular because the health insurance system is broken and most people are fed up and ready to throw the greedy bums out. We’ve been trying the technocratic incrementalism strategy for too long, with too little to show for it. Bold integrity is exactly what we need.

1 Reply

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MA Jan. 23

@Loren Guerriero Amen!! It seems as if the MO of the "progressives" has been to coddle right-wing ideas to get along...and, probably, to be on the contributors gravy train. I'll never forgive Clinton for his acquiescing to the destruction of oversight on the financial industry. Thieves run rampant when there are no controls.

Jessica Summerfield commented January 23

J

Jessica Summerfield

New York City Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Thank you; as others have commented already, this is so well said. To build on your point: just yesterday, a commenter on a NYT article described AOC as a communist. Incredible. The extent to which decent, pragmatic and, in a bygone era, mainstream, ideas are now painted as dangerous, extreme, and anti-American is both absurd and disturbing.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

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James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

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BE commented January 23

B

BE

Lawrence KSJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Once again reader comments are better than the editorial! This is the most concise explanation I've seen on these pages.

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Clint commented January 23

C

Clint

Walla Walla, WA Jan. 23

Times Pick

Thank you to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, Rashida Tlaib and other new progressive voices in Congress for standing-up to the impostor in the White House.

The other elected "representatives" are behaving like a dysfunctional family that pretends they don't see the drunk parent passed out on the floor every night.

A. Stanton commented January 23

A. Stanton

A. Stanton

Dallas, TX Jan. 23

Times Pick

If Hillary were President, there would never have been a shutdown.

That is the lesson that Mrs. Pelosi, AOC and Democrats should carry forward to 2020.

5 Replies

michjas commented January 23

michjas

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michjas

Phoenix Jan. 23

@A. Stanton

Since 1990, there have been funding gaps, shutdowns or serious threats of shutdowns almost every year. They have become routine tactics in the effort of each party to drive a hard bargain.

Mr. Slater commented January 23

M

Mr. Slater

Brooklyn, NY Jan. 23

@A. Stanton

Well, she's not the president (thankfully) and you can't predict hindsight only speculate.

fast/furious commented January 24

f

fast/furious

the new world Jan. 24

@A. Stanton

Don't make anything about Hillary.

That ship has sailed.

A.G. Alias commented January 24

A.G. Alias

A.G. Alias

St Louis, MO Jan. 24

@A. Stanton

I feel the same about what Ms. Pelosi et al. I am not sure about Hillary Clinton. I supported her all along more so in 2008. In 2016 I was quite angry at her for letting Trump become the president.

I wish Pelosi was less stubborn. If this dangerous exercise backfires, Democrats' chance for 2020 will be destroyed.

Trump didn't care to win even in 2016. He was preparing to announce the election was rigged in Hillary's favor. If he runs, can run, in 2020, he will take it as a blessing if he loses. He has little interest in governing other than a passing desire to have certain policies but he hates to lose.

Treat him as spoiled brat. Let his have his wall, which won't change anything. It's not like having more SUVs or plastic, which are bad.

Larry Roth commented January 24

L

Larry Roth

Ravena, NY Jan. 24

@A. Stanton If Hillary were president (as a majority of the voters wished), we would be somewhere in the middle right now of a Republican campaign to impeach her. It's how they roll.

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistance Jan. 23

@LTJ

No one is promoting "free stuff" - what is being proposed is that people/corporations pay into a system Progressively upwards (especially on incomes above 10,000,000 dollars per year) that allowed them and gave them the infrastructure to get rich in the first place.

I am sure you would agree that people having multiple homes, cars, and luxury items while children go hungry in the richest nation in the world is obscene on its face.

Aye ?

FJS commented January 23

F

FJS

Monmouth Cty NJJan. 23

@Ronny Respectfully, President Clinton had a role in the deconstruction of the middle class. My point is many of the folks in the news today were in congress that far back. Say what you will about President Trump and Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez, I believe they both have exposed the left, the right, the press for what they are. Please choose your own example. I don't agree with all of her positions, but I can't express how I enjoy her making the folks that under their watch led us to where we find ourselves today squirm and try to hide their anger for doing what she does so well. I've been waiting 55 years for this. Thank you AOC.

G James commented January 23

G

G James

NW ConnecticutJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Bruce, spot on. The point of the New Deal was not to replace capitalism with socialism, but to save capitalism from itself by achieving the balance that would preserve a capitalist economic system but one in which the concerns of the many in terms of freedom from want and freedom from fear were addressed. In other words, the rich get to continue to be rich, but not without paying the price of not being hung in the public square - by funding an expanding middle class. A middle class that by becoming consumers, made the rich even richer. But then greed took over and their

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messiah Saint Reagan convinced this large middle class that they too could be rich and so cutting taxes for the wealthy (and in the process redistributing the wealth from the expanding middle class to the wealthy) would one day benefit them - when they were wealthy. Drunk on the promise of future wealth, and working harder than ever, the middle class failed to notice whose ox was being gored and voted Republican. And now finally, the pendulum swings. Amen.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

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C Wolfe

Bloomington IN Jan. 23

@Socrates

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

Liz commented January 23

L

Liz

Chicago Jan. 23

I lived in Europe for a long time. Not even most right wing parties there wish to abolish universal healthcare, replace low or tuition-free colleges with college debt, etc.

The US has politically drifted far to the right when the center Democrats were in charge. Now Trump is lurching the country to extreme raw capitalism at the cost of national debt, even our environment and climate, Democrats need to stop incrementalism. Simple as that.

1 Reply

heinrich zwahlen commented January 23

h

heinrich zwahlen

brooklyn Jan. 23

@LizTime to rock the boat.

Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Los AngelesJan. 23

Times Pick

Keep on keepin' on, AOC. Be the leader you (and we) know you are.

Bob commented January 23

B

Bob

Taos, NMJan. 23

Bernie and AOC don't seem all that radical to me for the reason this op-ed points out -- I grew up in a New Deal Democratic family. My Grampa was an electrician supervisor for the City of Chicago and my Granma was a legal secretary. They wanted universal health care and free education and jobs for all. Those things made sense then, and they make sense now. They provide solutions to the deep problems of our society, so who wouldn't want them? We've had a lab test -- other than actual jobs for all Northern Europe has these things and we don't. Neo-liberalism, its Pay-Go formula for government, and its benefits for the rich fails on most counts except producing massive inequality and concentrated wealth. Bernie voters want solutions to inequality and climate change, and they are readily available if government can be wrested from the hands of Republicans like Trump and neo-liberals.

Blackmamba commented January 23

B

Blackmamba

ILJan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America's proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an

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unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Thea commented January 23

T

Thea

NYJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wish I could like this many more times. What you are saying is what is the truth.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

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James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN. Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

walking man commented January 23

w

walking man

Glenmont NY Jan. 23

I think you look at all this in a vacuum. Democrats veered left because there was a need to counterbalance what was happening on the right. They see Republicans aggressively trying to undo all the gains the left had achieved the previous several decades. Civil rights, Womens' rights, anti-poverty efforts, and so on all not just being pushed to the right, but forced to the right with a bulldozer. It got to a tipping point where Democrats could clearly see the forest for the trees. A great deal of this was a result of Republicans inability to candy coat their agenda. Universal healthcare....not being replaced by affordable alternatives, but by nothing. Tax cuts that were supposed to help the middle class, but, as evidenced by the government shutdown, giving them no economic breathing room. And, in fact, making their tax cut temporary, something nearly impossible to reverse with such a high deficit. Attacking immigrants with no plan on who, actually, would do the work immigrants do. The list goes on and on. In the past, many social programs were put in place not so much to alleviate suffering as to silence the masses. Now Republicans feel the time has come to take it all back, offering easily seen through false promises as replacements. That the left should see the big picture here and say "Not so fast" should come as absolutely no surprise. All they need now is a leader eloquent enough to rally the masses.

allen roberts commented January 23

a

allen roberts

99171Jan. 23

I think the Democratic Party is finally returning to its roots. We are now engaging in the same politics which gave us control of the House for about fifty years.

I went to my first International Union convention in 1972 at which Ted Kennedy was one of the featured speakers. One of the themes of the convention was healthcare for all. Now it treated as some sort of radical proposal from the left.

I am not certain why clean air and water, affordable health care and housing, combating climate change, raising wages, taxing the highest income brackets, updating our infrastructure, solving the immigration issue, and providing aid not weapons to other nations, are considered liberal or socialistic.

I think it represents the thinking of a progressive society looking to the future rather than living in the past.

1 Reply

The Wizard commented January 23

The Wizard

The Wizard

West Of The PecosJan. 23

@allen roberts Capitalism is progressive. Leftism is regression to tribalism ,myth and hunting-gathering. Conservatism is Stan Laurel scratching his head and smiling.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

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Midwest Josh

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C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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bdfreund commented January 23

b

bdfreund

OttawaJan. 23

@David G.

I would also say that many people think a cooperative economic enterprise, such as a worker owned factory, is Socialism. But this is blatantly wrong and is pushed by the rich business and stock owners to denigrate these types of businesses. Cooperatives have often proven themselves quite successful in navigating a free market system, while simultaneously focussing on workers rights and ownership. We need more if this in North America.

David J commented January 23

D

David J

NJJan. 23

@JBC, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez was voted into congress and then the media took notice. It wasn't the other way around.

My only hope is that she stays the course.

H. G. commented January 23

H. G.

H. G.

Detroit, MIJan. 23



@Bruce Rozenblit And don't forget the biggest socialist project of our time - the wall! And withholding 800k employee checks to do so? That's socialism at gun point.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

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mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

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James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

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will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

She's been in office less than a month. You want to shut down the conversation that is finally bringing real hope & passion to average people, & is bringing a new set of goals (& more integrity) to the Democratic Party? Paying for single-payer has been rehashed many times; just look at all the other 'civilized' countries who have it. For once, try putting the savings from ending co-pays, deductibles, & premiums into the equation. Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Jean commented January 23

J

Jean

ClearyJan. 23

There are two points left out of all of the analysis of both Pressley's and Ocasio-Cortez's campaigns.

First of all, both women did old fashioned retail politics, knocking on doors, sending out postcards, gathering as many volunteers as they could and talking about the issues with voters face to face. They took nothing for granted. This is precisely what Crowley and Capuano did not do.

Second, they actually listened to the voters regarding what they needed and wanted in Congressional representation.

What both of the stand for is neither Liberal or Conservative. What they stand for human values.

This is not to say that Capuano and Crowley did not stand for these same values, but they took the voter for granted. That is how you lose elections.

The Democrats are going back to their roots. They have found that the Mid-terms proved that issues of Health Care, minimum wages, good educations for all despite

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economic circumstances, and how important immigration is to this country really matter to the voters.

They need to be braver in getting this across before the next election

And the press might want to start calling the candidates Humane, period.

1 Reply

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MAJan. 23

@Jean Yes, definitely. The question about serving the people, all of the people, should not if, but HOW.

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MAJan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

New EnglandJan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Billy commented January 23

Billy

Billy

from BrooklynJan. 23

@Stu Sutin

I agree, "Liberal" is too broad a term, as so-called liberals do not agree on everything, especially the degree. We can be socially liberal, while economically moderate--or vice versa. Some believe in John Maynard Keynes economics, but appose abortion. Some want free college tuition, while others support public schools but do not support the public paying for higher education. Our foreign policy beliefs often differ greatly. What joins us is a belief in a bottom up economy, not top down--and a greater belief in civil liberties and a greater distribution of wealth. Beyond that, our religious and cultural beliefs often differ.

Robert Grant commented January 23

R

Robert Grant

Charleston, SCJan. 23

I think the Internet has provided an influx of new understanding for the American left. They've learned that things considered radical here are considered unexceptional in the rest of the developed world. There is a realization that the only reason these are not normal here is because of a lack of political will to enact them. That will is building as the ongoing inequities are splashed across the front pages and the twitter feeds. It is the beginning of the end for American exceptionalism (a term coined by Stalin as America resisted the wave of socialism spreading around the world in the early 20th century). Unbridled capitalism lasted longer than communism but only because its costs were

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hidden longer. We need to find the sustainable middle path that allows for entrepreneurship along with a strong social safety net (and environmental protection). This new crop of progressive Democrats (with strong electoral backing) might lead the way.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

BrooklynJan. 23

@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UTJan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subject indicates the opposite is true.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

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I'm a very moderate Democrat -liberal on social issues and very supportive of free global trade- who would vote for any of the current Democrats over Trump, but would leave the party if AOC's ideas became the norm.

I don't have a problem in principle with a 70% top marginal tax rate or AOC's Green New Deal- Meaning, these aren't moral issues for me per se. I just believe they would bankrupt the economy and push us into a chaos far worse than what we're seeing under Trump.

5 Replies

Albert Petersen commented January 23

A

Albert Petersen

Boulder, CoJan. 23

@Cass You are forgetting that the best economy we had was post WW2 when the top rate was 90% and corporate CEO's made reasonable incomes not the obscene pay of today.

Additionally, the negative economic impact of global warming will make us regret not addressing it sooner and leave the bottom 50% far worse off then they are now. So, we need to consider both a higher marginal rate and the green new deal very seriously before it is too late.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Albert Petersen

The top marginal tax rate should be what it needs to be in order to maximize economic growth in any particular year- That may be 35%, or 70%, or 90%. But, Alexandria

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Ocasio-Cortez seems to be throwing out numbers arbitrarily based on what she feels is "just," rather than on what makes the optimal economic sense.

Second, a green new deal is a wonderful thing. Her green new deal- having 100% of the cars, trucks, airplanes and busses running on 100% electric within ten years would require increasing mining in the Congo for cobalt by an order of magnitude, among other things. It's literally physically impossible to attain in such a short amount of time. By 2050? Sure. 2030? No way, Jose.

MikeG commented January 23

M

MikeG

Left CoastJan. 23

@Cass You may self-identify as a moderate but you sound like a conservative. Please go join the other party of no ideas if AOC strikes you as radical. The majority of Democrats don't agree with you.

Driven commented January 23

D

Driven

OhioJan. 23

@MikeG

What is wrong with being a conservative?

Cass makes perfect sense.

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@Cass

"I just believe they would bankrupt the economy and push us into a chaos far worse than what we're seeing under Trump."

And on what do you base this belief? Surely not history, which saw higher marginal tax rates and an expansion of the US economy.

OldBoatMan commented January 23

O

OldBoatMan

Rochester, MN Jan. 23

Younger candidates, like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, appeal to younger voters. John Kennedy appealed to WWII veterans, most of whom were in their 30s when they elected him. One of the reasons for Barack Obama's support in 2008 among younger voters is that he was a younger candidate and they identified with a younger candidate. That appeal to a younger electorate will play a larger role in future elections.

Don't focus too strongly on issues. Democrats will win by a landslide in 2020 if they nominate a younger candidate that can inspire younger voters.

November 3, 2020.

1 Reply

Roger commented January 24

R

Roger

California Jan. 24

@OldBoatMan

AOC appeals to more than just the younger voters. She appeals to everyone who is tired of catering to the loony right.

Focusing on issues is exactly what she's done, and should continue to do.

Jason A. commented January 23

J

Jason A.

New York NYJan. 23

Times Pick

The interesting part of this piece is the statement about politicians moving unwillingly. So some Democratic Congressmen and Congresswomen are allowing their personal beliefs to be compromised for the glory of being elected or re-elected? Sounds like someone I would not care to support.

2 Replies

G. commented January 23

G

G.

MichiganJan. 23

@Jason A.

Representatives should represent their constituents. For example, if most of the voters one represents want Medicare, perhaps that's a sign that one should reconsider their anti-Medicare views. And think about why constituents want Medicare.

Frank Leibold commented January 23

F

Frank Leibold

VirginiaJan. 23

@Jason A.

I agree with you -100%

D I Shaw commented January 23

D

D I Shaw

MarylandJan. 23

"This will be difficult, given the fact that what is being proposed is a much larger role for government, and that those who are most in need of government support are in the bottom half of the income distribution and disproportionately minority — in a country with a long racist history."

True enough, but if progressives want actual people in that bottom half to lead happier lives, the focus of any programs should not be to employ armies in left-leaning and self-perpetuating "agencies," but rather to devise policies to help people develop the self-discipline to:

A) finish high school,

B) postpone the bearing of children until marriage (not as a religious construct but as a practical expression of commitment to the child's future), and;

C) Find and get a regular job.

These are supported by what objective, empirical data we have.

These have not struck me as objectives of the rising left in the Democratic party. Mostly, I see endless moral preening, and a tribal demonizing of the "other," just exactly as they

accuse the "other." In this case the "other" is we insufficiently "woke" but entirely moderate white folks who still comprise a plurality of Americans.

I see success on the left as based primarily on an ability to express performative outrage. But remember, you build a house one brick at a time, which can be pretty boring, and delivers no jolt of dopamine as would manning the barricades, but which results in a warm, dry, comfortable place to live.

4 Replies

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@D I Shaw I think the precise point is that would much easier to do A,B, and C if there were universal health care, job guarantees, and clean water to drink. It is much easier to make good long-term decisions when you aren't kept in a state of perpetual desperation.

D I Shaw commented January 23

D

D I Shaw

MarylandJan. 23

@Roger

I agree that universal health care and security in old age make it much easier for people to live responsible lives. Beyond that???

Right there with some sort of universal health care, to the extent that it does not just enrich providers and insurers at the expense of everyone else. No one wants to be ill, so that addresses the moral hazard of health insurance on the part of the insured.

Right there with social security, as originally conceived. No one wants to get old and infirm. Not so much with its expansion to accommodate the self-interest of its administrators or its beneficiaries who learn to game the rules to avoid taking responsibility for themselves.

As for higher education, it would be much less expensive if the price were not jacked up by "Deans of Diversity" who make more than professors. Or anyone else who does not teach, other than custodians, groundskeepers, etc.

Finally, job guarantees sound good until one observes people standing around doing next to nothing, gaming THAT system. Not to mention public works projects where people set out cones at the beginning of the morning rush and take them back at 7:00 PM. Need I say more?

So, start with orderly primary and secondary classrooms where students in EVERY neighborhood can learn. Lose the outrage about "systemic racism" and "disparate impact" and simply teach children FIRST, to restrain their own impulses in the their own larger interest, and THEN to use that discipline to learn everything else.

alyosha commented January 23

a

alyosha

wvJan. 23

@D I Shaw

Good. Keep saying it.

And keep doing the parody of PoMo blather.

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

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@D I Shaw

I don't get it-- where are these millions of people taking advantage of SS and game the system? I've literally never heard of them. It seems like a terrible scam that would have the attention of law makers from both parties.

I have, however, heard of the 40 million people who live in poverty in the richest country on earth, under a government that takes every opportunity to give tax breaks to the ultra-wealthy.

G. Slocum commented January 23

G

G. Slocum

AkronJan. 23

at 63, I was there. I don't want second Trump administration either, but the route to a Democratic victory is not cozying up to the corporations and the wealthy, but by stating clearly, like FDR, "they are unanimous in their hate for me, and I welcome their hatred." We need people who are willing to say that the rich deserve to be taxed at a higher rate, because they have benefited more from our society, that no income deserves to be taxed at a lower rate than the wages paid to working people, and that vast wealth needs to be earned, not inherited.

Emmanuel Saez makes persuasive arguments, but they need to be made in the language of the working people.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

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38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propaganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

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M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington IN Jan. 23

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profwilliams commented January 23

p

profwilliams

Montclair Jan. 23

A great essay!

The wild card in all this analysis, of course, is what happens when these (now) young voters, age, eventually partner, and have kids.

As every generation has shown, the needs of a voter changes as they age.

I'm surrounded by many new neighbors with little kids who moved out of Brooklyn and Jersey City who suddenly find themselves concerned about rising property taxes- they now see the balance between taxes and services.

Not something they worried about a few years ago.

2 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@profwilliams - Well, property taxes are a local affair, but if we had a responsible federal government, it would help more with education which is the largest factor here.

As for the federal government, most people do not understand the relationship between government services and taxes.

Government services, militarily, infrastructure, research, etc. are NOT paid for or limited by taxes or borrowing.

The gov doesn't need your money. It can (thru the FED) create as much as it needs out of thin air. Just think about where YOUR money came from in the first place. Unless you have a printing press in your basement, it came from the federal gov. (This isn't quite right. Banks can create a limited amount, but we have just seen in 2008 what happens when they try to create too much.)

But there's a catch. If the gov needs to create too much money to do the things we want it to do, we may not be able to make enough stuff to soak that money up & will have too much money chasing not enough stuff, i.e. excessive inflation.

But that's easy to solve & where taxes come in. Taxes allow the gov to take back the excess money & prevent inflation. The purpose of taxes is to adjust the amount of money in the private sector. That is what max is telling us.

Now if the economy is constrained, if we cannot produce enough goods and services to soak up the new money, that's when we get excessive inflation. The usual cause of a constrained economy is shortages such of oil or food.

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MAJan. 23

@profwilliams Agreed. As a corollary, a huge problem in this country is the lack of affordable housing. Investors, searching for the greatest return, concentrate on housing for the affluent. The greatest need is for the rest of the population.

John Patt commented January 23

J

John Patt

Koloa, HIJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp I am a senior citizen heterosexual white male. I do not apologize for my race, gender, etc. In fact, I am proud of our accomplishments. I do apologize for my personal wrongs, and strive to improve myself.

617to416 commented January 23

617to416

617to416

Ontario Via MassachusettsJan. 23

@Bruce Shigeura

AOC in some ways is doing what Bernie was doing—mobilizing people around class as you say—but the difference is that AOC doesn't shy away from issues of racial justice. Bernie seemed to want to unite people by ignoring issues of race, as if he was afraid that mentioning race too much might drive Whites away. AOC seems able to hold whites on the class issue while still speaking to the racial justice issues that are important to non-Whites. She's an extraordinary phenomenon: smart, engaging, articulate and with personal connections to both the White and Non-White worlds, so she threatens neither and appeals to both.

harpla commented January 23

harpla

harpla

Jan. 23

@Stu Sutin

"Is something wrong about aspiring to free college education in an era when student debt totals \$1.5 trillion?"

Yes. If you're the Congressperson who gets his/her funding from the lenders.

Joshua Schwartz commented January 23

J

Joshua Schwartz

Ramat-Gan, IsraelJan. 23

A O-C has yet to open a district office. A O-C is more interested in "national" issues and exposure than those of her district. What A O-C may have forgotten is that it is her district and constituents that have to re-elect her in less than 2 years (or not):

"Would you rather have a Congress member with an amazing local services office, or one that leads nationally on issues?" she queried her 1.9 million followers on Instagram — a number that is well over twice the population of her district. The results strongly favored national issues."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/22/nyregion/aoc-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-district-office.html>

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As Mr. Edsall points out, her district is not necessarily progressive and liberal and while there may be national issues, at the bottom line, many of her instagram groupies are not her constituents.

Democrats like to constantly point out that Ms. Clinton won the popular vote, and she was the non-liberal-progressive Democrat.

I am sure that the Republicans pray for the success of the Democratic left. They seek to give voice to that left. That will bring the swing votes right back to or over to the Republicans, without, but possibly even with Mr. Trump (if the Democrats cross a left-wing tipping point).

Bottom line, instagram is fine and likes are great, twitter is good for snappy answers, but representatives to the House have to deliver to their district and constituents. A O-C leads, but to the salvation of the Republican party.

6 Replies

Marc commented January 23

M

Marc

VermontJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz M. Ocasio-Cortez explained on The Late Show the other night that the reason she has not opened her district office is due to the Government Shutdown. The people charged with setting up the office are on furlough, the money for the office is being held up and she staff or furnish the office.

H commented January 23

H

H

NYCJan. 23

@Marc

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Except that's outright false. Offices are open. All the other new Congress members from New York are setup and taking care of people.

She doesn't care about constituent service. She revels in the media attention, but isn't getting anything done even in the background.

NY has three Congress members (Lowey, Serrano, Meng) whose under-appreciated work on the appropriations committee actually helps ensure our region's needs and liberal priorities are reflected in federal spending.

Meanwhile Ocasio Cortez is working on unseating Democrats incumbents she deems insufficiently leftist e.g. Cuellar, Jeffries.

Who needs Republicans when you have Socialists trying to destroy the Democratic Party.

rtj commented January 23

r

rtj

MassachusettsJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz

"A O-C is more interested in "national" issues and exposure than those of her district. What A O-C may have forgotten is that it is her district and constituents that have to re-elect her in less than 2 years (or not)..."

Just want to compare and contrast that with Ayanna Pressley, who has a laser focus on her district.



"My process begins with the residents of the MA-7 congressional district. They are my greatest counsel and my stewards in how I vote, and in what legislation that I introduce. It's by actively listening to them that I better understand not only the nuance and the complexity of the problem, but usually where I find the solutions. "

As long as she continues to walk that talk, it should assuage any doubts i may have about her.

Joshua Schwartz commented January 23

J

Joshua Schwartz

Ramat-Gan, IsraelJan. 23

@Marc See the link above and read the NYT article. All (!! ) the other freshman representatives from NYC opened their offices. 4 of them did. Only she did not. See it in the NYT

Marc commented January 23

M

Marc

VermontJan. 23

@H I stand corrected!

Roger commented January 24

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 24

@Joshua Schwartz She's been in office for less than a month, under a government shutdown.

Marc commented January 23

M

Marc

VermontJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz M. Ocasio-Cortez explained on The Late Show the other night that the reason she has not opened her district office is due to the Government Shutdown. The people charged with setting up the office are on furlough, the money for the office is being held up and she staff or furnish the office.

Eric commented January 23

E

Eric

BremenJan. 23

Isn't this somehow the natural swing of things? Years of heavy-handed politics benefitting small minorities on the right have taken their toll, so now new ideas are up at bat.

By the way, these ideas aren't really that bold at all - many countries have living minimum wages or mandatory healthcare, and are thriving, with a much happier population. Only in the context of decades-long, almost brainwash-like pounding of these ideas as 'Un-American' or 'socialist' can they be seen as 'bold'.

American expectionalism has led to a seriously unbalanced and dangerously threatened social contract.

Tell me again, Republicans: why is a diverse, healthy and productive population living under inspiration instead of constant fear so bad?

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

Warren Peace commented January 24

W

Warren Peace

Columbus, OHJan. 24

My father fought in Germany during WWII, then came home and went to college on the GI bill. Both my parents received federal assistance for a loan on their first house. Later, during retirement, they were taken care of by Medicare and given an income by Social Security. They worked hard, kept their values, lived modestly, and voted for Democrats. Apparently, they were wild-eyed, leftist-socialist radicals, and I never knew it.

jrd commented January 23

j

jrd

nyJan. 23

The "experts" offering advice here seem to have forgotten that Hillary Clinton listened to them in 2016: the party decided that appealing to suburban Republicans and Jeb Bush voters was more important than exciting the Democratic party base.

The other hazard of calculated politics is that the candidate is revealed to be a phony, believing in nothing but power or that it's simply "her turn" -- an unconvincing program for a voter.

1 Reply

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Marty commented January 24

M

Marty

Pacific NorthwestJan. 24

@jrd Oh, just stop it already with the "her turn" (sneer quotes yours) canard. Hillary Clinton never once suggested it was her "turn" to run, nor did any of her supporters. Yet the haters started trotting that one out in 2008, cut and pasted it all the way through the 2016 election, and seem to have never tired of it. (Reminds me of the folks who continue to insist that Al Gore claimed to have invented the Internet.)

H commented January 23

H

H

NYCJan. 23

They will all face primary challengers in 2020. Tlaib and Omar didn't even win a majority of the primary vote. There were so many candidates running in those primaries, they only managed a plurality.

And let's be honest about the demographic changes in the districts Pressley and Ocasio Cortez won. They went from primarily ethnic White to minority majority. Both women explicitly campaigned on the premise that their identity made them more representative of the district than an old White male incumbent. Let's not sugarcoat what happened: they ran explicitly racist campaigns. They won with tribalism, not liberal values.

Democrats actually need more candidates like Lucy McBath, Antonio Delgado, and Kendra Horn if they want to retain Congressional control and change policy. And many minorities and immigrants aren't interested in the far left faction. We don't have a problem with Obama and a moderate approach to social democracy.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system we as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

Mercury S commented January 23

M

Mercury S

San FranciscoJan. 23

@In the know I'm formerly Republican, and female. I'm on the ACA, and while premiums were going up slowly, they've exploded in the past two years due to Republican sabotage. They are certainly no reason to vote for Trump.

D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

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C Wolfe

Bloomington IN Jan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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P commented January 23

P

P

New York Jan. 23

She has a massive throng of twitter followers, is completely unconcerned with facts, uses publicity to gain power and seems unwilling to negotiate on her positions. Remind you of anyone else?

UTBG commented January 23

UTBG

UTBG

Denver, CO Jan. 23

Best comment in some time. I work and live too much in the 'big flat'. I am a very hard core Chicago Democratic Liberal from birth, but the distressed towns and small cities are facing extinction.

then what?

FXQ commented January 23

F

FXQ

CincinnatiJan. 23

The establishment is trying so hard to spin the progressives push on the issues of Medicare for All, free state college and university tuition, a livable wage of \$15/hr as ponies and fairy dust and an extreme "socialist" makeover/takeover of America. But from all the polls that I've seen, these policies are actually quite popular even with a majority of Republicans. Yes, a majority of Republicans. A Medicare for All would cover everybody, eliminate health insurance premiums for individuals and businesses ( which by the way are competing with businesses in other countries that have a single-payer system) and would save \$2 trillion over ten years (Koch bothers funded study). The result would be a healthy and educated populace. But how to pay for this? Well, we spend over \$700 billion on our military while Russia spends \$20 billion and China spends \$146 billion, so there seems to be plenty of money that is already being spent to be redirected back to us without compromising national security. A Medicare for All system supports a private healthcare system just as it is now, except instead of giving some insurance company our premium who then skims off a big chunk for their profit, we pay it to our government who then administers the payments to the healthcare provider(s). The system is in place and has been for people 65 years and older and works very well with high satisfaction rates. Just expand it to all.

2 Replies

Tim commented January 23

T

Tim

The fashionable BerkshiresJan. 23

@FXQ

Thank you for stating the argument so well. Truly, Medicare For All is a no-brainer.

I am retired and as such am entitled to Medicare, which I gleefully accept. I mean, holy crap, where else can you get full medical coverage and go to any doctor you want, any time, without going through a "referral" process?



That costs me about \$350/month which is my Medicare premium and a quality backup plan that pays what Medicare doesn't.

During my working years my health insurance premiums were 5X that amount, for less coverage.

Like I said: no brainer.

Hugh Gordon Mclsaac commented January 23

Hugh Gordon Mclsaac

Hugh Gordon Mclsaac

Santa Cruz, CaliforniaJan. 23

Thanks. Well said.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

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Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Rochester, NYJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no ford plant nearby.

38 Replies

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Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

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M

Midwest Josh

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C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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FXQ commented January 23

F

FXQ

CincinnatiJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Well put.

As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "We all too often have socialism for the rich and rugged free market capitalism for the poor."

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Glenn Ribotsky commented January 23

G

Glenn Ribotsky

QueensJan. 23

@stuart

They used to call it the "Democratic wing of the Democratic party".

I was glad when Thomas Edsall finally got around, in this piece, to mentioning that what is often thought of as a radical leftist turn today, due to just how far to the right our general political discussions had gone, was actually pretty much mainstream Democratic policy for much of the middle 20th century.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Westchester Guy commented January 23

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[TalkingPoints@rvcdems.com](mailto:TalkingPoints@rvcdems.com)

W

Westchester Guy

Westchester, NY Jan. 23

It is remarkable that “big, bold leftist ideas” include

- preserving the historical relationship between the minimum wage and the cost of living
- lowering the cost of college to something in line with what obtained for most public colleges and universities in the 50s, 60s and 70s and exist in the rest of the Western world today
- adapting our existing Medicare system to deliver universal coverage of the kind generally supported across the political spectrum in Canada and the UK

Democrats should reject the “leftist” label for these ideas and explain that it is opposition to these mainstream ideas that is, in fact, ideological and extreme.

2 Replies

Joe Schmoe commented January 23

J

Joe Schmoe

Brooklyn Jan. 23

@Westchester Guy: Leftists want amnesty and, eventually, open borders. This is utterly and totally incompatible with their push for "free" college, universal health care, and so forth. The fiscal infeasibility is so obvious that one could only believe in these coexisting policies if they were blinded by something, like Trump hatred, or just plain dishonest. The "leftist" label for the new Democrat party is entirely appropriate. You also have your own bigots to counter Trump. The difference is that their bigotry is sanctioned by most of the mainstream media.

The Wizard commented January 23

The Wizard

The Wizard

West Of The PecosJan. 23

@Westchester Guy Agreed, capitalism needs an ideological, extreme defense. See Ayn Rand for more.

H commented January 23

H

H

NYCJan. 23

@Marc

Except that's outright false. Offices are open. All the other new Congress members from New York are setup and taking care of people.

She doesn't care about constituent service. She revels in the media attention, but isn't getting anything done even in the background.

NY has three Congress members (Lowey, Serrano, Meng) whose under-appreciated work on the appropriations committee actually helps ensure our region's needs and liberal priorities are reflected in federal spending.

Meanwhile Ocasio Cortez is working on unseating Democrats incumbents she deems insufficiently leftist e.g. Cuellar, Jeffries.

Who needs Republicans when you have Socialists trying to destroy the Democratic Party.

Eric commented January 23

Eric

Eric

The Other EarthJan. 23

The NYT should consider getting some columnists who reflect the new (FDR? new?) trends in the country and in the Democratic party. The old Clinton/Biden/Edsall Republican lite approach -- all in for Wall Street -- is dying. Good riddens.

BTW I'm a 65 year old electrical engineer.

1 Reply

Blunt commented January 23

Blunt

Blunt

NYJan. 23

@Eric

Bless you, Sir. We need more 65 year old electrical engineers in this country.

rtj commented January 23

r

rtj

MassachusettsJan. 23

You're missing something big here, sir. Capuano was a Clinton superdelegate in 2016 who declared well before the primaries (like all other Mass superdelegates, save for Warren who waited until well after the primaries.) Thereby in effect telling constituents that their vote was irrelevant, as they were willing to override it. Somerville went for Sanders 57% to 42%. Putting party over voters maybe isn't a great idea when 51% of voters in Massachusetts are registered Unenrolled (Independent) and can vote in primaries. Bit rich to signal that our votes don't matter, but then expect it later as it maybe actually does matter after all.



Pressley was all in for Clinton, which is of course suspect. But like me, she had only one vote.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@C Wolfe

Wow. Funky Irishman has been, for many months, writing about and presenting excellent data showing that the US is actually a center-left (if not strongly progressive) country. I used to present this evidence to Richard Luetgen (where has he gone??) who kept insisting we are center-right (but never, as was his custom, presented any evidence for this).

your example is the best I've ever seen. I'm a member of a 4000-strong Facebook group, the "Rational Republicans" (seriously - a local attorney with a decidedly liberal bent started it and almost beat regressive Patrick McHenry here in Asheville). I've been making this point on the FB page for the past year and people are stunned when they see the numbers.

I'm going to post your example as well. Excellent!

John commented January 23

J

John

LINYJan. 23

It's funny to watch people shocked when she makes her proposal. Her ideas are very old and have worked in the past in various cultures.

But the point that she can voice them is because she can. Her people put her there because she said those things with their approval.

She reflects her community ideals. Just like Steve King.

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GregP commented January 23

G

GregP

27405Jan. 23

Until the left figures out that every single one of their most desired Policy Implementations are only feasible with controlled immigration and secured borders doesn't matter who the messenger is. Want Single Payer Healthcare? Can't have it and Open Borders too. Want free College? Can't have it and Open Borders too. Want Guaranteed Basic Income? Cannot have it in any form without absolutely controlling the Border. So, either you want that influx of new voters to win elections or you want to see new policy changes that will benefit all Americans. Pick one and fight for it. You seem to have chosen the new voters.

3 Replies

B. Rothman commented January 23

B

B. Rothman

NYCJan. 23

@GregP. Nonsense. We were extraordinarily productive in this country in the early part of the twentieth century — before the Congress shut the door to immigration. Where is your evidence that we were not? Who do you think pays for healthcare? Hint: it isn't the CEOs collecting their Wall St. profits and not paying enough taxes. And if you want to see how nations with little immigration and an aging population struggle, you need to check out Japan's economy for the past ten years.

An influx of immigrants provides an immediate boost economically while their general youth means that while they work they actually don't use healthcare or other services any more than citizens do. In short, they contribute more than they cost us. This is why the government does not go after the businesses that illegally employ them. Paying for additional processing and managing large numbers of asylum seekers won't cost anywhere near \$5.7 billion (where did this number come from anyway?).

This is all about Trump's Ego Needs and the pusillanimous Republican Party of McConnell that has abdicated its Constitution oath. Before Christmas they passed legislation that DT was prepared to sign until the Right wing ideologies embarrassed him. We still could have escaped this hissy fit if the Senate had done its job. But McConnell wants to continue to undermine the judiciary and is prepared apparently to kowtow to our Mussolini wannabe in order to do it. Capitalism destroying Democracy.

Prede commented January 23

P

Prede

New JerseyJan. 23

@GregP No one supports open borders,besides the koch brothers and the congressmen they own, who are all republicans btw.

M.S. Shackley commented January 24

M

M.S. Shackley

AlbuquerqueJan. 24

@GregP There is no statistical relationship between your fabricated opposites. There are so few people who have come and are coming through our borders over the last decade that it is statistically insignificant. Taking one opposition: "Single Payer Healthcare" and "Open Borders". Illegal immigrants are not eligible for the ACA and are not and would not be for Medicare. Same with the other putative oppositions. All illegal immigrants have ever provided was cheap labor for mostly Republican corporations like farmers in California's Central Valley.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Matt Williams

But they are extraordinary, relative to their bought and paid for colleagues. That came first and the media is reporting it.

Their authenticity is naive, but it shouldn't be, and that's the story. It's a glimmer of hope for democracy that may be extinguished - let's celebrate this light in the darkness, while it lasts.

Erik commented January 23

E

Erik

Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

This is. Spot. On.

The socialism of: Privatize the profits, socialize the losses.

It's defined American economic and social policy for the last 30+ years and we can see the results today.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

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J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

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Elfego commented January 23

Elfego

Elfego

New YorkJan. 23

Why is the media lionizing this ignorant, undisciplined child? She should shut up, sit down, learn how to listen and learn from her elders in government. She is acting like a college student, who has no one to hold her accountable for her reckless, stupid behavior. Why does the media seem to be enamored of her?????

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middleJan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Jack Shultz commented January 23

J

Jack Shultz

Pointe Claire Que. CanadaJan. 23

It is exceeding strange to me that “Conservatives” in the US consider Medicare for all and universal access to higher education as being radical, pie-in-the-sky, proposals. Here in Canada we have had universal medicare for a half a century and it has proven itself to be relatively effective and efficient and has not driven us into penury.

As for free access to education beyond high school, I remember learning a while ago that the US government discovered that it had earned a return of 700% on the money spent on the GI Bill after WWII which allowed returning GIs to go to colleges and universities.

The problem with American conservatives is that they see investments in the health, welfare and education of the citizenry as wasteful expenditures, and wasteful expenditures such as the resources going to an already bloated military, and of course tax cuts for themselves as investments.

Orangecat commented January 23

O

Orangecat

Valley Forge, PAJan. 23

Note to the NYT and its contributors. Your sycophantic enslavement to promoting Ocasio-Cortez is beginning to fatigue some of your readers.

2 Replies

J Jencks commented January 23

J

J Jencks

PortlandJan. 23

@Orangecat - She has a lot going for her. Unfortunately, the way the Times covers her and a select group of others means other good people are going unnoticed.

Pete Buttigieg announced his candidacy for the DEM presidential nominee of 2020 yesterday. So far the NY Times has studiously ignored the announcement.

"Who is he?", you might ask. My point entirely. As of this morning we should all know. He is the DEM mayor of South Bend, Indiana, a DEM in the heart of the territory where DEMs need to make a strong showing in 2020.

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, IdahoJan. 23

@Orangecat

The people obsessed with AOC are the right wing media (eg, Fox News) and their cheer leaders (eg, Scott Walker). Their distortions of her positions truly are fatiguing.

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RedRat commented January 23

RedRat

RedRat

Sammamish, WAJan. 23

@chele Amen to you! I too am old guy (79) and think Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is a savior of the Democratic Party! She is young and has great ideas. I agree with you about the Clintons, they led the party down a sinkhole. I agree with just about everything I have heard Alexandria espouse. She is refreshing. Glad she is kicking the butts of those old guard Democrats that have fossilized in place--they are dinosaurs.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

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Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, California Jan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

Woof commented January 23

Woof

Woof

NY Jan. 23

Money is the mother's milk of politics, so let me comment on

"many of whom did not want the Democrats to nominate a candidate with deep ties to party regulars and to the major donor community."

Include me. Because the major donor community is

Charles E Schumer, Leader Democrats, House

Top Contributors, 1989 - 2018

1 Goldman Sachs

2 Citigroup Inc

3 Paul, Weiss et al

4 JPMorgan Chase & Co

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5 Credit Suisse Group

That is Wall Street

Nancy Pelosi, leader Democrats, House

Top Contributors, 2017 - 2018

1 Facebook Inc

2 Alphabet Inc (Google)

2 Salesforce.com

4 University of California

5 Intel Corp \$13,035

That is Silicon Valley . The U of CA should spent its money on students

What is the interest of these donors ?

For Wall Street, it is maximizing profits by suppressing wages, outsourcing to of enterprises it owns to low wage countries, and immigration of people willing to work for less

For Silicon Valley it is

Mining your data, violating your privacy, and immigration of people willing to work for less via H1B

To win general (not primary) elections you need large amounts of money. At in return for this money, you need to take care of your donors, lest you find you without money in the next election

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Until the Democratic Party frees itself of this system, it will spout liberal rhetoric, but do little to help average Americans

As Sanders showed, it can do so, running on small donations.

DNC, eye on frightened donors, killed his attempt.

1 Reply

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Woof

Not just the DNC killed any hope of reversing income inequality and the endemic corruption of anti-democratic lobbyist money in government, but also the weak-kneed centrist Democrat voters who believe that \$15/hour and healthcare for all is "extreme." They are liberal in name only, just like their politicians.

Cwnidog commented January 23

Cwnidog

Cwnidog

Central FloridaJan. 23

"The most active wing of the Democratic Party — the roughly 20 percent of the party's electorate that votes in primaries and wields disproportionate influence over which issues get prioritized — has moved decisively to the left."

Yet it seems that you feel that the party should ignore them and move to the center right in order to capture suburban Republican women, who will revert back to the Republican party as soon as (and if) it regains something resembling sanity.

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Do you seriously think that its worth jettisoning what you describe as "the most active wing of the party" for that?

2 Replies

Perspective commented January 23

P

Perspective

BangkokJan. 23

@Cwnidog, you misread Mr Edsall, I fear.

Cwnidog commented January 23

Cwnidog

Cwnidog

Central FloridaJan. 23

@Perspective: I can only read what he writes and put it in the context of past columns. As such, I respectfully disagree with you.

Ron Cohen commented January 23

Ron Cohen

Ron Cohen

Waltham, MAJan. 23

@shstl

Right on!

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

Linda Miilu

Chico, CAJan. 23

@David G.

See Norway, Denmark, Germany, England and Finland. Citizens have jobs and health care; education is affordable and subsidized. Not all young people attend universities; many go to vocational schools which prepare them for good jobs. We could do the same.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

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rose commented January 23

r

rose

atlantaJan. 23

I'm already tired of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and I'm a liberal and Hispanic...its constant overkill, everybody falling over her, total overexposure. The news media has found their darling for the moment. Let's see what she accomplishes, what bills she proposes and passes that is the work to be done not being in the news 24/7.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYCJan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

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Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit, at the end of a long line of commenters, I add my congratulations for a well-articulated overview of our political dilemma. Both "trickle-down" economics and "neo-liberalism" have brought us to this pass, giving both Democrats and Republicans a way of rewarding their corporate masters.

I believe both Clinton and Obama believed they could find a balance between the corporate agenda and a secure society. We see with hindsight how this has failed to materialize, and are rightly seeking a more equitable system – one that addresses the common sense needs of all of us.

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I, for one, am overjoyed that the younger generation has found its voice, and has a cause to support. My recollection of demonstrating against the Viet Nam war (and the draft), marching for civil rights, and even trying to promote the (then largely inchoate) women's rights movement, still evokes a passionate nostalgia. We have witnessed an entire generation that lacked passion for any cause beyond their individual desires. It's good to have young men and women reminding us of our values, our aspirations, and our power as citizens.

As the bumper sticker says, "If you think education is expensive – try ignorance."

Thanks again for a fine post.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Tintin commented January 23

Tintin

Tintin

MidwestJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp The problem with blaming a group based on demographics, rather than behavior or ideology, is that you are likely to be disappointed. There are a lot of people who are not old white men who are just as seduced by money, power, and local privilege as was the old guard. Feminists writing letters to condemn a male student who made charges of being sexually harassed by his female professor; African American activists who refuse to reject the antisemitism of charismatic cult leaders. Human beings in charge will be flawed, regardless of their race, gender identity, or sexual orientation. As the balance of power changes hands, corruption too will become more diverse.

6 Replies

John Patt commented January 23

J

John Patt

Koloa, HIJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp I am a senior citizen heterosexual white male. I do not apologize for my race, gender, etc. In fact, I am proud of our accomplishments. I do apologize for my personal wrongs, and strive to improve myself.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NYJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Don't be so quick to condemn. The really old white men of today defeated Germany and Japan.

Then those same old white men went into Korea and then Vietnam. Ok so maybe you have a point.

DSS commented January 23

D

DSS

OttawaJan. 23

@John Patt I am an American living in Canada and I call myself an American.

Shirley0401 commented January 23

S

Shirley0401

The SouthJan. 23

@Quiet Waiting

That was FIFTY YEARS AGO. People who fought in the Spanish-American War were still casting ballots, for heaven's sake.

McGovern has been used by Third Way apologists as a cautionary tale to provide cover for doing what they clearly wanted to do anyway.

The other reality is that the McGovern/Nixon race took place in a time when there was broad consensus that many of the social programs Republicans are now salivating over privatizing weren't going anywhere.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

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@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

ann commented January 23

a

ann

SeattleJan. 23

Abolishing ICE is tantamount to having open borders. No modern country can allow all people who are able to get to its borders to just move in, and take advantage of its government services. If a country were to start offering Medicare for All, no or reduced college tuition, a universal jobs guarantee, a \$15 minimum wage, and wage subsidies to the entire bottom half through an expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, paid maternity/paternity leave, and free child care, it would need tax-payers to support these plans. It could not afford to support all of the poor, uneducated migrants who have been illegally crossing our borders, let alone all of those who would run here if ICE were to be abolished.

Look at Canada which has more of a social safety net than is offered in our country. It has practically no illegal immigrants. (A long term illegal immigrant had to sue for the government to pay for her extensive medical care, and the court decisions appear to have limited government payment of her medical bills just to her and not to other illegal migrants.) It picks the vast majority of its legal immigrants on a merit system that prioritizes those who would contribute a special needed skill to the Canadian economy, who are fluent in English and/or French, and who could easily assimilate. Thus, most of Canada's immigrants start paying hefty taxes as soon as they move to Canada, helping to support the country's social safety net.

1 Reply

GregP commented January 23

G

GregP

27405Jan. 23

@ann

Agree entirely with the first paragraph. The second used to be true about Canada but it is changing fast there too. They have people crossing Roxham Road every day to take advantage of Trudeau's 'Welcome' tweet. Their conservatives are trying to shut it down but the Liberals are resisting every step of the way. They might just end up with Bernier in a year or so and he will fix it if they do. If Trudea gets a second term, expect Canada to mirror the US when it comes to illegal immigration in a few more years.

GAO commented January 23

G

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GAO

Gurnee, IL Jan. 23

@Samuel

To pay for universal health care you capture all the money currently being spent for the health care system. That includes all the employer insurance premiums, VA medical care costs, military medical costs, all out-of-pocket expenses, everything. That provides plenty of money for our health care needs as exemplified by the costs in other advanced countries with better systems.

Also re-activate parts of the ACA that were designed to control and reduce costs but that have gone unfunded. Reduce hospital and hospital administration costs, which are exorbitant and provide little real health care benefit. There will be plenty of funds for actual provider salaries (physicians, nurses, technicians, pharmacists, etc).

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USA Jan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

She's been in office less than a month. You want to shut down the conversation that is finally bringing real hope & passion to average people, & is bringing a new set of goals (& more integrity) to the Democratic Party? Paying for single-payer has been rehashed many times; just look at all the other 'civilized' countries who have it. For once, try putting the savings from ending co-pays, deductibles, & premiums into the equation. Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

I understand what you are saying, but please remember- half of this country thinks- rightly or wrongly- that AOC and many of her ideals are unobtainable and socialist.

Whether they are or are not is NOT the point.

We need ideas that are palatable to the mainstream, average American- not just those of us on the liberal wings. And I AM one of those.

Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

Martin Kobren commented January 23

M

Martin Kobren

Silver Spring, MDJan. 23

You have to accept some of this polling data with a grain of salt. Most of the population has no idea what “moderate,” “slightly liberal,” or extremely liberal mean. These tend to be labels that signify how closely people feel attached to other people on the left side of the ideological spectrum. The same is true, btw, of people on the right.

The odd thing is that if you ask Trump voters about the economic policies they favor, they generally agree that social security ought to be expanded, that the government has an obligation to see that everyone has medical care, that taxes on the rich should be higher and that we ought to be spending more money, not less on education. Where you see a divergence is on issues tightly aligned with Trump and on matters that touch on racial resentment. Trump voters do not favor cuts in spending on the poor, though they do support cuts in “welfare.”

The moral of the story is that a strategic Democratic politician who can speak to these Trump voters on a policy level or at the level of values—I’m thinking Sharrod Brown—may be able to win in 2020 with a landslide.

jk commented January 23

j

jk

nyJan. 23

I saw AOC on the Colbert Show recently and one of her first statements was in regards to wearing red nail polish.

I turned it off.

Enough of the red lipstick as well! Please.

Next she'll discuss large hoop earrings.

1 Reply

Bob Guthrie commented January 24

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 24



@jk

Trump talks about his grotesque hair do, the adequacy of his appendage size and seems to think he looks like Ryan Gosling. AOC is a beautiful young lady a lot easier on the eye than Vlad's bosom buddy. The Colbert Show is not Meet the Press and has a light entertainment component.

P McGrath commented January 23

P

P McGrath

USAJan. 23

O'Cortez is a "Fantasy Socialist. She says the stupidest and most outlandish things so the media puts a microphone in front of her face. She hates when folks fact check her because nothing she is saying adds up. O'Cortez has all of the same "spread the wealth" tendencies as the previous president who was much more cunning and clever at hiding his true Socialist self.

Trebor commented January 23

T

Trebor

USAJan. 23

@chele Right on. I expect there is a very large contingent of us. It is disheartening to be associated by age and ethnicity with the corporatist financial elite power mongers who control both parties and the media. But we can still continue vote the right way and spread the word to fight corruption and corporatism.

Eschew New Democrats like ORourke. The first commitment to find out about is the commitment to restore democracy and cut off the power of the financial elite in politics. All the other liberal sounding stuff is a lie if that first commitment is not there. Because none of it will happen while the financial elite are controlling votes. There will always be enough defectors against, for example, the mainstream support for medicare for all national health care to keep it from happening if New Democrats aren't understood as the republican lite fifth column corrupters they really are.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

MDB commented January 23

M

MDB

Encinitas Jan. 23

I see a Trump victory in 2020. Thank you, AOC.

1 Reply

Blunt commented January 24

Blunt

Blunt

NYJan. 24

@MDB

Brilliant analysis!!! The Kennedy School in Cambridge is looking for a Professor in forecasting elections. I will recommend you if you want.

Odysseus commented January 23

Odysseus

Odysseus

Home AgainJan. 23

@David G.

You mean like Scandinavia, right?

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

R. Law commented January 23

R

R. Law

TexasJan. 23

Chock full of very interesting data, but we tend to to believe Zeitz's conclusion that Dems are just returning to their roots, following the spectacular 2008 failures that saw no prosecutions - in starkest contrast to the S&L failure and boatload of bankers charged:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/04/magazine/only-one-top-banker-jail-financial-crisis.html>

To the extent this primary voter data is replicated across the country in Dem primaries, and not just the AOC and Ayana Pressley races, we could be convinced some massive swing is occurring in Dem primary results. Until then, we tend to believe that the cycle of 30-50 House seats which swing back and forth as Dem or GOP from time to time (not the exact same 30-50 districts each cycle, but about 30-50 in total per election cycle or two) is a continuation of a long-term voting trend.

Unpacking the egregious GOP'er gerrymandering, as is the goal of Eric Holder and Barack Obama:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/02/us/politics/voting-gerrymander-elections.html>

which has blunted Dem voter effects, will be of far more consequence - get ready !

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Jay Orchard commented January 23

J

Jay Orchard

Miami BeachJan. 23

I understand the Andy Warhol concept of everyone having 15 minutes of fame. But it's absurd that AOC's 15 minutes of fame coincide with her first 15 minutes in office.

Deb commented January 23

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D

Deb

Jan. 23

@shstl

I agree and as a moderate Democrat, I already feel like an outsider, so imagine what independents are thinking.

AOC stated that she wants to primary Hakeem Jeffries, who is a moderate. With statements like these, made before spending a day in congress, who needs the GOP to tear apart the Democratic party?

Sanders didn't even win the primary and his supporters claim the primary was stolen. We lost the house and senate all by ourselves.

I already have AOC fatigue and my rejoice for the blue wave is still there but fading.

Bill commented January 24

B

Bill

Terrace, BCJan. 24

Since 1980, the US has veered sharply to the Right. A course correction is long overdue.

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@In the know, Your party invented the fundamental ACA program. It was the brainchild of the Heritage Foundation that started this fiasco that you'd like to blame on Dems. Also, you simply cannot argue that the Republicans attempted to implement the program in good faith. They have done everything they can to sabotage it. In the end, Republicans don't want people to have affordable health care. It doesn't fit their "family-unfriendly" philosophy. Furthermore, the only real business-friendly ideas Republicans embrace are a) eliminate taxes, b) remove regulations, c) pay employees nothing. If you as a woman believe these are notions that strengthen you or your family, I'm at a total loss in understanding your reasoning.

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@D I Shaw I think the precise point is that would much easier to do A,B, and C if there were universal health care, job guarantees, and clean water to drink. It is much easier to make good long-term decisions when you aren't kept in a state of perpetual desperation.

Giacomo commented January 23

G

Giacomo

anytown, earthJan. 23

These 'new' ideas are not new, nor are they 'progressive democrats', nor are they even the democratic party's per se. More importantly, the 'issue', for which no one has come up with a solution, is the same -- how are we going to pay for this all? The GAO reported in '16 that Sander's proposal for payment was completely unsustainable. Similarly, Cortez's plan for a tax rate of 70% of earnings (not capital gains) over \$10mm per annum does not come close to funding 'medicare for all', 'free collage/trade school', and 'the New Green Deal'. Our military is a 'jobs program' rooted in certain state's economy -- it is going to be very difficult to substantially reduce those expenditures any time soon. The purpose of government is governance -- what politician is going to have the integrity and cujones to tell the American people that we need these 'liberal' policies, but that every single one of us is going to have to contribute, even those at the far lower income strata? Are we all willing to work longer in life and live in much smaller houses/apartments to do what is necessary? If the answer is yes, then and only then

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can any of us claim the moral high ground. Until then, it's just empty rhetoric for political gain and personal Aggrandizement of so-called progressives.

5 Replies

Andrzej Warminski commented January 23

A

Andrzej Warminski

Irvine, CAJan. 23

@Giacomo That's right, this country can afford trillions for the Pentagon system--the military-industrial complex, to coin a phrase--and foolishly criminal wars, but it can't afford national health insurance, something that some industrialized countries have had since the late 19th century. Anybody who thinks these ideas are "radical" or "leftist" clearly understands nothing about politics.

Tammy commented January 23

T

Tammy

ArizonaJan. 23

Arghh. This “we can’t afford it” argument is nonsense. Tax the wealthiest at much higher rates. Prioritize spending differently. Of course we can afford to be a more fair society.

Giacomo commented January 23

G

Giacomo

anytown, earthJan. 23

@Tammy

Excellent. What is the name of the politician and where is her/his plan for taxation posted for public review? Exactly, there aren't any.

You missed the point completely... it's not that we can't afford it, it's that no one has the political will, integrity, and math skills to actually make the numbers work. (Google Vermont's attempt to pay for state-wide healthcare in '15.)

Both Sander's and Cortez's tax plans (eg, 'taxing the wealthiest at much high rates') will not be enough to pay for what they both preach (and the country needs).

So again Tammy, what politician is going to have the integrity and cujones to tell the American people that we need these 'liberal' policies, but that every single one of us is going to have to contribute, even those at the far lower income strata? Until then, it's just empty rhetoric for political gain and personal aggrandizement of so-called progressives.

heinrich zwahlen commented January 23

h

heinrich zwahlen

brooklynJan. 23

@GiacomoThis country indeed has the potential to become the leader for a better world.

Giacomo commented January 23

G

Giacomo

anytown, earthJan. 23

@Andrzej Warminski

The issue has nothing to do with 'politics'... it has to do with 'governance' (eg, HOW specifically will things get done.)

So please tell us all, what is the name of the Congressperson and where is her/his plan posted for public review? Exactly, there aren't any. It's political suicide and even Bernie and Alexandra know it. Someone plans to significantly cut military spending... great,

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show us that plan and tell us how you're going to get that through Congress that benefits from the 'jobs program' that is military spending. No one has the political will, integrity, and math skills to actually make the numbers work. (Google Vermont's attempt to pay for state-wide healthcare in '15.)

Both Sander's and Cortez's tax plans will not be enough to pay for what they both preach (and the country needs).

"Radical' and 'Leftist' have nothing to do with anything... the only thing that matters is which politician is going to have the integrity and cujones to tell the American people that we need these 'liberal' policies, but that every single one of us is going to have to contribute, even those at the far lower income strata? Until then, it's just empty rhetoric for political gain and personal aggrandizement.

Keith commented January 23

K

Keith

TexasJan. 23

@chele I'm an "elder millennial" in my 30s. The first US election I really paid attention to was in 2000. Remember how all of the Democrats would gripe about, "oh I really \*like\* Nader, but the Green Party candidate is never going to win..."

It's a party in dire straights when the ideological base doesn't even particularly love its candidates on the issues. Repeat in 2004 with Kerry. Obama managed to win based on charisma and the nation's collective disgust with the neocons, but then we did it again with Hillary.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

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Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

Chris W commented January 23

C

Chris W

Toledo OhioJan. 23

Sorry libs, but with the exception of the Left Coast, and Manhattan, there is not alot of attention given AOC and her silly class warfare 70% tax nonsense, that goes with the

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Dem/Lib territory--nothing new or exciting with her. Being a certain ethnicity or gender is not exciting or inherently "good" as Progressives attempt to convince others. Identity politics is nonsense. When she does something of merit, not simply engage in publicity stunts and class warfare nonsense then maybe she will get some attention outside of Lib/Wacko world. "With all the attention that is being paid to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, Rashida Tlaib" Other than these opinion pages and the Lib coasts, not so much.

2 Replies

Xoxarle commented January 23

X

Xoxarle

TampaJan. 23

Funny but her 70% marginal tax proposal is polling at 60% support or higher, including significant support amongst Republican voters.

Chris W commented January 24

C

Chris W

Toledo OhioJan. 24

@XoxarlePlease provide specifics, anyone can find random/anecdotal "polling" to support pretty much any argument. Also, what does "significant" mean? Depending on the demographic being polled and my definition of significant I'm sure I could provide the exact opposite argument. Like I said, when she does something of merit maybe she'll get some attention outside of liberal world. Ethnicity and gender are neither inherently good or bad. Identity politics is absolute nonsense, end of the story

cgtwet commented January 23

c

cgtwet

los angelesJan. 23

Since Reagan there has been a steady drumbeat to the right and far-right policies. We've lived so long in this bubble that we've normalized these For-the-Rich policies as centrist. So I don't accept the writer's premise that the Democratic party is moving to a radical left. The Democratic party is simply embracing pro middle class policies that were once the norm between 1935-1979. And I welcome the shift of the pendulum.

1 Reply

JAE commented January 23

J

JAE

TexasJan. 23

@cgtwet

I totally agree. I attended Georgia Tech 1958-1962. It was free to in-state students. I paid about \$100 per quarter in "fees", including free attendance at all athletic events. Housing was not included, but was cheap, as was food at the college cafeteria. At that time states considered it part of their duties to insure access to higher education. I assume the change in that policy is due in large part to the Republican "no tax is a good tax" policy which also results, among other things, in the proliferation of toll roads.

I believe that there are things that it is in society's best interest to pay for through taxation. These things include education at all levels, infrastructure and medical care. I guess that makes me a liberal.

James Mullaney commented January 23

J

James Mullaney

Woodside, NYJan. 23

@Matt Williams Without the undue media attention we wouldn't be saddled with this cartoon character masquerading as a president.

Andrzej Warminski commented January 23

A

Andrzej Warminski

Irvine, CA Jan. 23

@Giacomo That's right, this country can afford trillions for the Pentagon system--the military-industrial complex, to coin a phrase--and foolishly criminal wars, but it can't afford national health insurance, something that some industrialized countries have had since the late 19th century. Anybody who thinks these ideas are "radical" or "leftist" clearly understands nothing about politics.

just Robert commented January 23

j

just Robert

North Carolina Jan. 23

The shift claimed by Mr. Edsall among democratic voters who claim to be liberal or progressive is more illusion than reality. With President Obama more democrats are willing and indeed proud that our party represents the cutting edge principle that we protect the needs and interests of those struggling to find a place in our society.

For a long time Democrats bought into the notion that the word liberal was some how shameful. But now with the machinations of a McConnell and Trump it becomes obvious that Democratic principles of justice for all and fighting for economic equality are not outside ideas, but actually central to the growth of our country. No longer will we kow tow to a false stilted opinion, but stand up proudly for what we believe and fight for.

Nima commented January 23

Nima

Nima

Toronto Jan. 23

Actually, people like AOC or Bernie aren't that far left at all. Internationally, they'd be considered pretty centrist. They're simply seen as "far left" because the Overton window in DC is far to the right. Even domestically, policies like universal healthcare and a living wage enjoy solid majority support, so they're perfectly mainstream

Samuel commented January 23

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S

Samuel

Santa Barbara Jan. 23

I understand what you are saying, but please remember- half of this country thinks- rightly or wrongly- that AOC and many of her ideals are unobtainable and socialist.

Whether they are or are not is NOT the point.

We need ideas that are palatable to the mainstream, average American- not just those of us on the liberal wings. And I AM one of those.

Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

Australia Jan. 23

@Jose Pieste

Well here in Australia its 10 minute waits for appointments made on the same day. I have MS and see my specialist without a problem. And the government through the PBS prescription benefit scheme pays \$78 of my \$80 daily tablets. We are not as phenomenally wealthy a country as the USA and we manage it with universal health care. I pay about \$30 Australian for each doctor's visit and sometimes with bulk billing that is free too. You reflect a uniquely American attitude about social services that is not reflective of what is done in other modern democracies. I really do feel for you my friend and for all Americans who have been comprehensively hoodwinked by the "can't afford it" myth. You can pay for trillion dollar tax cuts for people who don't need it. Honestly mate - you have been conned.

beberg commented January 23

beberg

beberg



Edmonds, WAJan. 23

@Samuel

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez has sponsored or co-sponsored 18 bills in the House, including original co-sponsor with Rep. Pressley of H.R.678 — 116th Congress (2019-2020) To provide back pay to low-wage contractor employees, and for other purposes.

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

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Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

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The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

JBC commented January 23

J

JBC

NC Jan. 23

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, as is well documented here and throughout world media, prefers spotlights and baffling interviews to opening her district office and serving her electorate.

As with every other media creation, the shiny star that it has made of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez will fade soon. The arc of her House career will as well.

4 Replies

David J commented January 23

D

David J

NJJan. 23

@JBC, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez was voted into congress and then the media took notice. It wasn't the other way around.

My only hope is that she stays the course.

JBC commented January 23

J

JBC

NCJan. 23

@David J

I wonder if it would be acceptable to Rep. Ocasio-Cortez' electorate for her to stay a course which precludes opening a district office that other newly-elected Representatives have accomplished. Either she is ill-informed (uninformed?) about how to open the office to which she was elected to occupy, or she prefers a course which is simply jumping from talk show to talk show.

Regardless of which came first, the Representative evidently prefers spotlight to service.

heinrich zwahlen commented January 23

h

heinrich zwahlen

brooklynJan. 23

@JBCWrong, Trump did not fade, but became president.

David J commented January 23

D

David J

NJJan. 23

@JBC, how long has she been in office? Two weeks. I'm surprised she hasn't opened a chain of stores, or perhaps a Cortez Tower.

You're too impatient, or something else...

Fred commented January 24

F

Fred

Up NorthJan. 24

Ocasio-Cortez and the rest haven't been in Congress a month.

Get back to me when anyone of them even gets a bill passed naming a Post Office.

Until the, maybe you ought to learn your jobs?

jk commented January 23

j

jk

NYJan. 23

@Derek Flint

There was a reason for the DLC's decision to be more center left. The Democrats were losing and this gave them a chance to win, which they did with Clinton, almost Gore, and Obama.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

G. commented January 23

G

G.

MichiganJan. 23

@Jason A.

Representatives should represent their constituents. For example, if most of the voters one represents want Medicare, perhaps that's a sign that one should reconsider their anti-Medicare views. And think about why constituents want Medicare.

Kingfish52 commented January 24

Kingfish52

Kingfish52

Rocky MountainsJan. 24

The Democratic party was shoved to the right with Bill Clinton's Third Way ideology that made its focus the same wealthy donor class as the Republicans, while breaking promises to its former base, the middle and working class. This led to the unchecked capitalism that produced the Crash of '08, and the subsequent bail out to Wall St. The powers running the DNC - all Third Way disciples, like Hilary - refused to take up any of these "socialist" causes because their wealthy donors didn't want to have their escalating wealth diminished. Meanwhile these Democrats In Republican Clothing were banking on continued support from those they had abandoned. And they got it for years...until now.

Now, finally, we're getting candidates who represent those abandoned, and who are refusing to hew to the poobah's Third Way agenda. But the Old Guard is trying to retain their power by labeling these candidates as "socialists", and "far left". Well, if that's true, then FDR was a "socialist" too. Funny though how all those "socialists" who voted for FDR, Truman, JFK, and LBJ enjoyed such capitalistic benefits like good paying jobs, benefits, home ownership, good education, and the fruits of Big Guv'mint like the Interstate Highway system, electricity, schools, the Space Program and all the benefits that produced. It was only when we turned our backs on that success and relied on unchecked capitalism that most of America began their slide backwards.

We need to go left to go forward.

Christy commented January 23

C

Christy

WAJan. 23

The leftward swing of the Democrats is in direct proportion to the rightward swing of the Republicans and a gut reaction to the GOP's failure to do anything constructive while in power -- i.e. failure to replace Obamacare with Trump's promise of "cheaper and better;" failure to repair our crumbling infrastructure, and yet another failed attempt at trickle-down economics by robbing the U.S. Treasury with a massive tax cut for the rich that provided absolutely no benefits for the middle class and the poor. As always, what the Republicans destroy the Democrats will have to fix.

Daniel commented January 24

D

Daniel

KinskeJan. 24

AOC scares the public because:

1. She is young.
2. She is attractive.
3. She is smart (like any of you heard of a marginal tax rate)
4. She is browner than pasty white.
5. She is the future and with her in place the past (you fogies) is dead.
6. She has done more than any of you, or your children have by age 29.
7. And most vexing of all to everyone is she is right.

So, go through your fives stages of grieving and accept it. Ha ha ha ha.

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

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The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23



@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

SteveRR commented January 24

SteveRR

SteveRR

CAJan. 24

"...as millennials and minorities become an ever-larger proportion of the party, it will have a natural constituency..."

I would counter that as they start to actually pay taxes then the millennials will adopt the standard liberal plaint, 'raise the taxes on everybody except me'

Martin commented January 23

Martin

Martin

New YorkJan. 23

The meanings of these labels--liberal, left, center, conservative--, and of the spectrum along which they supposedly lie, changes year to year, and most pundits and politicians seem to use them to suit their own purposes. When you realize that a significant group of people voted for Obama and then for Trump, you realize how radically the politics of the moment can redefine the terms.

The Democrats could create a narrative that unites the interests of all economically disadvantaged people, including white people. Doing so would create a broad majority and win elections, but it would arouse the fury of the oligarchs, who will demonize them as "socialists." But as Obamacare proved, if actually you do something that helps people across the board even the Republicans and the media will have a hard time convincing people that they are oppressed, for example, by access to health insurance. For the oligarchs, as for the Republicans, success depends on creating a narrative that pits the middle class against the poor. In its current, most vulgar form, this includes pitting disadvantaged white people against all the rest, but the Republicans have an advantage in that their party is united behind the narrative. Democratic politicians may be united against Trump, but that means nothing. The challenge will be uniting the politicians who run on economic justice with the establishment Democrats who have succeeded by hiding their economic conservatism behind identity politics.

Marc commented January 23

Marc

Marc

AdinJan. 23

I applaude AOC. I am 72 white male. I have been waiting for someone like AOC to emerge. I wish her the best and will work for her positions and re-elections and ultimate ambitions. She is a great leader, teacher, learner, whip smart, and should not be taken likely.

Go for it AOC! Realize your full potential.

Mario Quadracci commented January 23

M

Mario Quadracci

MilwaukeeJan. 23

Enough about her, sheesh

Xoxarle commented January 23

X

Xoxarle

TampaJan. 23

Someone as thoroughly imbedded in the establishment as this Op-Ed writer is necessarily going to need to be educated on what the political center of gravity really is.

The Democrats have shifted RIGHT over the past few decades. Under Bill Clinton and Pelosi, Schumer, Feinstein and Obama. They are not left, not center-left, not center, but instead center-right. They have pursued a center-right agenda that does not engage with the rigged economy or widening inequality, or inadequate pay, or monopolist abuse of power, or adequate regulation and punishment of corporate crime.

They have enthusiastically embraced our deeply stupid wars of choice, and wasted trillions that could have been put to productive use at home.

The new generation of progressive Democrats seek to move the debate BACK TO THE CENTER or Center-Left if you will. Not the Left or Far-Left. They want to address the issues the current Democrat Establishment have ignored or exacerbated, because they are in essence, the same rarified rich as the lobbyists and donors they mingle with. The issues that affect MOST of us, but not the FEW of them.

The endgame of this shift is that Obama engineered a pseudo-recovery that saw the very rich recover their gains, but the poor become MORE impoverished. Such is the rigged economy, 21st Century style. Things have to change, the old guard have to be neutered. Too much wealth and power is concentrated in too few hands, and it's too detrimental to our pseudo-democracy.

Shenoa commented January 24

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S

Shenoa

United StatesJan. 24

AOC behaves like a sanctimonious know-it-all teenager....entertaining for about 5 minutes, then just plain annoying and tiresome. Does not bode well for the Democratic Party,...

Panthiest commented January 23

Panthiest

Panthiest

U.S.Jan. 23

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and her legislative cohorts are a much needed breath of fresh, progressive air for the U.S. Congress.

And I say that as someone going on age 70 who was raised and educated in the conservative Deep South.

Go left, young people!

Our road to hatred commented January 23

Our road to hatred

Our road to hatred

NjJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Unfortunately, the hot button on fox is the word socialism. so undo the negative press there and have a chance of implementing fairer policies.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

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VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Roger commented January 23

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@Samuel

"It's easy to go to a rooftop- or a twitter account- and yell "health care and education for all!"

Its not easy to get anyone to listen. The moral impetus precedes the "actual plans," which come out of the legislative process,

Why would you be against this getting attention?Unless, of course, you oppose health care and education for all.

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

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Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

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Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

RVN '69 commented January 23

RVN '69

RVN '69

FloridaJan. 23

I am a old white male geezer and lifelong liberal living in complete voter disenfranchisement in Florida due to gerrymandering, voter suppression and rigged election machines (how else does one explain over 30,000 votes in Broward County that failed to register a preference for the Senate or Governor in a race where the Republican squeaked in by recount?).

I am pleased to finally see the party moving away from corporatist and quisling centrists to take on issues of critical import for the economy, the environment and the literal health of the nation.

As “moderate” Republicans come to a cognitive realization that they too are victims of the fascist oligarch billionaire agenda to end democracy; they too will move to the left.

So, I for one am not going to worry an iota about this hand-wringing over something akin to revolution and instead welcome what amounts to the return of my fellow New Deal Democrats.

ST commented January 23

S

ST

New YorkJan. 23

Too much attention here to this new cohort of self important attention seekers presenting as civil servants. Not one of them has had any legislative experience in their lives how can they do all they say they want. They have no grasp of policy economics and politics. Are they too good to recall the wise words of Sam Rayburn - "Those who go along get along" or is that too quaint outdated and patriarchal for them? Why dont journalists and other pols call them out. Example, AOC calls for 70% marginal tax rate - saying we had it before, ha ha. Yes but only when defense spending as percent of gdp was 20-40 percent, in the depth of WW2 and the cold war, life and death struggles - it is now 5%, no one has the stomach for those rates now, and no need for them to boot. Free school, free healthcare, viva la stat! yeah ok who will pay for it? Lots of ideas no plans, flash in the pan is what it is, it will die down then settle in for a long winter.

fred commented January 23

f

fred

MiamiJan. 23

There is a difference between posturing as a leader and actually leading. So, there is another, and very direct, way for real Americans to end the shutdown: Recall petitions. With very little money, why not target Mitch McConnell. Laid off federal workers could go door-to-door in Kentucky. The message, not just to the Senate majority leader, would be powerful. And this need not be limited. There are some easy targets among GOP



senators. Perhaps Ms. Ocasio-Cortez can achieve greater national standing with a clipboard and pen down on the hustings.

Tintin commented January 23

Tintin

Tintin

MidwestJan. 23

I'm a liberal Democrat and I remain very skeptical regarding the platforms of these new members of Congress. Youthful exuberance is admirable, but it's not sufficient to address complicated issues related to fairness. Fairness does not always mean equity of wealth. Some people have more because they have worked more, worked longer, or took more risks with their money. Should the nurse who worked three jobs to make \$150,000/year be made to sacrifice a significant portion for those who chose to work less? Such an anecdotal question may seem naive, but these are the kinds of questions asked by regular Americans who often value social programs, but also value fairness. The claim that only some tiny fraction of the 1% will bear the cost of new programs and will alone suffer increased taxation is simply untrue, and those who are making this claim know it. This tiny group of wealthy knows how to hide its money off-shore and in other ways, as documented in the Times last year. Everyone knows the low-lying fruit for increased taxation is the upper middle class: Those who work hard and save hard and are nowhere near the top of the wealth pyramid. It's that nurse with the three jobs, or the small business owner who now clears \$200,000 a year, or the pair of teachers who, after 25 years of teaching, now bring home \$150,000 combined. Those are the targets of the proposed "new" taxes. Don't believe the hype. I'm a liberal, and I know what's up with these people.

4 Replies

yulia commented January 23

y

yulia

MOJan. 23

How the nurse was able to find 3 jobs at once that pay her 150K a year? I guess none of these jobs require full day work and yet pay 50k a year.

Apple Jack commented January 23

A

Apple Jack

Oregon Cascades Jan. 23

@Tintin A nurse working three jobs is probably over stressed & unlikely to perform adequately without endangering patients.

Same is true if two of those jobs are with a fast food outlet.

JM commented January 23

J

JM

NJ Jan. 23

@Tintin -- Keep up the good fight. Those of us who work at jobs to make household incomes like this can't seem to get through to people that we are terrified of being asked for even more. Because of the SALT deduction cap, few of us got any benefit from last year's tax reform (I got an extra \$50 a week and then had to give it back because of the lower deductions). We know that we will be expected to bear the brunt of these plans, as well as being taxed for Social Security on 100% of our income. What's the incentive to work hard if you don't get the benefits.

I'm not asking to pay any less. I just don't see why we are constantly being expected to pay more.

Sharon commented January 23

S

Sharon

Leawood, KS Jan. 23

@JM, can't agree more to your statement, "What's the incentive to work hard if you don't get the benefits." My husband has compared it to having one student who works really hard and deserves an "A" and another student doesn't do squat so deserves an "F," but out of "fairness" you give both of them a "C."

Woody commented January 23

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W

Woody

MissouriJan. 23

Ocasio-Cortez represents the success of a progressive in ousting a white liberal in a safely Democratic district. While interesting, that doesn't provide much of a blueprint for winning in 2020 in districts and states that voted for Trump.

As noted elsewhere in this newspaper, of the roughly 60 new Democrats in Congress elected in 2018, two-thirds, were pragmatic moderates that flipped Republican seats. Progressives were notably less successful in flipping Republican seats.

nora m commented January 23

n

nora m

New EnglandJan. 23

Just keep in mind that what the author deems "radical" ideas are considered mainstream in the rest of the developed world. We are an extreme outlier in lacking some form of universal health care, for example.

Also, while the NYT clearly saw Bernie's 2016 campaign as shockingly radical, the very people Edsall says we must court were wild about Bernie. His message about income inequality resonates with anyone living paycheck to paycheck and the only thing "radical" about it is that he said the truth out loud about the effects of unbridled capitalism.

The neoliberal types that the NYT embraces are the milquetoast people who attract a rather small group of voters, so, I am not too eager to accept his analysis. I fully expect the Times to back Gillibrand and Biden, maybe even that other corporatist, Booker. They don't scare the moneyed class.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@Matt Williams - You are ignoring the many statistics in the article that apply to the Democratic party as a whole.

For example:

"From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of Democrats who said the government should create “a way for immigrants already here illegally to become citizens if the meet certain requirements” grew from 29 to 51 percent, while the share who said “there should be better border security and stronger enforcement of immigration laws” fell from 21 to 5 percent."

There are many others.

Tom J commented January 23

T

Tom J

Berwyn, ILJan. 23

Cortez has fire and I respect that. Time to have what WE want, not what they want.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Quiet Waiting, the DLC was officially formed after Mondale's loss, in '85. the DLC's main position is that economic populism is not politically feasible. But I don't recall either McGovern or Mondale's losses being attributed to being too pro-worker, too pro-regulation of capitalism, or making tax rates progressive again.

Further, the idea that economic populism has no political value was just disproved by a demagogue took advantage of it to get elected. The RP's mid-term losses and other data points show that people in the middle are realizing Trump's not really a populist. Those economic Trump voters, some of whom voted for Obama twice, are up for grabs. Why would you be afraid that the DP's shift to raising taxes on the wealthy and being pro-worker will result in a Trump victory?

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

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@chele

Me, too!

David commented January 23

D

David

CaliforniaJan. 23

The Dems have been drifting to the right for decades, egged on by pundits who keep telling them to move to the center. Do the math: moving to the center just moves the center to the right. Frankly, Nixon was more liberal than most of today's Dems. A move to the left is long overdue.

Andrea Landry commented January 23

A

Andrea Landry

Lynn, MAJan. 23

The Democrats are the party of the middle class and the poor, and the GOP is a party of the rich. That is the distinction most voters make.

3 Replies

Jackson commented January 23

J

Jackson

VirginiaJan. 23

@Andrea Landry. The Dems are the party of identity politics. Do you honestly think Dems aren't rich - Soros, Steyers, Zuckerberg, Buffet, Clinton, Obama?

dlb commented January 23

d

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dlb

washington, d.c. Jan. 23

@Jackson

All politics are identity politics and justice for all is an enduring American value. And wealthy Republicans once again put forward the trickle down economic plan for the 99%, who the heck would want trickle down anything has always been a mystery to me. Its not good enough, and its all the Republicans have.

Purity of commented January 23

P

Purity of

Essence Jan. 23

@Andrea Landry

The middle-class and the poor are the enemies of the working class. The working-class are well aware of that, which is why they are drifting towards Trumpism; a conservative ideology that purports to listen to their demands on immigration and trade.

If the democrats don't change course on those two issues their reign will be short-lived.

Robert Migliori commented January 23

R

Robert Migliori

Newberg, Oregon Jan. 23

The rumblings in the Democratic party may represent a realization that WE THE PEOPLE deserve a bigger slice of the pie. Democrats such as Sanders, Warren and AOC are tapping into a reservoir of voters who have been excluded from the American Dream by design. The new message seems to be "fairness". I think that translates into government which does the most good for the greatest number of people. Candidates who embody that principle will be the new leaders. Ignore at your peril.

AACNY commented January 23

A

AACNY

New YorkJan. 23

The problem is AOC doesn't really know anything. Not everyone feels comfortable saying it, but it's pretty hard to miss.

1 Reply

J.C. commented January 23

J

J.C.

MichiganJan. 23

@AACNY

She knows we don't have time to muck about with platitudes and incrementalism and weak tea. The status quo has to be upset if we are to do what we need to do for the future of our country and the world. I'm aligned with every one of her priorities for this country, so I guess that makes me a know-nothing too.

Democrats should have been talking for years about the same things AOC and Bernie Sanders have been talking about. You need to convince people and put your ideas into the public conscience. Republicans have been doing that for decades, while Democrats have been asleep at the wheel, which is why Republicans now control the narrative on taxes and deregulation and health care and unions and trade and the list goes on.

Now we've gone so far to the right that even Democrats think that policies that would have been considered normal in the past are "crazy". We need to get back on track and you need to buckle your seat belt.

Ole Fart commented January 23

O

Ole Fart



La,In, Ks, Id.,Ca.Jan. 23

@Quiet Waiting: if voters believe republicans are helping them economically then follow them off the cliff. Hopefully enough voters will try a more humane form of capitalism.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WAJan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers(not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

TexasJan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

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@chele

Me, too!

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

Steve W commented January 23

S

Steve W

FordJan. 23

Ms Ocasio Cortez is a partial illustration of Reagan's dictum that "The trouble with our liberal friends is not that they are ignorant, but that they know so much that isn't so".

In the case of AOC she is not only very ignorant but she believes many things that are actually not true.

For her to actually believe that the "world will end in 12 years" and simultaneously believe that, even if true, Congress could change this awful fact is so breathtakingly ignorant one hardly knows where to start.

JoeFF commented January 23

J

JoeFF

NorCalJan. 23

Maybe it's worth considering that a lot of those spooky millennials, the stuff of campfire scare stories, themselves grew up in the suburbs. They are the children of privilege who have matured into a world that is far less secure and promising than that of their swing-voter soccer moms. Health care, student debt, secure retirement, and the ability to support a family are serious concerns for them. And don't even get me started on climate change and the fossil fuel world's stranglehold on our polity.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@dudley thompson, if you are one of those elite moderate liberals against the "lefties" concern about college and medical costs, protections for workers and the environment, and progressive taxation, then in the end getting your vote isn't worth sacrificing the votes of all the other people who do care about those things.

Your "moderate" way may calm those swing voters who fear change, and allow them to vote for the Democrat, but it also demoralizes and disappoints the much larger group of potential Democratic voters that craves change.

Odysseus commented January 23

Odysseus

Odysseus

Home AgainJan. 23

@Jessica Summerfield

..."article described AOC as a communist." And I saw an article describe Ross Douthat as a "columnist"... equally misleading. Will the calumny never cease?

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

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VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MNJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

ML commented January 23

M

ML

BostonJan. 23

Thomas, this "left" used to be known as the middle. A commitment to housing instead of an acceptance of homelessness. Dignity. A tax system designed to tax wealthy people, not, as we have now, a tax system designed to tax the middle class and poor.

Can we all just take a look at what is being promoted -- look at what AOC is proposing compared to Eisenhower era tax rates. We have lurched right so that event center-right is now considered left.

Raul Campos commented January 23

R

Raul Campos

San Francisco Jan. 23

Rage is the political fuel that fires up the Left. Rage also is the source of some very bad ideas. Having bad ideas is the reason people don't vote for a political party in a presidential election. The democrats are now the party of socialism, open borders, very high taxes, anti-religious bigotry, abolishment of free speech, rewriting the constitution, stuffing the Supreme Court, impeachment of the President, and being intolerance of other views.

They have also alienated 64 million Americans by calling them deplorables, racist and a host of other derogatory terms. Not a good strategy to win over voters in swing states. They also have attacked all men and white men in particular. They think masculinity is toxic and that gender is not biological but what a person believes themselves to be (noticed that I used the plural pronoun?). So far a long list of bad ideas. Let's see how it plays out in 2020.

1 Reply

David commented January 23

D

David

Emmaus, PA Jan. 23

@Raul Campos

I question the accuracy of the labels you place on Democrats but I do not question the fact that many voters BELIEVE as you do. Democrats have an uphill battle to change these perceptions and fearsome opponents in the Republican smear machine and hateful right-wing media.

Anthony commented January 23

A

Anthony

Western KansasJan. 23

We need to be careful what we refer to as left. Is the concept that we have access to affordable housing, healthcare, and decent jobs really a position of the far left? Not really. The 1944 progressives saw access to basic life as a right of all people. This is why young educated progressives support policies that encourage success within the unregulated capitalist economy that has been created over the last 40 years. The evidence illustrates that federal and state governments need to help people survive, otherwise we are looking at massive amounts of inequality that affect the economy and ultimately affect the very people, the extremely rich, who support deregulation.

Stephen commented January 23

S

Stephen

New HavenJan. 23

Look at what's going on in Venezuela! Let's not go this direction.

1 Reply

Bob Guthrie commented January 24

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 24

@Stephen

But Venezuela does not represent moderate liberal democracies like for example Norway that provides good social services.

Kathy commented January 23

K

Kathy

OxfordJan. 23

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@Bruce Rozenblit The Republicans great skill has been selling lies to the socially conservative to get their greedy financial agenda through. They have never cared about their voters other than how best to spin their rhetoric.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

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James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Kurt Pickard commented January 23

K

Kurt Pickard

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Murfreesboro, TN Jan. 23

Moving left takes a twitter account, a quixotic mentality and the word free. Its seditious arousing rhetoric is blinkered by the lack of a viable strategy to support and move it forward. Liberals thrive on the free media attention which feeds their rancor and aplomb.

Liberals are the infants of the Democratic Party. They're young, cute and full of amusing antics. They have an idyllic view of what the world can be but without efficacy. When they are challenged, or don't get enough attention, they revert to petulance.

As all mammals do, most liberals eventually grow up to join the Democratic median. Those that don't become the party regalers

brought out when the base needs energized. They grow old and fade away, remembered only for their flamboyance and dystopian view of the world.

The Democratic Party has never been more fractured since its inception. With close to thirty potential candidates for President, it is going to take a coalition within their party in order to put forth a viable nominee. Then the party infighting will commence which will lead the party into defeat.

Democrats must focus on a united party platform which is viable and will produce results for the American people. Enough of the loquacious hyperbole and misandrous language; it's time to stop reacting and start leading.

Doremus Jessup commented January 23

Doremus Jessup

Doremus Jessup

On the move Jan. 23

We are looking at a future Speaker of the House.



Watch out Republicans, this woman is not afraid of you white, stodgy, misogynistic and racist haters.

Your party, once a viable and caring party, is dead.

Clark Landrum commented January 23

C

Clark Landrum

Near the swamp.Jan. 23

The Republican Party used to be a moderate political party that was fully capable of governing. Over the years, the right wing of the party assumed control and they became a radically conservative party that basically hated government and did nothing for the benefit of average Americans. As a result, many voters came to believe that a more liberal stance was preferred to what the Republicans had become. Basically, the Republican Party veered sharply to the right and went off and left a lot of their earlier supporters, like me.

Charlie commented January 23

C

Charlie

Little Ferry, NJJan. 23

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is the perfect foil to the Trump twitter fest we've been subjected to for the past 2 years. However, enough of the tit for tat -- I would still like to see the freshman representative put forth some legislation for a vote.

PLH Crawford commented January 24

P

PLH Crawford

Golden Valley. MinnesotaJan. 24

The further the Democrats go Left with all the cultural politics including white people bashing and calling Men toxic, the further I am heading towards the right. I personally can't stand what the Democratic Party has turned into. We'll see who wins in 2020. I

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think a lot of people forget what happens in mid term elections. People vote for change and then, after seeing what they wrought, switch back.

ray commented January 23

r

ray

mullenJan. 23

gentrification is bad.

white flight is bad.

so which is it?

Fred commented January 23

F

Fred

BaltimoreJan. 23

In terms of policies, this "sharp shift to the left" represents a return to the New Deal and the Great Society and a renewed commitment to civil rights. It is a return to things we never should have turned away from.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NYJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Don't be so quick to condemn. The really old white men of today defeated Germany and Japan.

Then those same old white men went into Korea and then Vietnam. Ok so maybe you have a point.

ML commented January 24

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M

ML

BostonJan. 24

"What pundits today decry as a radical turn in Democratic policy and politics actually finds its antecedents in 1944."

This quote in the article should have been the lede. Instead, it appears 66 paragraphs into the article.

What is now being called "left" used to be called "center."

It used to be called the values and the core of the Democratic party.

David Keys commented January 23

David Keys

David Keys

Las Cruces, NMJan. 23

Shifted to the LEFT? After decades of movement to the Right, by the GOP and even assisted by Dems such as the Clintons, etc., this political movement is merely a correction, not a radical shift as your article contends.

fast/furious commented January 24

f

fast/furious

the new worldJan. 24

@A. Stanton

Don't make anything about Hillary.

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That ship has sailed.

RM commented January 23

R

RM

Brooklyn, NYJan. 23

Just as the reader comments from yesterday's opinion piece on the Covington School story by David Brooks reveal rampant confirmation bias, the comments here reveal an equally relevant truth: nobody, but nobody, eats their own like the left. The "Down With Us" culture in full effect.

Marc commented January 23

M

Marc

VermontJan. 23

I am confused about what message, what issues resonate with the "moderate" people who are disaffected from the liberal message of the Democrats on the left. What policies would bring them to vote Democratic, what is it about health care for all, a living wage and opening the voting process to all people are they opposed to.

Is it policy or message that has them wavering?

Blunt commented January 23

Blunt

Blunt

NYJan. 23

Here is a thought I would like to share with the New York Times:

Thomas Edsall's article is excellent. The corollary I draw from it that the paper that projects itself as the voice of the liberals in this county has to understand that it has fallen behind times. If the statistics and commentary accompanying it is a criteria to consider, The Times should move to a more progressive editorial platform. The sooner, the better!

The support given by this paper to Hillary Rodham Clinton over Bernie Sanders in 2016 is unforgivable. The attitude exhibited towards Elizabeth Warren is hardly different. This has to change if you want to keep your relevance unless you believe publishing Edsall's essay is just part of your "diversity" policy.

What the followers of AOC and other progressives are clamoring for are very basic human needs that have been delivered in affluent (and not so affluent) societies all over the globe. No need to name those countries, by now the list is well known.

What do we need delivered: Universal Healthcare, Free Public Education K through College, No Citizens United, Total Campaign Finance Reform, Regulation of Wall Street, Regulation of Pharma, Regulation of Big Tech, Gender Equality, 21st Century Infrastructure. All paid for by cutting the Military and Defense Budget Waste (cf Charlie Grassley, a buddy of Karl Marx) and taxing the top percent at levels AOC cites and Professors Suez and Zucman concur with in their Times OpEd.

Skanik commented January 24

S

Skanik

BerkeleyJan. 24

Why do Political Commentators and Analysts  
keep operating under the delusion that people  
vote their skin colour ?

People vote their economic interests.

I am all in favour of National Health Care

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Letting Immigrants who have not committed a crime stay and become citizens.

But I am also in favour of stricter Border Control as I feel our duty is to the poor citizens of America.

Send Economic aid to poorer countries, help them establish just governments.

As for Ocasio-Cortez, she is aiming too high and has too many lies about her past to go much higher.

David commented January 23

D

David

Emmaus, PA Jan. 23

Democrats need to win elections first. Progressive ideas may have support on the coasts and cities but fall flat in red states where there is still widespread dislike for immigrants and minorities and strong opposition to “having my hard-earned tax money supporting free stuff for the undeserving who can’t/won’t take care of themselves.” Because the Electoral College gives red states disproportionate representation the Democrats must win some red states to win a presidential election. Running on a strong progressive platform won’t work in those Republican-majority states.

What Democrats need is a “Trojan Horse” candidate. Someone who can win with a moderate message that has broad appeal across the entire country but who will support and enact a strong progressive agenda once he/she is elected. And on a local election level, Democrats need to field candidates whose message is appropriate for their local constituency—progressive in liberal states, more moderate in conservative areas.

Winning elections comes first. Let’s do what it takes to win and not let our progressive wish list blind us to the importance of winning elections.

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Joe Schmoe commented January 23

J

Joe Schmoe

BrooklynJan. 23

@Westchester Guy: Leftists want amnesty and, eventually, open borders. This is utterly and totally incompatible with their push for "free" college, universal health care, and so forth. The fiscal infeasibility is so obvious that one could only believe in these coexisting policies if they were blinded by something, like Trump hatred, or just plain dishonest. The "leftist" label for the new Democrat party is entirely appropriate. You also have your own bigots to counter Trump. The difference is that their bigotry is sanctioned by most of the mainstream media.

MDCooks8 commented January 23

MDCooks8

MDCooks8

West of the HudsonJan. 23

Has AOC or any other liberal offered any feasible policy to improve the lives of the people they claim to help?

Just take a good hard look at NYC where AOC is from which for many years the Public Housing Authority cannot even provide adequate heat in the building the city owns.

So while AOC dreams of taxing the wealthy 70% perhaps she needs to slow down and catch up to reality to realize what she offers is only building towards another Venezuela.

Kip Leitner commented January 23

K

Kip Leitner

PhiladelphiaJan. 23

This article is half poison pill. By reading it, you learn a lot about Democratic Party voting patterns, but you also have to endure a number of false ideas, the worst of which is Edsall's warning that radical Democrats will foment internal chaos leading to electoral loss.

The fact is, it is the corporate democrats, who in the last 40 years abandoned the base of working, blue collar democrats in favor of their Wall Street overlords. It is the corporate democrats who created the billionaire class by reducing corporate tax rates. It is the corporate Democrats who by reducing marginal tax rates created the plutocracy. It is the corporate democrats who gave \*Trillions of Dollars\* to Bush and Obama's perpetual wars and \$70 Billion more than the defense department asks. This impoverishing the citizenry with debt is their legacy as much as the Republicans.

This shoveling of money to the 1% who abandoned the middle class has been a train ridden by Corporate Democrats. It is the Corporate Democrats who caused all this friction by letting the middle class fall off the edge of the economic cliff -- all the while proclaiming how much they care. They show up on MLK day and read flowing speeches from the podium when what we really need is activism and changes in marginal tax rates, defense spending and the Medical Insurance and care oligopoly.

So now there is revolution brewing in response to the Corporate Democrats' appeasement of the Oligarchy? Good. Bring it on.

Jeremiah Crotser commented January 23

J

Jeremiah Crotser

HoustonJan. 23

Honestly, it is the centrist, neoliberal wing of the Democratic party that gave up on talking to the Midwest and focused on the coasts. That was the Clinton strategy and it didn't work. Although AOC comes from an urban area, her message is broad: she is for the struggling, working person. Edsall underestimates AOC's basis in economic thinking and her appeal to flyover country. She speaks carefully and justly to social issues, but she also speaks to the "kitchen table" issues that middle America is concerned with--in a much more real way than the neoliberal Dems have figured out how to.

MD Monroe commented January 23

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M

MD Monroe

Hudson ValleyJan. 23

Please end you outsized coverage of AOC. I really don't know how you justify all the news coverage. She is one of 435 representatives, and a new one at that. No accomplishments, just a large Instagram following.

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, IdahoJan. 23

@John Patt

Everybody over the age of 50 should apologize for giving our young people catastrophic climate change, endless wars, broken healthcare, crumbling infrastructure, ever widening income and wealth disparities, unaffordable post-secondary education, rampant gun violence, no voice for labor. We over 50 didn't care enough to vote and to make enough political noise to keep these things from happening. We over 50 all have personal responsibilities for this messed up world we're leaving the young.

6 Replies

John Patt commented January 23

J

John Patt

Koloa, HIJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp I am a senior citizen heterosexual white male. I do not apologize for my race, gender, etc. In fact, I am proud of our accomplishments. I do apologize for my personal wrongs, and strive to improve myself.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NY Jan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Don't be so quick to condemn. The really old white men of today defeated Germany and Japan.

Then those same old white men went into Korea and then Vietnam. Ok so maybe you have a point.

DSS commented January 23

D

DSS

Ottawa Jan. 23

@John Patt I am an American living in Canada and I call myself an American.

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, Idaho Jan. 23

@Zor

The answer is no. Remember Schumer saying that for every urban vote Democrats lost by running Hillary, they would gain 2 suburban votes. It didn't turn out that way. The centrist, corporatist Democrats (including Hillary and Biden) have no clue how to reach the working class of any race. The working class focus of AOC is the Democratic Party's best chance at a future. But of course the establishment, centrist, corporatist Democrats are still focused on helping their big money donors.

Here's another question: Just how are establishment, centrist, corporatist Democrats different from Republicans?

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Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 23

There really is not a far left in America. You guys have this weird aversion to moderate sensible socialism that -as the saying goes- is only in America. Our conservative government in Australia accepts it as a given the things AOC is fighting for. There is nothing weird about universal health care in modern advanced countries. The conservatives have a magic word in the USA that they use as a bogeyman and the word is socialism. Ironically they don't mind Trump snuggling up to extreme left dictators like Kim and ex KGB Soviet operatives like Don's supervisor Vlad Putin who by definition had to be a card carrying communist to get to his position. But moderate socialism is all over northern Europe, NZ, UK and Australia. You people are oppressed by conservatives playing the "that's socialism" card at every turn. We never ask where does the money come from? here. The money seems to be there in all the countries that take care of the health of their citizens. America is a wonderful country with fantastic people- I love visiting... but to use an Aussie word - crikey I wouldn't want to live there.

1 Reply

PLH Crawford commented January 24

P

PLH Crawford

Golden Valley. MinnesotaJan. 24

@Bob Guthrie

We could have a lovely, sensible socialism here if we didn't take care of most military matters in the world. Military might cost money. The problem is our people are suffering because other Western countries rely on the US to do it for them.

JB commented January 24

JB

JB

ArizonaJan. 24

This is the difference between R & D's. OAC may get her support from well-to-do, educated whites, but her platform focuses on those left behind. Even her green revolution will provide jobs for those less well off. R's, on the other hand, vote only for candidates that further their selfish interests.

Pono commented January 23

P

Pono

Big IslandJan. 23

A.O.C.

Alexandria "Overexposure" Cortez.

This young woman is talented but should pace herself a bit.

It's not a marathon but it's not a sprint either. Let's call it "middle distance" in track terms.

You need to save some breath for when it's really needed.

Pace for long term influence on policy.

Or be a "one hit wonder".

MikeG commented January 23

M

MikeG

Left CoastJan. 23

@Cass You may self-identify as a moderate but you sound like a conservative. Please go join the other party of no ideas if AOC strikes you as radical. The majority of Democrats don't agree with you.

Eero commented January 23

E

Eero

East EndJan. 23

Ideology fails when it meets reality. Trump and McConnell are busy teaching the American middle class what it is to be reduced to poverty - health care they can't afford, rising taxes on those who have had some economic success, elimination of well paying jobs, and on and on. Those voters are understandably interested in pocket book issues, the resurgence of progressive candidates meets this newly emphasized need.

In addition, look at the population demographics. The baby boomers were a "bump" in population, they in turn have produced a new bump in their children, who are now adults. The boomers were quite left, their children have inherited some of this belief system - equal rights and protection and support of those with less opportunity.

The voters in general are also completely fed up with politicians lying to them and taking away their benefits. They generally have a mistrust both of the right wing destruction of our norms, and the Democrats failure to fight back (Garland should have been appointed even in the face of McConnell's calumny). The new face of the Democratic party feeds pocketbook issues, a belief that America is, in fact, a melting pot, and the need for restoration of our Democracy. This pretty much covers all the bases, the Democrats just need to get better at educating the populace.

Zor commented January 23

Z

Zor

OHJan. 23

By and large, the majority of 2600+ counties that Trump carried are not economically well off. However, they are socially very traditional.

Do the Democrats have a message that will resonate with millions of these traditional white middle/lower middle class voters in the hinterland?

1 Reply

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, IdahoJan. 23

@Zor

The answer is no. Remember Schumer saying that for every urban vote Democrats lost by running Hillary, they would gain 2 suburban votes. It didn't turn out that way. The centrist, corporatist Democrats (including Hillary and Biden) have no clue how to reach the working class of any race. The working class focus of AOC is the Democratic Party's best chance at a future. But of course the establishment, centrist, corporatist Democrats are still focused on helping their big money donors.

Here's another question: Just how are establishment, centrist, corporatist Democrats different from Republicans?

bored critic commented January 23

b

bored critic

usaJan. 23

have you listened to her interviews? she doesn't say much of anything. all political about all these socialist ideas with no means or method of how to get there. and thank goodness she has no clue how to get there

Andrew commented January 23

A

Andrew

NYJan. 23

I used to be friends with a very high-achieving guy I met as a 15-year-old on a teen summer tour in Israel, run by the national Reform synagogue movement, in 1985. In the course of our friendship spanning the final years of high school through the beginning of college, gradually fading to an email or 2 once every couple years; our different paths & outlooks became very stark, though we'd both call ourselves liberals.

My friend left no stone unturned in his unambivalent achievement orientation, embracing w/religious fervor the absolute virtue of success, the unimpeachable morality & integrity of our meritocracy, & meritocratic ideals/ethos. Naturally, he wound up at Harvard, majoring in government, followed by Harvard Law.

What struck me throughout was the unvarnished "empiricism" of his outlook: rarefied, lofty principles or romantic ideals seemed alien: the nitty gritty of practical & procedural realities were the whole picture. The one time we explicitly discussed comparative politics, he only gravitated toward the topic of Harold Washington's coalition-building prowess.

He was an ardent Zionist ("Jewish homeland!"), with little apparent interest in theology or spirituality for that matter.

Eventually he went into corporate law, negotiating executive compensation. I think he epitomized the Clinton Democrat: A "Social justice," equal opportunity for all, meritocracy "synthesis."

In a word, that peculiarly "practical," pragmatic liberalism was \*ultimately conservative\*.

rantall commented January 23

r

rantall

MassachusettsJan. 23

Let us all remember that since Reagan the "center" has moved decidedly right. So when we talk about a move left, we are moving back to where we were in the 1950s-1970's. For example take AOC's tax proposal. Right out of that time period. Look at the GOP platform in the 1950's. It reads like a progressive platform today. So let's put this in perspective. Everything is relative and we have adjusted to right wing dominant politics today.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

Edsall looks at the fact the Democrats (and, indeed, the whole country) are moving in a progressive direction. He does not look at the question of why.

I maintain that with an increase in educated voters, the country is moving towards policies that work, that are good for the country as a whole, not just for a minority.

The other wealthy countries, all with a universal government health care system such as an improved Medicare for all, get BETTER health care as measured by all 16 of the bottom line public health statistics for ALL of their people at a cost of less than HALF per person as we pay.

High inequality has been bad for the economy and governance of this country. Look at what happened in 1929 and 2008 both preceded by periods of high inequality. Compare that with the long period of low inequality after WWII of Great Prosperity. Today as a result of terrible SCOTUS decisions, the Super Rich pushing the country towards oligarchy.

The situation at our borders was actually better before 2003 when ICE was created. It has perpetrated so many atrocities, rightly garnered such a terrible reputation, why isn't it time to abolish the thing and start over with a new more humane organization. After all, the Germans did not keep the Gestapo after the war.

I running out of space, but let me end by saying we are now getting more progressive voters that say that  $2 + 3 = 5$ , and fewer conservative ones who say  $2 + 3 = 23$  and fewer moderates who want to compromise on  $2 + 3 = 14$ .

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23



@Concerned Citizen, likewise, public education is funded largely by property taxes, even on those who do not have children in school, or whose children are out of school. This is not "someone else's" money! It is all our money, and this is the way we choose to employ it – to educate all our children, realizing, I hope, that educated children are a major asset of a developed country.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it

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isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

[www.remember-to-breathe.org](http://www.remember-to-breathe.org)

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

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New England Jan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middle Jan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

Blackmamba commented January 23

B

Blackmamba

ll Jan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America's proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to

those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propaganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

BrooklynJan. 23

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@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

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D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

Allentown commented January 23

A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

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@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

Steve commented January 23



S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Rochester, NYJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no ford plant nearby.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education

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before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYCJan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@Michael I'm glad you said that because yes, tuition USED TO BE much, much cheaper. Guess why? No one is against "affordable" tuition, or student loans that get PAID BACK. We are against greedy colleges and universities and their professors making megabucks but claiming to be philanthropists and egalitarian. They would have you believe they are about sharing and altruism when in reality they are plain greedy. Think about your taxes and how much you have to EARN to pay these folks these salaries. Many of them produce exactly zero. Art teachers who have never SOLD a piece of art yet they make a six figure salary. I'm not against people who produce but even "Leonardo" had a benefactor who paid for it all.

Craig G commented January 23

C

Craig G

Long IslandJan. 23

@Michael Education is mostly (not entirely) run and operated by liberals. If their ideas ran up the cost of a college education to an unbearable level, what makes people think that allowing their ideas on a national level won't do the same? Lack of State Funding isn't why prices are so high. State Schools are a bargain compared to most Private Colleges.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@C Wolfe yes, but soaring tuition is a direct result of salaries and benefits i.e. greed, these folks receive. Moreover, many of them keep two sets of books. They don't tell you about their hidden revenues. Like broadcast channels that are allocated to "educational" uses that they then lease to private concerns. Land they own, patents they receive benefits from, etc., etc. Further, what, exactly, do they produce? I have no issue with departments that produce tangible, marketable, and even research oriented results that benefit us. However, I have a huge issue with their socialized, affirmative action, diversity, agenda to promote many "disciplines" that do little or nothing. I am totally uninterested in sponsoring, and do not sponsor, even though they ask me, these activities. They are not being paid to "change" the world, or promote themselves, they are being paid to teach - period.

ManhattanWilliam commented January 23

ManhattanWilliam

ManhattanWilliam

New York, NYJan. 23

Until AOC starts to achieve some actual LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES, I'm not prepared to follow her ANYWHERE. I'm willing to listen to what she has to say, some of which I agree with and some I question. I lean Left on most issues but I'm not a fanatic, and fanatics exist on BOTH sides of the political spectrum. I believe that one must PROVE themselves before being beatified. In substance, I'm open to the "new wing" of the Democratic party which I am, officially, a member of. Let me add that I will NEVER cast a vote for anyone calling themselves a Republican because that very label is forever tainted in my book. But I don't much care for the 'tit for tat' Tweeting from AOC either, writing about Joe Lieberman (whom I do not like) "who dat"? What is "dat", Miss AOC?

PeterC commented January 23

PeterC

PeterC

BearTerritoryJan. 23

The insane part of this never gets addressed. Why should Americans political interests and aspirations be controlled by two monopolistic parties?

1 Reply

Ed L. commented January 23

E

Ed L.

SyracuseJan. 23

@PeterC

Because we Americans cannot keep more than two ideas in our heads at a time?

Mathias Weitz commented January 23

M

Mathias Weitz

Frankfurt aM, GermanyJan. 23

The country may be in a need of a more social agenda, but this agenda must perceptible help the depressed white rural folk first. Nothing will work what make those, who are already falling behind feel like a "basket of deplorables".

I hope AOC will find a way not just to become a poster star of the progressive urban left, but also understand the ailing of the depressed rural right.

dmdaisy commented January 23

d

dmdaisy

Clinton, NYJan. 23

The Democratic Party needs to do a very good job of educating an electorate (and possibly some of its own members) that has for more than 30 years drunk the kool-aid of the "lower our taxes," small government, and deregulation gurus.

We have such a predatory capitalism now, with government failing over and over again to reign in huge corporations headed by those who think they should be determining everything from economic to housing to health to foreign policy. Enough already.

Most of the young members of Congress need a lot more experience and more immersion in the nitty gritty of creating legislation before they can take the reins, but they can educate their constituents. And maybe they can convince others that everyone gains through a more level playing field.

Lou commented January 23

L

Lou

New YorkJan. 23

Calling these ideas left is a joke. AOC and Bernie Sanders would practically be conservatives in Canada and Europe. What we have are 3 unofficial parties:

1. The party of people with good ideas who aren't afraid to speak about them because they aren't beholden to big donors
2. The party of watered down, unpopular ideas that are vetted by 20 pollsters and donors before seeing the light of day
3. The party that gets into office by tapping into people's primal fears, and avoids policy altogether

Republicans have been moving the goalposts for decades now, how can you even tell left from right anymore?

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michjas commented January 23

michjas

michjas

Phoenix Jan. 23

@A. Stanton

Since 1990, there have been funding gaps, shutdowns or serious threats of shutdowns almost every year. They have become routine tactics in the effort of each party to drive a hard bargain.

SLE commented January 23

S

SLE

Cleveland Heights Jan. 23

Running up the Democratic vote in Blue states by pandering to left leaning views will not unseat DJT in 2020. Winning the popular vote by 3 or 3 million yields the same results. Unless or until we adopt the Nation Popular Vote Intrastate Compact or reapportion the House more equitably, Republicans will continue to exploit the Electoral College's antimajoritarianism. Courting the minority of lefties mimics DJT's courting of his base; last November proved that elections are won in the middle.

Appealing to moderates in purple states is the only path to 270. If you have any doubt, ask private citizen HRC how much good the Democratic over-vote did for her.

Kathy commented January 24

K

Kathy

Oxford Jan. 24

All this fuss over a bright young person who stopped complaining and ran for office. She has a platform. Time will tell how effective she will be. Right now, she's connecting to those young and old who believe we can do better.

If you had a choice who would you rather share a beer with? A Trump supporter who has no interest beyond building an ineffective wall or an Ocasio-Cortez supporter, full of ideas, some fanciful, some interesting but most off all energy and light versus fear and hate?

Barry Moyer commented January 23

Barry Moyer

Barry Moyer

Washington, DC Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

What is exceedingly strange to me is that those who rail against socialism completely misread socialism at its very roots; Family.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VT Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WA Jan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Mike commented January 23

M

Mike

AustinJan. 23

Yes, because all these pundits got 2016 so right. They are people with their own opinions, just like everyone else, except the punditry has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo that has been so good to them for so long.

Enough already! Times, you're as much to blame as these pundits for 2016!

Jerre Henriksen commented January 23

J

Jerre Henriksen

IllinoisJan. 23

When progressive solutions are proposed, the opposition yells "socialism" while others bring up the cost of progressive solutions. No one talks about the significant portion of our nation's wealth spent on the military. We don't audit the Pentagon or do due diligence on the efficiency of huge projects undertaken by the military nor do we question the profits of the industrial-military complex.

Meanwhile, Russia manipulated our latest presidential race, underscoring the worry over cyber attacks. Climate events in the country mean our citizens experience life changing events not brought on by terrorists or immigrants. A medical event in a family can initiate bankruptcy; we all live on that edge. Our infrastructure projects have been delayed for so long that America looks like a second rate country. Income inequality is ongoing with no sign of lessening. Suicide is on the increase while death by drugs is an



epidemic. An education for students can mean large debt; efforts to train the workforce for the technological world are inconsistent. For many of us, the hate and fear promoted in this country is repulsive. Because our society works for an ever smaller number of us, Americans are increasingly understanding that a sustainable, just society works for all its citizens. We are exhausted by the stalemate in Washington leaving us caring very little about the labels of progressive, moderate, or conservative. We just know what needs to change.

LTJ commented January 23

L

LTJ

UtahJan. 23

The New Democratic approach in essence is taking wealth and redistributing it, along with promising free goods and services. Is that high-minded or simply a Brave New World. The underlying assumption seems to be the rest of America will not find that worrisome, and that what happened in MA and NY represents a nationwide trend.

3 Replies

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@LTJ

No one is promoting "free stuff" - what is being proposed is that people/corporations pay into a system progressively upwards (especially on incomes above 10,000,000 dollars per year) that allowed them and gave them the infrastructure to get rich in the first place.

I am sure you would agree that people having multiple homes, cars, and luxury items while children go hungry in the richest nation in the world is obscene on its face.

Aye ?

LTJ commented January 23

L

LTJ

UtahJan. 23

@FunkyIrishman I propose that ecologically unsound urban areas become self-supporting or disaggregate, rather than relying on food and water being shipped in from outlying areas. And I leave it to others to be the judge and jury of what level of wealth is “fair,” and what should be taken.

jrd commented January 23

j

jrd

nyJan. 23

@LTJ

Tell me -- do the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq count as "free goods and services", since we chose to print money to finance them, rather than pay for those pointless military adventures with tax hikes? Or what about farm subsidies and leasing of public lands for way below market price? That's not paid for either -- we're running a \$1 trillion deficit, if you haven't noticed.

Am not sure what terrible things happened in MA and NY, but all but the very rich are far better off in those states than their counterparts in most of the rest of the low tax/low service states. And you don't see many NYC and Boston billionaires relocating to Utah unless maybe they intend to run for the Senate.

ML commented January 24

M

ML

BostonJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Do you consider Eisenhower leftist? (highest tax rates ever). How about Nixon? (established the EPA).

We have lurched so far right in this country that the middle looks left. I'm sick of the labels -- listen to what these leaders are actually proposing. If you don't understand how the marginal tax rate works, look it up. If you don't realize we once didn't accept mass homelessness and mass incarceration as a fact of life in America, learn some history. We're living in a myopic, distorted not-so-fun-house where up is down and center is left. We need to look with fresh eyes and ask what our communal values are and what America stands for.

5 Replies

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@dudley thompson, if you are one of those elite moderate liberals against the "lefties" concern about college and medical costs, protections for workers and the environment, and progressive taxation, then in the end getting your vote isn't worth sacrificing the votes of all the other people who do care about those things.

Your "moderate" way may calm those swing voters who fear change, and allow them to vote for the Democrat, but it also demoralizes and disappoints the much larger group of potential Democratic voters that craves change.

bored critic commented January 23

b

bored critic

usaJan. 23

actually, the anti leftist progressive is pro trump.

The Captain commented January 24

T

The Captain

St Augustine, FLJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Dear Dudley, please note the following:

The one and only way the United States will eventually improve for a very large and abused group of Americans on the dismal state of wages, ridiculously high health care- and prescription drug costs, exorbitant costs for education, racism/neo-nazizum, more equality, sensible immigration/justice/tax laws, the right of women for equal pay and their right to choose (to name only a few) can and will only be achieved via a leftist government.

For the average American being a socialist or lefty is like being a stupid, bad and unpatriotic person.

The Alexandrias, Ayamas and Rashidas are leading the way.

I hope you will get old enough to enjoy the good things coming and re-read your today's comment at that time.

Kind regards.

Sarah Conner commented January 23

S

Sarah Conner

SeattleJan. 23

These voters are not moving to the left. They are correcting a trend to the right that accelerated with Reagan: the rise of corporate dominance and societal control; the loss of worker rights, healthcare and protections through destruction of our unions; and the mass incarceration of our nation's young African American men for minor drug offenses, thus destroying their futures and communities. These "left" liberals are fighting to bring back democratic norms and values that were once taken for granted among those of all political stripes.

Mark Thomason commented January 23

Mark Thomason

Mark Thomason

Clawson, MI Jan. 23

I have always voted in every primary. I have always voted for the most "leftist" available. So did my whole family, and all the people with whom I discussed our voting.

The issue was always "most leftist available." That often was not very leftist at all.

That is what has changed. Now the option is there. It isn't because we vote for it. We vote for it now because now we can, now the choice is there.

What has changed is not so much the voters as the invisible primary before anyone asks us voters. What changed is the Overton Window of potential choices allowed to us.

I think voters would have done this a long time ago, if they'd had the opportunity.

So why now? Abject failure of our politics to solve our problems has been true for decades, so it isn't mere failure.

I'd like to think it was voter rebellion. We just wouldn't vote for their sell outs. Here, that meant Bernie won our primary, and then we did not turn out for Her.

We finally forced it. The money men could not get away with it anymore.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,ny Jan. 23

It is strange that Mr Edsall frames Medicare 4 All , Free College , and higher taxes on wealthy as RADICAL leftist ideas .. when it fact each of these proposals have the majority of support from Americans.. The most current poll shows 70% support for Medicare 4 All.. so you are only radical if you DON'T support.

Centrist commented January 23

C

Centrist

NYCJan. 23

Unless the progressives start addressing the concerns of the middle class, they will drive the Democratic Party right off the cliff.

You remember us, don't you? People who have tried to do things right and work hard. Granted, our cares and concerns aren't that sexy or tweetable so it's easy for you newly elected firebrands to overlook us.

Don't forget, we are the ones who will ultimately foot the bills for your giveaways.

Jerry Smith commented January 23

J

Jerry Smith

Dollar BayJan. 23

The notion that democrats are moving leftward is borne on revisionist history. There's nothing new or bold being proposed; Zeitz is right on the money.

PK commented January 23

P

PK

AtlantaJan. 23

"Medicare for All, government-guaranteed jobs and a higher minimum wage"

I have a question to all the "progressive" Democratic voices in Congress - how are you going to pay for such an agenda? Money doesn't just grow on trees. Either you will have to cut funds from another program, or raise taxes. Most of these progressive people favor raising taxes on the wealthy. But what is your definition of "wealthy"? \$10 million in annual income? \$1 million in annual income? \$500k? \$200k?

Almost all the proposals I have seen coming from progressives involves increasing tax rates for families making more than \$200k, either through higher rates, phased out deductions, or ineligibility for certain programs. A professional couple where both are software engineers could easily surpass this threshold, but they are not rich. They struggle to pay the mortgage, save for the future, pay taxes, and provide for their children. Why should they be forced to pay more in taxes percentage-wise than a family earning \$100k or \$60k?

It is for these reasons that I as an independent will never support progressive candidates. These candidates lack basic math abilities and a basic notion of fairness. So if the Democratic party starts to embrace some of the policies espoused by these progressives, they are on a path to lose elections in the future.

1 Reply

Bob Guthrie commented January 24

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 24

@PK

They are going to pay for it the way all other modern democracies now pay for it. Why don't you ask how are you going to pay for the huge tax cuts for the wealthy who don't need it? America is the odd one out... not the norm. If people are looked after, they are less of an economic burden than if you throw them to the wolves.

BTW running countries is not a matter of the basic maths you speak of. It's a lot more nuanced than that.

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

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Linda Miilu

Chico, CAJan. 23

@AutumnLeaf

Mitch McConnell blocked Obama at every turn; he denied him the appointment of a moderate respected Judge to the SC, a Judge the GOP had voted for on the Superior Court. Congress wasted time with 40 attempts to declare the ACA unconstitutional; the Plan was modeled on a Romney Plan in MA. Scalia's Citizens United Decision declared that corporations are people; Scalia knew that he was using a Superior Ct. Decision with a transcription error: word spoken: corporation; word transcribed: individual. Scalia spent a lot of time at corporate lodges, "hunting"; mainly eating until he finally ate himself to death. McConnell spends his time with mine owners. Trump spends his time with lobbyists for Israel and Saudi Arabia.

9 Replies

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MAJan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtpJan. 23



@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UTJan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subjection indicates the opposite is true.

nickgregor commented January 23

n

nickgregor

PhiladelphiaJan. 23

I think this article underscores the incredible opportunity available to the left if they pick a radical democratic socialist candidate. If they are already winning the college educated crowd that is gentrifying these major urban areas and losing the poorer minority crowd that is voting for people like the Clinton's over Sanders or Crowley over AOC; we are getting the people whom one would think would be less incentivized to

vote for our platform and we can gain the people who would benefit more from our platform. Therefore, it is really just a question of exposure and talking to these people. Reaching out to minorities; talking about mass-incarceration, how it disproportionately affects precisely these minority voters that we have to gain; and how the moderate democrats have been benefiting economically and politically from the chaos and inequities in these communities for years. It is a question of messaging. Minorities are our natural allies. They are disproportionately affected by the inequality; and as soon as we can reach them; tell them that their brothers, husbands, sons are coming home, and that we have a job for them to support their family when they do, that is a huge % of voters that will swing our way, and accelerate the pace of our revolution--and what critics will come to remember as the end of their decadence and control over all facets of society, to the detriment of everyone else. The end is coming--and a new, better society is on the verge of being reborn

1 Reply

Rhporter commented January 23

R

Rhporter

VirginiaJan. 23

@nickgregor

You're right only if FDR was a radical. He wasn't. Returning to our FDR/Truman/LBJ Ross is where it's at. Obama rules!

jmgardina commented January 23

j

jmgardina

la mesa, californiaJan. 23

Of all of those quoted in this article, the only one who really gets it right is Joshua Zeitz. FDR's 1944 State of the Union address should be required reading for every Democrat, and every Establishment talking head who warns against alienating suburban voters by advocating for a New Deal social safety net.

I share the sentiments of many on who have responded by noting that it was, and is, the leadership of the Democratic Party that has moved right rather than the Democratic electorate that shifted left. Don't believe me? Go back through the sixteen years of the Clinton and Obama presidencies and see how many times each referenced Ronald Reagan versus even mentioning Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, or Lyndon Johnson.

Jose Pieste commented January 23

J

Jose Pieste

NJJan. 23

Medicare for all? Get ready for 6-week waits for a 10 minute appointment (and that will be just for primary care). After that, expect to wait 6-12 months to see a specialist.

1 Reply

Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 23

@Jose Pieste

Well here in Australia its 10 minute waits for appointments made on the same day. I have MS and see my specialist without a problem. And the government through the PBS prescription benefit scheme pays \$78 of my \$80 daily tablets. We are not as phenomenally wealthy a country as the USA and we manage it with universal health care. I pay about \$30 Australian for each doctor's visit and sometimes with bulk billing that is free too. You reflect a uniquely American attitude about social services that is not reflective of what is done in other modern democracies. I really do feel for you my friend and for all Americans who have been comprehensively hoodwinked by the "can't afford it" myth. You can pay for trillion dollar tax cuts for people who don't need it. Honestly mate - you have been conned.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

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@c harris - Hillary received almost 4 million more primary votes than Bernie.

JABarry commented January 23

J

JABarry

Maryland Jan. 23

@José Franco

I will not dig out social security trustees' projections of future funding requirements or the possible solutions bandied about by politicians (google them), but one single tweak would eliminate any projected shortfalls.

Currently the FICA contribution is limited to earnings of \$132,900. Those who earn over that amount pay no FICA tax on the earnings above that level. The person earning a million dollars in 2019 will stop paying FICA on his earnings by mid-February. Applying FICA to all earnings of all earners would keep social security solvent. No raise in retirement age, no reduction in benefits, no insolvency.

As to Medicare's solvency and public benefits, see the excellent comments of Len Charlap.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health

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care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system were as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed by horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NY Jan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Shenoa commented January 23

S

Shenoa

United StatesJan. 23

There are several issues upon which I and my like-minded moderate family members will cast our votes in 2020:

- Border security and the end to the brazen exploitation of our citizenry by the millions of foreign migrants who illegally, and with an attitude of entitlement, trespass into our sovereign country year after year...costing our taxpayers billions.

- Reckless proposals to increase government benefit programs that aren't affordable without raising taxes, threatening our already stressed social security safety net.

- The rise of Antisemitism and the mendacious obsession with Israel amongst leftists within Congress, as well as within the ranks of their constituents.

Democrats will need to address these issues to our satisfaction if they want our votes.

2 Replies

Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 23

@Shenoa

With sincere respect I do not think you are moderate though you describe yourself so.

- being critical of Israel does not necessarily equate with those who criticise the Israeli government, the leader of which is under criminal investigation. There are many left wing Jewish people and left wing Israelis

- America has a wonderfully welcoming attitude to immigration. However since you bring anti-Semitism into the argument, expecting Honduran refugees to wait patiently for visas in Tegucigalpa is not essentially different to expecting 1940's German Jewish people to wait patiently at some office in Berlin for permission to leave and for visas

-Reckless proposals to look after people? What is in truth reckless, is raising USA debt by trillions to pay off aspiring American oligarchs with obscene trickle down tax cuts

- Brazen exploitation by immigrants willing to do work the locals don't want to do? I guess that would justify putting children in internment camps and effectively abducting them from their parents.

I respect your opinion and respectfully, and I think logically, disagree with it.

Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 23

@Bob Guthriel meant to say that being critical of Israel does not necessarily equate with anti- Semitism.

Apologies.

PeoplePower commented January 23

P

PeoplePower

NycJan. 23

Ed, it's time to retire. If you spent time looking at the actual data, Democratic primary voters, particularly those in overly restrictive closed primary states like New York, are older, wealthier, "socially liberal" and "fiscally conservative." They are what we would have called moderate/Rockefeller Republicans 40 years ago, but they vote Democratic because that's who their parents voted for. Most progressive voters today, the ones who support Medicare for all, investment in public higher education, taxation on wealth (you know, those pesky issues that mainstream Democrats used to support 30-40 years ago) are younger and more likely to be unaffiliated with any political party. This is why Bernie did much better in states with open primaries, and Hillary did better in closed primary states like NY

AOC won in spite of NY's restrictive primary system. She was able to achieve this because many of the older Democratic establishment voters who would have voted for Crowley stayed home, and she was able to motivate enough first-time young voters in her district to register as a Dem and vote for her. (First time voters in NY can register with party 30 days prior to primary election)

Let's be clear though: your premise that Dem primary voters are driving the party's shift to the left couldn't be further from the truth--the progressive shift in the body politic you describe is coming from younger, independent, working class voters and is redefining the American left.

Woof commented January 23

Woof

Woof

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NYJan. 23

From the NYT , Edsall April 19, 2018

The Democrats' Gentrification Problem

"Conversely, in the struggling Syracuse metropolitan area (Clinton 53.9 percent, Trump 40.1 percent), families moving in between 2005 and 2016 had median household incomes of \$35,219 — \$7,229 less than the median income of the families moving out of the region, \$42,448."

Syracuse, a democratic City in one of the most democratic States in the US, so assuredly democratic that Democratic Presidential candidates rarely show up has been left by the Democrats and the Democratic Governor ,Cuomo, in a death spiral of getting poorer by the day

That in a State, that includes NYC, the international capital of the global billionaire elite.

Exactly, what have the Democrats done to help ?

Dave commented January 23

D

Dave

ConnecticutJan. 23

"Sawhill argues that if the goal of Democrats is victory, as opposed to ideological purity, they must focus on general election swing voters who are not die-hard Democrats."

Wow, what an original argument! I have been hearing the exact same thing since I registered to vote at age 18 in 1977. Democrats are always urged to support the "sensible, centrist" candidates who keep on losing elections to Republicans who drag their party, and the whole country by default, even further to the right. JFK was called a communist and worse by pundits like this and he would have won by a landslide in 1964. How about if Democrats for once push for policies that are backed by 90 percent of Americans, like Medicare For All, the higher minimum wage, universal college education, renewable energy and the rest of the Green New Deal and higher marginal tax rates for the rich. I would love to see just one presidential candidate run on this platform before I die so I can fill out my ballot without holding my nose.

1 Reply

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, IdahoJan. 23

@Dave

1.2 million people voted for the platform you're asking for. They voted for Jill Stein. If the Democratic Party wants those votes in 2020, it should nominate a true progressive, like Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren. If the Democrats nominate another centrist, corporatist retread like Biden, Tim Kaine, Michael Bloomberg, Eric Holder, you will see the Green Party vote exceed 2 million and the Democrats lose again.

Piece man commented January 23

P

Piece man

South SalemJan. 23

Kind of make sense considering how far to the right the Republican Party has gone with the Donald. And he's a guy who was a Democrat at one point. He's a dangerous mr nobody. Let's counter going far to the left so we can come back to some middle ground.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San Diego Jan. 23

@Len Charlap

Canada can also more easily afford universal healthcare and a stronger social safety net because it doesn't have the outsized military budget that we do.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Princeton NJ Jan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

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José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

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Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

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That indicates some funny business going on.

Mr. Slater commented January 23

M

Mr. Slater

Brooklyn, NYJan. 23

Until I see well-crafted legislation that is initiated by her that will help improve the lives of many she's just another politician with sound bite platitudes. She doesn't even have a district office in the Bronx yet to the chagrin of many of the constituents.

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

bfree commented January 23

b

bfree

portlandJan. 23

AOC is a liberal darling who's stated (on 60 Minutes) that unemployment rates are low because everyone is working two jobs; I might add, that has nothing to do with how unemployment rates are figured and come on, "everyone?" And recently she's stated that the world will end in 12 years if we don't do something about climate change. Come on, this is silliness, ignorance and borderline stupidity. If she's the poster child for the Democrats, then she's the gift that will keep on giving to the GOP.

Evan Walsh commented January 24

E

Evan Walsh

Los AngelesJan. 24

Here's my thing- though I'm a deeply liberal person who shares a lot of political beliefs with Ocasio-Cortez, I'm am not the least bit interested in her.

Why? Because she's one representative of a district all the way across the country from where I live. I care about about my newly flipped district in Sherman Oaks. I care about my solidly Democratic district in Santa Rosa.

Just because one charismatic representative from Brooklyn has a good Twitter feed doesn't mean that I have to care or that she deserves a highly-placed role on an important committee. She's a freshman. Let her learn. And then, go ahead and tell me she deserves a seat.

Andrew M. commented January 23

A

Andrew M.

British ColumbiaJan. 23

I grew up during the Vietnam War, and over the years came to admire the American people who ultimately forced their government to withdraw from an immoral (and disastrous) military adventure. This is rare in human history. Rare in American history too, as the follies in Iraq drag on and on to remind us.

Perhaps the American people are becoming themselves again. I wouldn't call it drifting left at all.

Sean commented January 23

S

Sean

GreenwichJan. 23

Thomas Edsall's column is yet another conservative spin on Democrats from The New York Times.

Where are the voices of progressive Democrats, who form the overwhelming majority of New York City residents? Of New York state residents? Who form the core of the Democratic Party's support.

The Times insists that these conservative voices are the only ones deserving of publication here. Where in the world did the notion come from that The Times was a "liberal" publication?

michaeltide commented January 23

m

michaeltide

Bothell, WAJan. 23

@Chris Young, It seems you aonly approve of departments that teach what you consider "productive." If schools become an adjunct to the marketplace, then only the material, quantifiable results will be the metric by which the value of education is measured. This will leave us, as in some ways we are already becoming, a population that emulates robots, and has no use for critical thinking, ethics, or art.

The profit in education is in the quality of the students it turns out into the world, not on a corporate balance sheet.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23



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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

[www.remember-to-breathe.org](http://www.remember-to-breathe.org)

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

New England Jan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middle Jan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

Blackmamba commented January 23

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B

Blackmamba

11Jan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America's proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

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Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake

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American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propaganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

BrooklynJan. 23

@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

Allentown commented January 23

A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

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@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

Steve commented January 23

S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

Michael commented January 23



M

Michael

Rochester, NY Jan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no Ford plant nearby.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los Angeles Jan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYC Jan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, Illinois Jan. 23

@Michael I'm glad you said that because yes, tuition USED TO BE much, much cheaper. Guess why? No one is against "affordable" tuition, or student loans that get PAID BACK. We are against greedy colleges and universities and their professors making megabucks but claiming to be philanthropists and egalitarian. They would have you believe they are about sharing and altruism when in reality they are plain greedy. Think about your taxes and how much you have to EARN to pay these folks these salaries. Many of them produce exactly zero. Art teachers who have never SOLD a piece of art yet they make a six figure salary. I'm not against people who produce but even "Leonardo" had a benefactor who paid for it all.

Craig G commented January 23

C

Craig G

Long Island Jan. 23

@Michael Education is mostly (not entirely) run and operated by liberals. If their ideas ran up the cost of a college education to an unbearable level, what makes people think that allowing their ideas on a national level won't do the same? Lack of State Funding isn't why prices are so high. State Schools are a bargain compared to most Private Colleges.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, Illinois Jan. 23

@C Wolfe yes, but soaring tuition is a direct result of salaries and benefits i.e. greed, these folks receive. Moreover, many of them keep two sets of books. They don't tell you about their hidden revenues. Like broadcast channels that are allocated to "educational" uses that they then lease to private concerns. Land they own, patents they receive benefits from, etc., etc. Further, what, exactly, do they produce? I have no issue with departments that produce tangible, marketable, and even research oriented results that benefit us. However, I have a huge issue with their socialized, affirmative action, diversity, agenda to promote many "disciplines" that do little or nothing. I am totally uninterested in sponsoring, and do not sponsor, even though they ask me, these

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activities. They are not being paid to "change" the world, or promote themselves, they are being paid to teach - period.

TR NJ commented January 23

T

TR NJ

USAJan. 23

It's all good but important to expand the focus on the entirety of the Democrats in Congress - and the amazing age range and gender mix. The opportunities are vast - an intergenerational government of forward thinking, principled women and men. Please media pundits - avoid focus on only 1 or 2. There are brilliant ideas pouring forth - let the ideas from every corner flow! Remember that the intense media focus on Trump, liberal as well as conservative, contributed significantly to what happened in election 2016.

Upstate commented January 23

U

Upstate

NYSJan. 23

The left shift is the natural response of people that saw their well paying job move to Mexico and China, and now if lucky work at WalMart. So much for free trade, NAFTA, the WTO and all the liberal economists

David Gregory commented January 23

David Gregory

David Gregory

SunbeltJan. 23

If by liberal you mean the circular firing squad of the politics of aggrievement, no.

My politics fall in line with FDR's Second Bill of Rights. Here he describes them in 1944

<https://youtu.be/3EZ5bx9AyI4>

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"...true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security & independence.  
"Necessitous men are not free men." People who are hungry & out of a job are the stuff  
of which dictatorships are made...

We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of  
security & prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed.

Among these are:

The right to a useful and remunerative job...;

The right to earn enough to provide adequate food & clothing & recreation;

The right of every farmer to raise & sell his products at a return which will give him & his  
family a decent living;

The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom  
from unfair competition & domination by monopolies at home or abroad;

The right of every family to a decent home;

The right to adequate medical care & the opportunity to achieve & enjoy good health;

The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident  
& unemployment;

The right to a good education."

That is where Democrats used to be. Then came the Corporate Democrats, the DLC  
and the Clintons.

Wah commented January 23

W

Wah

CaliforniaJan. 23

This piece misses more than it hits. Where it misses particularly is in its insistence that the Class interest of working class Democrats pulls the Party right, rather than left, and that the insurgents are mostly young, white gentrifying liberals.

This is not altogether false, but misses that many of the gentrifiers are not middle class themselves, but lower middle class young people with huge college debt who could never dream of living in upper middle class enclaves like most of the opinion writers in the Time for example. So they move into the inner city, make it safe for professionals, and then yes, Brooklyn goes white. Harlem goes white. Berkeley loses its working class majority. Etc.

The big problem for the left of the Democratic Party is not that its mostly young, white and middle class; it is that the very term "liberal" is now widely understood by working class people as meaning "establishment." And they are against the "establishment". As it happens, so are the young insurgents.

This then is the task for the left of the Democrats; to unite the culturally conservative working class with the emerging multi-racial, multi-ethnic youth vote to take down both the reactionary Right and the Liberal establishment.

And the only reason such a sentiment seems crazy is that the New York Times, far from being a bastion of the resistance to Trump is actually a bulwark of that Liberal Establishment.

Stats are stats but the future is unwritten.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Matt Williams

Exactly. I'm a Democrat in a conservative area, and all my Democrat friends think this woman is nuts. Our Senator Jon Tester is wonderful. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez? Hard pass.

9 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@Matt Williams - You are ignoring the many statistics in the article that apply to the Democratic party as a whole.

For example:

"From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of Democrats who said the government should create "a way for immigrants already here illegally to become citizens if they meet certain requirements" grew from 29 to 51 percent, while the share who said "there should be better border security and stronger enforcement of immigration laws" fell from 21 to 5 percent."

There are many others.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Matt Williams

But they are extraordinary, relative to their bought and paid for colleagues. That came first and the media is reporting it.

Their authenticity is naive, but it shouldn't be, and that's the story. It's a glimmer of hope for democracy that may be extinguished - let's celebrate this light in the darkness, while it lasts.

James Mullaney commented January 23

J

James Mullaney

Woodside, NYJan. 23

@Matt Williams Without the undue media attention we wouldn't be saddled with this cartoon character masquerading as a president.

Driven commented January 23

D

Driven

OhioJan. 23

This is a shame as most of the country wants middle of the road.

Ralphie commented January 23

R

Ralphie

CTJan. 23

AOC is pretty interesting. She's charismatic, fearless....and I'm trying to think of something else. OH, she's personally attractive. If the government gig falls apart she can probably get TV work.

But as an intellectual light or a rational political leader -- she is clearly lacking. OF course that may not matter as the earth will come to an end in 12 years.

Which is even more ludicrous than saying the earth is only 6000 years old.

She is simply spouting far left talking points which are driven by emotion, not rational thought.

And she keeps making unforced errors in her public speaking engagements. She really doesn't appear to understand what she's talking about and can't respond to reasonable questions about her policy positions.

But then, that's not too unlike much of the left. So maybe she's a perfect fit for a fact free faction which is beginning to run the dem party.

1 Reply

bored critic commented January 24

b

bored critic

usaJan. 24

after her 1st term she'll either be doing traffic/weather or the lottery results.

Gloria Utopia commented January 23

G

Gloria Utopia

Chas. SCJan. 23

One commenter gave a really insightful look at socialism for corporations and the rich here, otherwise known to most of us as corporate welfare, including subsidies to oil companies, who seem rich enough, but nevertheless, extend their "impoverished" bank accounts for more of our dollars.

Successful corporations, will reward investors, CEO's, hedge fund managers, all those at the top, but the worker, not too much for that drone, who was part of the reason of the success of that corporation.



Socialism has been tainted by countries with autocratic rulers , uneducated masses, and oftentimes, as in Latin America, religious masses. But, Scandinavia, has shown us a socialism to envy. It's confident citizens know that much of what makes life livable has been achieved. Finland rates as one of the happiest countries in the world. Taxes are high, but one isn't bankrupted because of illness, one doesn't lose a home because of a catastrophic illness, education is encouraged, and one doesn't have to pay the debt off for 30 years or more. The infrastructure is a priority,

war is not. It just seems like it's a secure way to live. This is socialism I wish we could duplicate.

Does anyone consider that socialism also includes our police, libraries, fire stations, roads, and so much more?

Used for the good of society, it's a boon for all, rather than unregulated capitalism which enriches the few at the expense of most of us.

3 Replies

sm commented January 23

s

sm

new yorkJan. 23

@Gloria Utopia It works in Sweden because it's a small country .

JM commented January 23

J

JM

NJJan. 23

@sm and because, until recently, it had a very homogenous population. You can see the strains on Scandinavian "utopianism" as more immigrants/refugees enter those countries.

Bob Guthrie commented January 24

B

Bob Guthrie

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AustraliaJan. 24

@JM

Australia is an exceptionally diverse country. In central Sydney on a working day it's hard to spot a white face- often only one in fifteen. I have observed this personally. Yet it works here. What difference does the complexion of the user make? It looks like you are saying that only whites of European stock will not abuse the system.

There is one big white man in the USA right now who is shredding your systems with the help of his enablers.

Allentown commented January 23

A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Michael Pilla commented January 23

M

Michael Pilla

Millburn, NJJan. 23

Never has someone gotta so much for doing so little.

None of this means anything if it doesn't become law. As a life long Liberal Democrat (there, I said it) myself, I find it infuriating when Liberal/Progressive politicians get out-sized credit for their good intentions while those same good intentions threaten party unity. The Progressive idea of party unity seems to be limited to getting what they want or they'll walk away.

They just know better, so there's no need for compromise. Never mind that they have no way of enacting any of this legislation—and more often than not Progressives lose at the polls.

These "kids" need to wake up and realize that there are no moral victories in politics. The ONLY goal of any Democrat has to be unseating Trump and McConnell, everything else is a noise, and a dangerous distraction.

Jake Wagner commented January 23

J

Jake Wagner

Los Angeles Jan. 23

I support

universal health care, free college for students who meet enhanced entrance requirements and raising marginal tax rates to 70% on wealthy Americans.

Yet I do not support

an expansion of the EITC, ending immigration enforcement or putting workers on boards of directors.

So where do I stand?

All my life I've voted Democratic. But there has been a seismic shift in politics.

And after the shift I will most likely vote Republican or for a third party.

The issue that causes my change in affiliation is the Me Too movement.

I find it repugnant that feminists seem to argue that the media rather than the courts should determine guilt or innocence in sexual assault cases.

Bill Cosby had an agreement with Andrea Constand in their case. But feminists weren't happy with the outcome. So they resorted to extra-legal means to get Cosby convicted.

This included a media campaign in which the NY Times and the New Yorker wrote stories highlighting accusations of 60 women for which statutes of limitations had elapsed.

But statutes of limitations are there for a reason. This became clear in the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh which degenerated into a trial for rape. Nobody except maybe the accuser could remember in any detail events at the party in which the rape had presumably occurred. So the confirmation became one of character assassination in which Kavanaugh was convicted of drinking beer.

I will NEVER vote for any politician who supports the Me Too movement.

Alan commented January 23

Alan

Alan

Seattle, WAJan. 23

"... protection from the vicissitudes of market capitalism"? People want protection from monopoly capitalism. The left-right frame is a fallacy. If you put the actual policies on the table, the great majority want single payer, clean elections, action on climate change, etc. Pitting Left v. Right only redounds to tribalism. It ends up with a President who shuts down the business of which he himself is the CEO. That's not great.

Tom W commented January 23

T

Tom W

WAJan. 23

I guess you skipped the part about gentrified districts voting progressive in 2018.

sleepdoc commented January 23

s

sleepdoc

Wildwood, MOJan. 23

Just as less educated white voters vote Republican against their own interests, the better educated and wealthier progressive Dem voters in the burbs and gentrifying parts of cities are at risk of doing the same but for different reasons. Hopefully, being better educated, they will realize in time that they will be voting against their own economic interests. This will come in several forms including paying more in FICA taxes when the income cap is eliminated, not getting their health insurance federally subsidized because they make too much money and paying more in state and local taxes to finance better public schools and local services. As a lifelong 70 year old white male Independent, who has never voted for a Republican and am decidedly liberal, in my view the young-uns who are pulling the Dem party to the left need to realize that the majority of our population lean left or right from the center and may not buy in to their 'socialist' agenda. In sum, watch what you wish for -- you may get it.

Bill commented January 23

B

Bill

Des MoinesJan. 23

The electorate represented by Ms Ocasio Cortez (the 16% who voted) are quite out of step with the rest of the country. It may be news to many but that is why Mr. Trump beat a candidate who should have won by 30 points.

2 Replies

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@Bill

It is still yet to be determined how this administration won because all of the facts are not in. They could have garnered help and conspired with foreign powers. (Mueller investigation and others)

What is out of step is thinking that the rich and corporations are more deserving of tax breaks than the poor or middle class.

The United States is a decisively Progressive nation bordering on Socialism. Poll any Progressive idea or policy and they are wildly popular. (even among republicans) For too long though, the radical right has polarized, used wedge issues and divided any group that may implement said policies for all. (and not just for all of one kind - like white christian males)

There is 100,000,000 that sits out any given election. Why is that ? Are they that uninterested and maligned that they think that everyone is the same?

That is changing friend, starting with this Congresswoman and ultimately leading to massive Progressive majorities in the near future.

Watch.

Peter commented January 23

P

Peter

ChicagoJan. 23

@FunkyIrishman

“The United States is a decisively Progressive nation bordering on Socialism.”

What on Earth?! Funky Guinness perhaps?!

“Poll any Progressive idea or policy and they are wildly popular. (even among republicans)”

Polls are vastly overrated and discredited and useful only to social science eggheads

“For too long though, the radical right has polarized, used wedge issues and divided any group that may implement said policies for all. (and not just for all of one kind - like white christian males)”

As if there aren't always clear losers in any political fight

kevo commented January 23

kevo

kevo

swedenJan. 23

“Democrats Aren't Moving Left. They're Returning to Their Roots.”

This I think is a more accurate reflection of our political reality. The "red shift", pun intended, must be framed within the perspective that the entire political discourse has been hijacked by the right with the likes of Breitbart, Infowars and Drudge spewing raw chunks of neo-Nazi red meat, which Faux and Fiends swallow whole and regurgitate as prime time pabulum suitable for the masses. This has "anchored"

the civic discussion so far to the right that any proposal on the liberal side is seen as Democrats moving far left. It is time for the Democrats to stop being afraid of standing up for a truly liberal program. There is nothing radical about universal healthcare or minimum wages that allow people to earn a living with a single job. It works in Canada it works in Sweden and it works in most western countries. Come Democrats, let us join the civilized.

ann commented January 23

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a

ann

SeattleJan. 23

"They include the determination to oppose all things Trump, ..."

A great many people oppose all things Trump, almost as a knee-jerk reaction. But, if the media were to focus on any one of the subject areas, presenting all sides of the issue, then voters might find themselves actually agreeing with some of Trump's positions.

Voters might arrive at Trump's position(s) for different reasons than he has, but, none-the-less, see that his position(s) do make sense for the country.

For example, the media does not investigate how much it is costing us annually to support undocumented migrants after subtracting the little they pay in taxes, how poorly educated they are and how much longer it is taking them to learn English in comparison to immigrants and refugees from just a generation ago, how the unskilled and low-skilled manufacturing jobs, which we still had in plenty back then, which enabled immigrants to move into the middle class are now harder to find and needed by our own citizens, how the undocumented are crowding our classrooms, hospitals, mass transit systems, and having too many children for our country's ecology.

Let's take Trump out of the equation, and look at each issue on its own merits.

SecondChance commented January 23

S

SecondChance

IowaJan. 23

Seeing your photo of Cortez and Presleys stonefaced stares was mildly humorous. Their appeal is akin to electing hysterical teenagers from the Salem trials. Their radical and anti-Semitic stances and comments are alienating moderates and older Democrats.

jaco commented January 23

j

jaco

NevadaJan. 23

How is it that "educated" people can support such bad ideas.

"Medicare for All, free college, a universal jobs guarantee, a \$15 minimum wage, an expansion of the EITC to the entire bottom half, workers on boards of directors, ending ICE, raising marginal tax rates to 70 percent are all big, bold leftist ideas and appear to be gaining currency."

These aren't bold ideas they are stupid ideas that would bankrupt the country. Marxism simply doesn't work, do these "educated" folk not learn from the lessons that Venezuela is teaching? Perhaps they are not as "educated" as our "progressives" believe?

Jodi commented January 23

J

Jodi

FloridaJan. 23

I do not believe, as the author states, "They include the determination to oppose all things Trump". They rightfully oppose his bigotry, hatred, anti-immigration, and disrespect for women and minorities. A reminder, this is not radical, this is rational. This is not extreme, this is normal.

Larry Roth commented January 24

L

Larry Roth

Ravena, NYJan. 24

If it looks like the Democrats are moving strongly to the left, it's because they have stopped chasing the GOP over the cliff in a vain effort to meet them in some mythical

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middle. That's why the gap is widening; Republicans have not slowed in their headlong rush to disaster.

In truth it is the Republican Party and its messaging machine that has been doing its best to drag America to the extreme right by controlling the narrative and broadcasting talking points picked up and amplified by the Mainstream Media.

The Mainstream Media has its own issues. Increasingly consolidated under corporate ownership into fewer and fewer hands, it has developed a reflex aversion to anything that looks too 'left' and a suspicion of anything that looks progressive.

The desperate battle for eyeballs in a fragmenting market has also taken a toll; deep journalism or reporting that risks alienating any part of the shrinking audience for traditional news is anathema to the bean counters who have financialized everything. Deliberate intimidation by the right has also taken a toll.

Republicans have no answers; Democrats do - and that's the gist of it. The real challenge is to prevail against a party that has embraced disinformation, the politics of resentment and destruction - and the Mainstream Media that has failed to call them out on it.

Rev. E. M. Camarena, PhD commented January 23

Rev. E. M. Camarena, PhD

Rev. E. M. Camarena, PhD

Hell's Kitchen Jan. 23

History shows that democrats will talk, talk, talk to the left in the run-up to presidential primaries. Then, in the general, they gee to the right.

FDR was an exception because America had millions of people marching in the streets for change - and not with a permit on one Saturday a year wearing inane knitted hats. They meant business. Look into the Bonus Marchers:

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

After FDR, Truman and other democrats smearing people like Henry Wallace, America's last true progressive, with the "communist from Russia" attack as Truman ignited the malign cold war that democrats have recently resurrected.

Would that democrats abandoned their current search for personalities and concentrated on workable policy in their platform.

The democrat party, what's left of it after demexit, is rapidly becoming a messianic religion, with a new "flavor of the month" just around the corner to save us all, hallelujah.

"Democrats fall in love. Republicans fall in line," still applies.

<https://emcphd.wordpress.com>

1 Reply

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

@Rev. E. M. Camarena, PhD, your comment loses meaning when you say FDR was "the last progressive." He may have been the greatest progressive, but LBJ and other elected dems like Mike Mansfield brought us the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, Medicare, Medicaid. If that is not a "progressive" series of accomplishments, I do not know what is.

Jose Pieste commented January 23

J

Jose Pieste

NJJan. 23

If the Democratic Party goes socialist, I will have no choice but to vote for Trump. Sure he is a braggart with a big mouth. But I would rather live in free society with a free market economy under a braggart, than in a society controlled by an ever-expanding federal government with an ever-expanding reach into our lives (and livelihoods).

Shirley0401 commented January 23

S

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Shirley0401

The SouthJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

You really ought to run for office, Bruce.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

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Earl W. commented January 23

E

Earl W.

New Bern, NCJan. 23

"The willingness of voters to support Democrats who are pushing initiatives like these will depend in large part, however, on the ability of candidates to assure the general electorate that their agenda is beneficial to all and not just to favored liberal constituencies."

And this is key, so why is it in the last paragraph of a very long essay? I see many new faces making lots of noise about social justice, which is usually code for taking care of people who are not you (but at your expense). If they want to re-capture white males and white females without a college education (you know, the key demographic slice of voters that cost Hillary the election), Democrats are going to have to explain what's in it for those forgotten voters. It's been forty years since they've seen their real family incomes go up and they're getting impatient for progress that always seems to go to other people. Just ask the Yellow Jackets in France if you don't believe me.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@José Franco - More data

All other industrialized countries have some form of universal government run health care, mostly single payor. They get better care as measured by all 16 of the bottom line public health statistics, and they do it at 40% of the cost per person. If our system were as efficient, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each year.

[www.pnhp.org](http://www.pnhp.org) & [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org) & especially [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/data/oecd-health-statistics\\_health-data-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/data/oecd-health-statistics_health-data-en)

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Here are the per capita figures for health care costs in 2016 in PPP dollars:

US - 9507.2

Austria - 5227.3

Belgium - 4839.8

France - 4500.4

Germany - 5550.6

Luxembourg - 7462.8

The Netherlands - 5385.4

Switzerland - 7919.0

Sweden - 5487.5

Denmark - 5199.3

UK - 4192.5

Canada - 4643.7

OECD Average - 4003

Let's compare some bottom line statistics between the US and the UK which has real socialized medicine.

Life expectancy at birth: UK - 81.1 US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (Deaths per 1,000): UK - 3.8 US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): UK - 9 US - 14

As Einstein said,

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"The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits."

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system we as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both

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were followed horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Alex Cody commented January 23

A

Alex Cody

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Tampa Bay Jan. 23

About time, too. For the past twenty years or so, the entire political spectrum has been moved to the right.

The leftward shift will re-balance it.

Marcus Brant commented January 23

M

Marcus Brant

Canada Jan. 23

Socialism in America is something akin to satanism, and it's a tragedy. The working class have abused and betrayed themselves at least since the germination of the mythical American Dream. Union membership, traditionally a bulwark of leftist social thought, has been seriously eroded by those working stiffs within it unable to spot the deleterious irony of voting conservatively on national and state platforms while baying for employer concessions at the local level. Governments and corporations, thus emboldened, have worked in concert to heavily propagandise against left wing influences (like trade unions) by using the spectre of Soviet and Chinese communism as anathema to the advantages capitalism offers, which is not entirely untrue. However, when capitalism becomes suborned, as did communism, by the vice of greed, not everyone can benefit from it.

Cortes and her colleagues are tasked with exorcising the demons of past right wing perceptions of left wing thought. They are up against a dubious resistance coming from within the ranks of those who should be democrat who voted for whatever Trump is instead. I wish her luck, but I advise her to tread carefully and wisely and to use the examples of honey over vinegar to bring back the shifted base. People need her and her ilk, but youthful enthusiasm and hard ideology might yet snatch a defeat from the jaws of victory.

George G. commented January 23

G

George G.

Santa Fe NM Jan. 23

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This is so scary. I am terrified. AOC is 1) completely economically illiterate and 2) in a post-modern haze where there is not objective reality. Her policies - were they to be implemented - would substantially lower the living standard of all Americans AT BEST. At worst, we would end up in like Cuba or Venezuela.

When critics bring this up - the response from her (and even supposedly objective media like CNN and the NYT) is to accuse them of being racist or sexist, and not engage in any debate about this. (For example, when conservative commentator Ben Shapiro challenged her to a debate she called his challenge a "cat call").

Please help.

Bun Mam commented January 23

Bun Mam

Bun Mam

OAKLANDJan. 23

What is so radical about a country taking care of ALL its people as oppose to taking care of just businesses and the wealthy? Free education is a bit lofty, but how about debt-free education? What is so radical about affordable healthcare that doesn't bankrupt people?

1 Reply

PLH Crawford commented January 24

P

PLH Crawford

Golden Valley. MinnesotaJan. 24

@Bun Mam

I absolutely agree but the question is how are we going to pay for it? There has to be a fine, nuanced way to do it such as removal of pork from the federal government, taxes that do not slow down our economy by unfairly burdening our innovative entrepreneurs,

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making global corporations pay their real share of taxes, taxing Wall Street electronic stock trading as an example.

If people go in like a Bull in a China shop, it's not going to make the people who pay most of the taxes, which happens to be the middle class happy. There is also the question of why they should always be the ones most burdened? People forget that revolutions are started by the middle class.

sharon commented January 23

s

sharon

worcester county, maJan. 23

@Independent

Why should we have insurance companies at all? Have a medical fund that everyone pays into that pays for your health care costs as needed. I'm 60 years old. I get a yearly physical, am on no medication, don't have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or any other health issues. My husband has slightly elevated blood pressure and we pay for the meds ourselves since they're less than our co-pay would be. In a year he will qualify for Medicare. Between him and myself we use about \$300 worth of healthcare a year. Yet my husband's payment for his employer provided insurance is \$140 a week. And that's just his portion. His employer pays even more than this! We have a \$7000 deductible and a \$500 out of pocket before our insurance pays for anything not mandated by the ACA. That's \$14780.00 a year in out of pocket expense before our "insurance" kicks in. What a bargain!

9 Replies

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MAJan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtpJan. 23

@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UTJan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subject indicates the opposite is true.

Alex commented January 23

A

Alex

Naples FLJan. 23

I was raised a democrat and voted that way until I was in my my 50s. The reason I left the party is not that I don't want people to have entitlements that improve their lives. It is not because I hate immigrants or those who are different. It is because, and almost solely because, NOTHING was being done about ILLEGAL immigration. We can't have an entitlement society when people are self selecting for immigration at whatever level and however they can manage to get in and place roots. I was surprised and put off by liberals claiming my desire for national border integrity to be nefarious and racist. I am bitter now. I am dug in now. I am sorry, but that is how I feel. This is the last of my subscription to the Times as I am tired of being hated because I believe in strong borders. Many of you don't care and say good riddance. But I will vote in 2020, and there are many like me.

Thomas commented January 23

Thomas

Thomas

Shapiro Jan. 23

The social justice argument for expanding the social safety net and controlling winner take all capitalism is that only the federal government has the power to regulate modern capitalism, the financial markets, and successfully reduce income inequality through income redistribution.

The desirability of these “back to the future” New Deal and Great Society programs may be self evident to Liberals. However, they must not repeat the mistakes of failing to raise taxes to fund such programs with current tax dollars. Even if the slope of progressive taxation is increased to 1960s levels, the cost is immense and the backlash reaction of affluent middle class America and The plutocrats in the Republican party will be fierce.

The devil will be in the political details. How the Democratic party creates its new national Democratic party electoral coalition will determine their electability. Only if elected, can they cease to be a voice howling in the wilderness.

If they focus on identity politics of the “oppressed” based on race, ethnicity, citizenship status they will fail. To prevail they must win Senate and the Presidential elections. Only by attracting rural and suburban white, even evangelical Christian counties in red-states can they prevail in the electoral college. If the lose they will remain the party of

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minorities doomed to being forever “in the minority”. In a word they must learn to find and count votes well.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NYJan. 23

My only concern right now is making sure that Trump never sees a second term and that as many of his Republican henchmen as possible are put put to pasture in 2020.

I fear that the leftward movement of the Democratic Party will make that goal difficult to achieve.

There are more registered Democrats than there are Republicans. But the majority of voters consider themselves Independents, and they are crucial for a Democratic win.

Moving to far to the left runs the risk of alienating the middle.

I would like to see a safe centrist liberal candidate who will be more likely to win in 2020. Once the Democrats regain full control of all three branches of government, then by all means lets move to the left.

But we have to win first.

2 Replies

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Yes, we need people who believe in liberal democracy and a modern state that serves everybody equally. The Republican Party has been taken over by people who don't respect most of the American people and who want a republic under the supervision of themselves instead government by consent of the governed.

Livonian commented January 23

Livonian

Livonian

Los AngelesJan. 23

@Larry

"Once the Democrats regain full control of all three branches of government, then by all means lets move to the left.

But we have to win first."

You've got it exactly right. Politics is not performance art. It is not self-expression. It is not about imagining a comprehensive world outcome. It about winning elections in order to be able to legislate, in incremental degrees, towards that preferred outcome.

Win first. Don't alienate those you need to win.

Everything else comes after that.

Kathy commented January 23

K

Kathy

OxfordJan. 23

I find it enthralling and amazing that Republicans and probably some Democrats have made this intelligent, outspoken, newly election Representative such a lightning rod. If anything speaks to shaking up the establishment, she is the one. Donald Trump was supposed to do that but he's such a colossal failure as a leader, deal maker and human being. Her ideas may or may not find traction, she may or may not be at the beginning of a long and storied trajectory but clearly, she has touched a nerve.

I absolutely love it. Best of all, she's up to the challenge. And I'm pretty sure there's a whole generation behind her that sees what a mess is being made of our country and are ready to step into the fray. Of course not all her ideas will be instant hits but she gives us all hope for the future.



To AOC I say, "Wow!"

K Yates commented January 23

K

K Yates

The Nation's File CabinetJan. 23

The things that Ocasio-Cortez talks about are nothing new. It's just odd to hear someone talk about doing ALL of them, and saying it fearlessly.

I'd vote for all of those things in a New York minute, and frankly would get a thrill out of slapping the old guard in the face. I'm almost 60, by the way.

bh commented January 23

b

bh

Austin, TXJan. 23

It's amazing that Trump enjoys >90% support from Republicans, and the D's are sitting here worrying about becoming "too liberal", which translates to "going back to the foundations of the Democratic party that began under FDR."

Unbelievable.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

This a comment from C Wolfe (in reply to Socrates). I thought it was so wonderful it deserved to be repeated.

please send this to everyone you know, and in particular, anyone who claims the US is a "center right" country:

From C Wolfe:

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

richard cheverton commented January 23

r

richard cheverton

Portland, ORJan. 23

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez is a creature of the New York-centric media, and, if anything, she is a symptom of the over-concentrated, navel-gazing, isolated and, frankly, arrogant media that has come to dominate political and social discourse. Let's take a pledge to refrain from lionizing Ms. Ocasio-Cortez until she actually, say, co-sponsors a bill that actually passes--or, for that matter opens a district office.

Sam I Am commented January 23

S

Sam I Am

Windsor, CTJan. 23

Correlation does not equal causation.

Pressley and AOC won because they charismatically engaged their potential electorate. Those who saw and heard them, turned out to vote. Older voters just went to the polls and voted for the name they already knew.

Whether the public policy positions of Pressley and AOC are liberal or moderate is entirely besides the point. The point is simply this: CHARISMA. They have it; Crowley and Capuano didn't. Pressley and AOC presented themselves as vessels for the aspirations of Democrat-sympathizing potential voters. The specific policy proposals were merely the framework around which the edifice of their personalities was constructed.

If Democrats want to win, they'll allow primaries to determine which candidate has the charisma to motivate new Democrat voters to the polls. After Democrats win, they can engage in an earnest public policy debate (which the general public will largely ignore). Whatever they decide, it will be better than what the government-hating GOP has to offer.

Aaron commented January 23

Aaron

Aaron

Orange County, CAJan. 23

People forget the University of California system was free until 1956... In the 1970's it was only a few hundred dollars - Then the system exploded in the late 1980's. Granted the population of California was much less than it is now - but the concept of "free education" certainly isn't new..

1 Reply

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Aaron

The majority of Californians during the 1950s and 1960s paid taxes. That's how you get to have a game of musical chairs where everyone is seated when the music stops.

Albert Petersen commented January 23

A

Albert Petersen

Boulder, CoJan. 23

@Cass You are forgetting that the best economy we had was post WW2 when the top rate was 90% and corporate CEO's made reasonable incomes not the obscene pay of today.

Additionally, the negative economic impact of global warming will make us regret not addressing it sooner and leave the bottom 50% far worse off then they are now. So, we need to consider both a higher marginal rate and the green new deal very seriously before it is too late.

Bill commented January 23

B

Bill

from HonorJan. 23

@shstl

The answer is to help people to understand that they should not be captive to fear. That is the strategy of those in power who manipulate people's emotions so that they can easily override their ability to think rationally. When people are able to use their intellects to make decisions true solutions are possible.

5 Replies

Ron Cohen commented January 23

Ron Cohen

Ron Cohen

Waltham, MAJan. 23

@shstl

Right on!

Deb commented January 23

D

Deb

Jan. 23

@shstl

I agree and as a moderate Democrat, I already feel like an outsider, so imagine what independents are thinking.

AOC stated that she wants to primary Hakeem Jeffries, who is a moderate. With statements like these, made before spending a day in congress, who needs the GOP to tear apart the Democratic party?

Sanders didn't even win the primary and his supporters claim the primary was stolen. We lost the house and senate all by ourselves.

I already have AOC fatigue and my rejoice for the blue wave is still there but fading.

UTBG commented January 23

UTBG

UTBG

Denver, COJan. 23

Best comment in some time. I work and live too much in the 'big flat'. I am a very hard core Chicago Democratic Liberal from birth, but the distressed towns and small cities are facing extinction.

then what?

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Todd commented January 23

T

Todd

Key West,flJan. 23

Time will tell how much of the perceived leftward shift of the democratic party is simply rejection and strong reflexive opposition to anything Trump. Is the Democratic party really going to settle in as a de facto open borders party? Or when they next have to govern will they have to formulate a sane balanced immigration policy? And assuming the later where does that leave the likes of the AOC's of the party. Does she stop seeking the spotlight long enough to build connections in Congress and try to actual accomplish things or does she become a left mirror of Sarah Palin? It could go either way,

Frank Shifreen commented January 24

F

Frank Shifreen

New YorkJan. 24

Edall's final point that thsesre are Democrats returning to Democratic roots and not a wave of radicalism. I along with a lot of other older voters was infected with a kind of gradualism.

I voted for Hilary, much now to my dismay. AOC among others is stating what she, and what many of us want. The old Democratic party was a mirror image of Republicans, with taking the same money, voting for the same wars, and within it all a kind of shame,liberal as a kind of curse, where

we were afraid to make our own agenda, make our own plan for America. taking the burden, in health care, college education, immigration, is an investment in the future

Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJJan. 23

@don salmon

Richard Luetzgen expired Dec. 1 2018 at age 63.

Here is his NYT obituary.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

She needs to listen and observe and not make judgments until she knows a lot more than she does. Our government is not the simple situation that her inexperienced mind supposes right now. Unfortunately, she's become a magnet for the media and that pressures her to disregard the hard work becoming a competent elected representative requires.

3 Replies

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Casual Observer

I think you make teh same mistake the republicans are making. She is not naive or ignorant.

<https://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-aoc-taxes-20190107-story.html>

Casual Observer commented January 23

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C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Of course she is ignorant and naive. Nobody learns anything by being the center of attention. She's on the same trajectory as was Trump when he became a celebrity, so full of his own importance and eager to spout off about every popular issue what he never really understood much of anything and that he ended up a silly and ill-informed old man. She needs to be listening and learning, and expressing her opinions infrequently.

magicisnotreal commented January 24

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 24

@Casual Observer

You did not read and you are not a very keen observer. There is no similarity twixt her and El Trumpo. You are pointing at the press who couldn't manage to sully her and are now trying to trivialize her by over exposure.

Mr. Slater commented January 23

M

Mr. Slater

Brooklyn, NYJan. 23

@A. Stanton

Well, she's not the president (thankfully) and you can't predict hindsight only speculate.

Richie by commented January 23

R

Richie by

New JerseyJan. 23



@Michael You are right.

Funding someone's education is one of the best investments you can make. I lived in NYC during the 70s, at the time when City University was free for anyone. I was able to get my education for free, and since then I have worked in higher paying jobs and paid taxes to NYC that have exceeded to cost of my tuition at least 100 fold.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

www.remember-to-breathe.org

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

New EnglandJan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middleJan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

Blackmamba commented January 23

B

Blackmamba

IIJan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

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America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America's proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propaganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

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Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

Brooklyn Jan. 23

@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

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NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

Allentown commented January 23

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A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but

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unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

Steve commented January 23

S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Rochester, NYJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no ford plant nearby.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYCJan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@Michael I'm glad you said that because yes, tuition USED TO BE much, much cheaper. Guess why? No one is against "affordable" tuition, or student loans that get PAID BACK. We are against greedy colleges and universities and their professors making megabucks but claiming to be philanthropists and egalitarian. They would have you believe they are about sharing and altruism when in reality they are plain greedy. Think about your taxes and how much you have to EARN to pay these folks these salaries. Many of them produce exactly zero. Art teachers who have never SOLD a piece of art yet they make a six figure salary. I'm not against people who produce but even "Leonardo" had a benefactor who paid for it all.

Craig G commented January 23

C

Craig G

Long IslandJan. 23

@Michael Education is mostly (not entirely) run and operated by liberals. If their ideas ran up the cost of a college education to an unbearable level, what makes people think that allowing their ideas on a national level won't do the same? Lack of State Funding isn't why prices are so high. State Schools are a bargain compared to most Private Colleges.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@C Wolfe yes, but soaring tuition is a direct result of salaries and benefits i.e. greed, these folks receive. Moreover, many of them keep two sets of books. They don't tell you about their hidden revenues. Like broadcast channels that are allocated to "educational" uses that they then lease to private concerns. Land they own, patents they receive benefits from, etc., etc. Further, what, exactly, do they produce? I have no issue with departments that produce tangible, marketable, and even research oriented results that benefit us. However, I have a huge issue with their socialized, affirmative action, diversity, agenda to promote many "disciplines" that do little or nothing. I am totally uninterested in sponsoring, and do not sponsor, even though they ask me, these activities. They are not being paid to "change" the world, or promote themselves, they are being paid to teach - period.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtpJan. 23

@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever

supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

petey tonei commented January 23

petey tonei

petey tonei

Jan. 23

NYT columnists need to lower the volume a notch. Please don't turn Alexandria O-C into a Sarah Palin of sorts. Republicans did that before, they amplified everything Sarah did, said, gestured and we all know how that turned out. So please, moderate yourselves. Show everyone equal coverage, impartial and nonjudgmental. But then NYT is unable to do that, hmmm..

Lynne Hollander commented January 23

L

Lynne Hollander

CaliforniaJan. 23

The Democratic party has only moved left from it's rightward swing under Bill Clinton.

We are returning to our roots in progressive economic and social policy. Hurrah

!

Joshua Schwartz commented January 23

J

Joshua Schwartz

Ramat-Gan, IsraelJan. 23

@Marc See the link above and read the NYT article. All (!! ) the other freshman representatives from NYC opened their offices. 4 of them did. Only she did not. See it in the NYT

6 Replies

Marc commented January 23

M

Marc

VermontJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz M. Ocasio-Cortez explained on The Late Show the other night that the reason she has not opened her district office is due to the Government Shutdown. The people charged with setting up the office are on furlough, the money for the office is being held up and she staff or furnish the office.

H commented January 23

H

H

NYCJan. 23

@Marc

Except that's outright false. Offices are open. All the other new Congress members from New York are setup and taking care of people.

She doesn't care about constituent service. She revels in the media attention, but isn't getting anything done even in the background.

NY has three Congress members (Lowey, Serrano, Meng) whose under-appreciated work on the appropriations committee actually helps ensure our region's needs and liberal priorities are reflected in federal spending.

Meanwhile Ocasio Cortez is working on unseating Democrats incumbents she deems insufficiently leftist e.g. Cuellar, Jeffries.

Who needs Republicans when you have Socialists trying to destroy the Democratic Party.

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rtj commented January 23

r

rtj

MassachusettsJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz

"A O-C is more interested in "national" issues and exposure than those of her district. What A O-C may have forgotten is that it is her district and constituents that have to re-elect her in less than 2 years (or not)..."

Just want to compare and contrast that with Ayanna Pressley, who has a laser focus on her district.

"My process begins with the residents of the MA-7 congressional district. They are my greatest counsel and my stewards in how I vote, and in what legislation that I introduce. It's by actively listening to them that I better understand not only the nuance and the complexity of the problem, but usually where I find the solutions. "

As long as she continues to walk that talk, it should assuage any doubts i may have about her.

Ed Smith commented January 23

E

Ed Smith

ConnecticutJan. 23

So tired of this 'need to win elections' argument. We need to let go of being a perpetual war nation with a military industrial complex running foreign policy. (Republican Eisenhower 60 years ago or today's far left liberal?) We need to protect vast more

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amounts of our natural resources for future generations and have government oversight of our food and drugs. (Republican Teddy Roosevelt 115 years ago or today's far left liberal?) We need government to regulate chemicals and pollution and enforce environmental law to protect the health of our citizens. (Republican Nixon's EPA or today's far left liberal?) We need to redistribute the wealth that has been removed from the pockets of average citizens and hoarded by a few. (Republican Eisenhower, Teddy Roosevelt or today's far left liberal?) We need to abandon 'States Rights' and work to extinguish racism. (Republican Lincoln or today's far left liberal?) Yes - I am a far left liberal with deep Republican roots. Does anyone else get that?

Vincent Amato commented January 23

Vincent Amato

Vincent Amato

Jackson Heights, NYJan. 23

Basically more fretting over the possibility of a real left emerging from within the rusted framework of the Democratic Party. All those statistics, all that demographic analysis. Save your eyesight. There are no hidden constituencies. Something resembling a radical left has been with us since the origins of the republic, and it emerges whenever it is necessary. It is the saving grace of the nation.

MCH commented January 23

M

MCH

FLJan. 23

If her base is the 18-25 year olds, wait until they mature, get well paying jobs and see how quickly they'll reject her socialism. Unfortunately, given the quality of education these past years, this may be a dream for the rest of us.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Keith

It (the Democratic Party) is a party in dire straits, as you say, when "we" are told to stay in line, hold our noses, and vote for someone who gives talks to Wall Street executives, takes the big checks, and won't tell us what was said. Or when we get a president who was a good orator but who stuffed his cabinet with people from Goldman Sachs and bailed out Wall Street during the meltdown, forgetting about Main Street. In addition, both supported our vast Military Industrial Complex over domestic needs such as universal healthcare. And nothing has changed, at least so far. It's worth looking at FDR's cabinet picks to see the array of individuals he chose back in the day of the New Deal and worth reviewing the alphabet soup of agencies he created to provide honest work.

12 Replies

Bill W commented January 23

B

Bill W

Vancouver, WA Jan. 23

@chele Me too! I am 72 y/o, retired, college educated at a rather tough school in which to gain entrance. Lived below my means for over 40 years. Parents are both WW2 Marine Corps officers (not career), who voted Republican and were active in local elections. They would be shocked and disgusted at what that "party" represents now.

Quiet Waiting commented January 23

Q

Quiet Waiting

Texas Jan. 23

@chele

That which you are pleased to call the DLC nonsense originated not with the Clintons, but with one of the worst presidential defeats the Democratic party ever suffered: the 1972 campaign of George McGovern. That debacle resulted in a second Nixon administration and I hope that the current trends within the Democratic party do not result in a second Trump administration.

Derek Flint commented January 23



D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, California Jan. 23

@chele

Me, too!

Keith Dow commented January 23

Keith Dow

Keith Dow

Folsom Jan. 23

The University of California was free until a failed actor became governor. Germany has free higher education and free health care. Germany is not a liberal bastion. These are just common sense ideas.

Andrew commented January 23

A

Andrew

New Haven CT Jan. 23

And so, like beleaguered mainstream republicans, I, a lifetime Democrat, am wondering if the democratic party's tent will be broad enough for me come next election. My money will follow the mind and heart, leaning independent these days.

Alice's Restaurant commented January 23

A

Alice's Restaurant

PB San Diego Jan. 23

A wing of the DNC Politburo has been looking for a Cultural Marxist saint since Obama left office--seems they've found one in Ocasio-Cortez.

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But making strident social-fiscal demands will only rally the troops--producing results is the real test and that requires more than 20th century Grand Collective dogma.

1 Reply

Cecilia commented January 23

C

Cecilia

TexasJan. 23

@Alice's Restaurant. Big words suggesting Russian invective. Meaningless at best!

unreceivedogma commented January 23

unreceivedogma

unreceivedogma

New YorkJan. 23

I distinguish between progressives, liberals, and neo-liberals. My politics are to the left of progressives.

Living in NYC, I have been a registered Democrat - as opposed to registered as independent - for tactical reasons, as in NYC the real vote occurs during the primaries. I have been voting since 1972, and have missed a vote only twice during that period. Of those hundreds of votes, I can't say that there were many candidates that were left enough for me: it's usually the lesser of evils. But during the 70s, there were people I could pull a lever for instead of having to write in. When the Clintons came to power, the party shifted rightward to the extent that even my father, a working-class Catholic Johnny-lunch-bucket Daily News reading sort of guy, even felt hard-pressed to remain a member of.

I have often said since Nov of 2016 that I am not unhappy that Hilary lost. It was my hope then as it is now that Trump's election would trigger an awakening. That awakening is happening, and it fills me with genuine joy that sometimes feels overwhelming. This would not be happening if Hilary won. We would have muddled through 8 more years of neoliberalism, maybe ended up with someone worse than

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Trump in 2024 and would have lost 8 years. The Overton Window is finally opening to ideas that represent the real needs of the majority.

God bless the Bernie Sanders, the OACs, and all the others that are finally making it safe once again to full-throatedly voice progressive ideas.

2 Replies

Cecilia commented January 23

C

Cecilia

TexasJan. 23

@unreceivedogma. So, what we're experiencing in our enlightenment is better than what Hillary would have done? trump has alienated every ally, butchered environmental processes, threatens to leave NATO, claims North Korea has denuclearized, cut protections for trans soldiers, ripped up the DACA agreement and lied more than Pinocchio every dreamed of! He's made a laughingstock of the US to the entire world. He can't leave office quick enough. And if some junior congressperson wants to hammer on these inequities, more power to them. The dems won November because we are sick of the depraved crime family that now occupies our beloved white house. The end of this nonsense cannot come soon enough!

unreceivedogma commented January 23

unreceivedogma

unreceivedogma

New YorkJan. 23

@Cecilia.

Cecilia, the short answer to your question is yes.

The modestly longer answer is that thanks to this crisis, the Democratic Party might finally be reclaimed by people who are able to bring it back to being the party for the rest of us.

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Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Erland Nettum commented January 23

E

Erland Nettum

Oslo, NorwayJan. 23

In Norway we are recruiting a lot of professors and associate professors from US academic institutions. One of the selling point is that in Norway sending their kids through university will not break the back of the family financially. It is a huge incentive as fewer and fewer of the middle class in the US are able to do so. The demographic on campuses of US universities have changed over the last 20 years. Now a lot of them are surviving on students from China and the Middle East that can actually afford the tuition. Consider what this will do to your ability to compete in the future.

5 Replies

Retired prof commented January 23

R

Retired prof

NYSJan. 23

@Erland Nettum

If you are a prof at a US university, your kids can go at reduced tuition to your University.

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Retired prof

And offspring of anyone signing up with the military have always gotten freebies.

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Erland Nettum

Norway = homogenous, educated population of 5 million.

United States = a not homogenous or educated since 1840 population of 330 million.

Norway's continued economic and social salubrity is not guaranteed, due to a massive influx of foreigners. It's entirely within reason to expect Norway and all Scandinavian nations to institute well-defined quotas to regulate growth by ethnicity and religion.

FYI: Norway's entire population is less than metro Houston, Atlanta or DC.

Erland Nettum commented January 23

E

Erland Nettum

Oslo, NorwayJan. 23

@Retired prof

That may be so, they are still coming in droves.

Erland Nettum commented January 23

E

Erland Nettum

Oslo, NorwayJan. 23

@Maggie

Germany population almost 82 million have no tuition neither for domestic or foreign students, same as in Norway. That this is only possible in small countries is a lie Republicans tell themselves to keep up their backwards policies.

What you state about the future of Scandinavia, which by the way constitutes only Sweden and Norway geographically, but includes Denmark historically and leaves both

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Iceland and Finland out of the picture, is not entirely within reason as you state, as all the countries involved keep outpacing the rest of the world when it comes to prosperity and human development.

Caleb commented January 23

C

Caleb

IllinoisJan. 23

The formula for success for liberal Democrats:

1. Be bold and progressive. Medicare for All and free tuition and public colleges are two issues with overwhelming public support. Be especially bold on stopping climate change and the terrifying creep toward nuclear war.

2. Be strong on equality but avoid identity politics. Focus on economic, bread-and-butter issues that benefit all. Identity politics is an enemy of progressive politics.

3. Stop bashing Israel. Opposing settlement expansion and working for for peace is great, but Democrats must make clear that Israel has a right to exist and to be secure.

4. A strategy of abandoning liberals and seeking the votes of moderate Republicans WON'T WORK. See Hillary 2016.

Paul Bernish commented January 23

P

Paul Bernish

Charlotte NCJan. 23

It is a measure of how successful and ubiquitous Republican propaganda has been since Ronald Reagan that even today, a column like Edsall's today contains an undertone of unease about the "left" or "liberal" trend of Democratic activists. It's as if these people were bomb-throwing Bolsheviks bent on destruction of America . . .



Medicare for all, OMG! Immigration reform, seriously! Reining in free market capitalism; how dare you!

The experts and academics quoted also offer a note or two of political caution: will these ideas ever take hold in a nation that prides self-help and rugged individualism?

Methinks it is time for a new narrative, one in which progressive or leftist ideas are gaining momentum and a foothold because the dominant centrist to right-wing politics of the past 50 years is no longer offering solutions, but modest, mousy, incremental tweaks to issues of existential importance.

Trump in this narrative becomes the poster boy for reckless, feckless policies intended to make the rich not only richer, but almost completely devoid of regulation, limits on wealth concentration, and regard for social safety nets that keep a third of the population from drowning.

As I say, time for a new narrative.

MDCooks8 commented January 23

MDCooks8

MDCooks8

West of the HudsonJan. 23

Is AOC donating back into the federal government coffers 70% of her salary which is nearly triple the median income of most households in the US?

1 Reply

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@MDCooks8, if AOC can help get anything done to restore progressive tax rates and otherwise address the problem of the ever widening gap between the rich and the struggling, she will be strengthening our nation so much more than we are paying her in salary.

<https://inequality.org/facts/income-inequality/>

Jason A. commented January 23

J

Jason A.

New York NYJan. 23

The newly elected politicians are playing "sound bite" politics, let's say the thing most likely to get me quoted on the news or in a paper or redistributed via social media.

N commented January 23

N

N

Washington, D.C.Jan. 23

The author's comment that Democrats moving "left" want, among other things, "greater protection from the vicissitudes of market capitalism," may reflect his own bias rather than reality. I can't speak for everyone, but what I want is less corporate welfare, exemplified by the 2008 bank bailouts and tax cuts for corporations, which have been supported by both Republicans and Democrats in Congress and the White House. Without the bailout, which shifted tax dollars away from ordinary citizens to the banks, Goldman-Sachs and other monopoly capitalists would have gone belly-up. "Free market capitalism" is something that does not really exist, due to the entanglement of government with corporations (e.g., the Obama cabinet being comprised of those with Wall Street connections and the fox-guarding-the-chicken coop members of Trumps' cabinet). Adding insult to injury, the bank bailout was followed by what amounted to interest-free loans in the trillions that were funded by the taxpayers. And, according to a DOD website, the last defense budget approved by Congress was \$1.3 trillion -- this in the face of the inability of DOD (according to the NYT and other media sources) to account for literally trillions of dollars in past allocations. This is corporate welfare at its

most blatant. What many of us want is a halt to the transfer of wealth from the working poor and middle class to the wealthy that has been facilitated, if not made possible, by "our" government.

Thomas Smith commented January 23

Thomas Smith

Thomas Smith

TexasJan. 23

Ms. AOC is certainly an interesting character. Unfortunately, she also seems to be remarkably ill informed or willfully ignorant. Listen closely to her in one on one interviews and you will see she is strong no on opinion but really short on facts.

jrd commented January 23

j

jrd

nyJan. 23

@LTJ

Tell me -- do the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq count as "free goods and services", since we chose to print money to finance them, rather than pay for those pointless military adventures with tax hikes? Or what about farm subsidies and leasing of public lands for way below market price? That's not paid for either -- we're running a \$1 trillion deficit, if you haven't noticed.

Am not sure what terrible things happened in MA and NY, but all but the very rich are far better off in those states than their counterparts in most of the rest of the low tax/low service states. And you don't see many NYC and Boston billionaires relocating to Utah unless maybe they intend to run for the Senate.

NotJammer commented January 23

N

NotJammer

MidwestJan. 23

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Our grandchildren who are ready to vote by 2020 hopefully will rise to the task at hand.

I will soon die.

I pray for the Left to save our country before a Dictator gives it to Putin.

Dont be fooled again!

Rob commented January 23

R

Rob

CalgaryJan. 23

@Ronny I agree with you - have a subsidized education - (rather I prefer to say equal access to education) as well as health care guarantees to a greater extent equality of opportunity - which is what all democratic societies should strive for. It's not equality of outcome but equality of opportunity. Children should not be punished for have parents of lesser means or being born on the wrong side of the tracks...

Independent commented January 23

I

Independent

the SouthJan. 23

Everybody asks how we can pay for Medicare for all.

We already are paying for it. We just aren't getting it.

The money we pay to private insurance would instead be paid to Medicare.

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We spend an average of \$10,000 per person for health care in the US.

The other first world countries spend \$4,500 to \$5,500 per person.

And we have parts of the US with infant mortality of a second world country.

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@G. Harris

So many within the Democratic party up until now have hedged their bets for too long. What that means is that they take conciliatory tones (deferring to republicans and more tax cuts) at every turn. That is no longer the acceptable status quo.

What the new Congresswoman is doing is being unequivocal for not only a change of the status quo, but a return to Progressive values even before 1970's. The vision includes as well women and minorities, which have been used as props for too long.

A pretty face helps, but people are listening.

J.C. commented January 23

J

J.C.

MichiganJan. 23

@AACNY

She knows we don't have time to muck about with platitudes and incrementalism and weak tea. The status quo has to be upset if we are to do what we need to do for the

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future of our country and the world. I'm aligned with every one of her priorities for this country, so I guess that makes me a know-nothing too.

Democrats should have been talking for years about the same things AOC and Bernie Sanders have been talking about. You need to convince people and put your ideas into the public conscience. Republicans have been doing that for decades, while Democrats have been asleep at the wheel, which is why Republicans now control the narrative on taxes and deregulation and health care and unions and trade and the list goes on.

Now we've gone so far to the right that even Democrats think that policies that would have been considered normal in the past are "crazy". We need to get back on track and you need to buckle your seat belt.

Purity of commented January 23

P

Purity of

EssenceJan. 23

"Leftism" does not equal trying to lower wages and raise housing costs by importing as much cheap foreign labor as possible. All of these "leftists" calling for such policies are fakes: they are trying to convince those in the middle-classes who were once sympathetic to genuine left-wing causes that their ideology now means that they must be anti-worker and pro-foreigner. They are even more slavishly devoted to serving the interests of capital than the republicans. Some "leftists" they are.

RILL commented January 23

R

RILL

CaliforniaJan. 23

I love AOC. Her heart and her mind are in the right place. For any of the people who write in trying to insult her with patronizing descriptions of "little girl". She is a force to be reckoned with. she also graduated cum laude with BA's in economics and international relations.

She is very prepared for working in governance! AOC is much better prepared to tackle these issues than most of the ignorant folks who criticize her for working to make a difference and better our lives.

Keep going AOC! You rock!

All you critics? Your petulance just shows you are foolish and immature. Grow up.

Teller commented January 23

T

Teller

SFJan. 23

Your position will be tested in 2020, when, once again, you may find the nation as a whole is not as enamored by the ideas of AOC as the coastal thinkers think it is.

Neander commented January 23

N

Neander

CaliforniaJan. 23

This type of pigeonhole analysis sadly ignores some extremely inconvenient facts: such "liberal" proposals aren't "left", they were also stock in trade for conservative Republican Richard Nixon. The Clean Air Act, Title IX, the EPA, and OSHA; health reforms, strengthening Social Security, a minimum tax on the wealthy and a guaranteed income for the poor- Nixon backed them all.

It's exceptionally misleading to talk about "left, progressive, extreme liberal" stances without first establishing what we're comparing them to. That shorthand makes convenient handholds for pundits and shallow discussions, but they're meaningless when you pull back a bit.

It would be far more accurate and useful to focus instead on the real political divide: between those who (like Republicans Nixon and Teddy Roosevelt) believed government had a decisive and critical role to play, and those who don't. Ironically, many of Nixon's more 'progressive' ideas in the 70's were blocked by Democrats.

Abandoning the false narrative of left vs right will rapidly expose just how many Americans actually agree with each other on things that matter - a reality that only vested partisans and political fundraisers abhor.

R. R. commented January 23

R. R.

R. R.

NY, USAJan. 23

AOC for president.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Albert Petersen

The top marginal tax rate should be what it needs to be in order to maximize economic growth in any particular year- That may be 35%, or 70%, or 90%. But, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez seems to be throwing out numbers arbitrarily based on what she feels is "just," rather than on what makes the optimal economic sense.

Second, a green new deal is a wonderful thing. Her green new deal- having 100% of the cars, trucks, airplanes and busses running on 100% electric within ten years would require increasing mining in the Congo for cobalt by an order of magnitude, among other things. It's literally physically impossible to attain in such a short amount of time. By 2050? Sure. 2030? No way, Jose.

texsun commented January 23

t

texsun

usaJan. 23



The compact version of what is going on is the liberals elected to Congress reflect the hopes and attitudes of those who voted for them. These shifts occurred in response to Trumpism, the new GOP platform of ideas. The grassroots campaigning focused on core issues like health care, immigration, voting rights and decency stand opposed to nativism, xenophobia, misogyny, racism, showering the rich with favors and fear over hope.

The choices made during the midterms suggest the GOP needs a complete engine overhaul or voting patterns unlikely to swing in their favor.

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

@tom, I was a 60's/70's kid. So I know the glories of the middle class as well as you do. I for one did not pull the ladder up behind me-- I have voted for every tax I could to benefit the many, since my first election, then at age 21. I volunteered in local public schools to make them best in class-- not for MY kid only, but for ALL kids. As far as these younger people, where was the leading edge of them as the GOP and then Obama launched us into disastrous wars in the middle east? Silent bystanders as their peers rushed off into a fool's mission, wasting our (THEIR) blood and treasure. Please recall it was US-- the baby boomers-- who brought down the disastrous Vietnam policy and kept us out of a draft and wars of choice for a long time to follow. So let's not over-congratulate those "coming along" until we see them actually accomplishing something.

Brad commented January 23

B

Brad

Los Angeles, CAJan. 23

Hillary embraced a moderate left position nationally and narrowly lost. Beto embraced a further left liberal position in a state that is more conservative than the nation, and also narrowly lost. One could argue Beto energizing of the base had a more beneficial effect for his election than Hillary's middle of the road approach did for her election.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

Maybe it would do us good to remember that the man currently identified as the best liberal Democrat, Bill Clinton, is in fact further to the political right than reagan. That is how he beat reagan's veep.

We have a very long way to go to get back to "normal" for the DEM's. AOC's proposals and discussions on taxes are closer to the reality of what made our nation exceptional. A government that was for the people and took long term proactive steps to keep it stable and build its economy so that the most people possible could get the benefit from it.

Tax cuts were for actually creating long term benefits paying jobs, not as it is since the 80's given before that was done and offering no penalty for not doing it. Two articles by Hiltzik in the LAT explain the facts about AOC's tax views and how the GOP are trying to do what they always do, portray it as something it is not.

1-7-19

<https://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-aoc-taxes-20190107-story.html>

1-22-19

<https://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-aoc-taxes-20190122-story.html>

Danny commented January 23

D

Danny

BxJan. 23

AOC is the best breath of fresh air this country has had in a very long time. Although vehemently opposed to the death penalty, I could see my way to forgiveness on single issues to appease the more hesitant of our electorate. I am hoping for all the states to try at least one Democratic senator resulting in a 60 plus majority as well as a strong majority in the house. A little court packing and these creaking old bones would get to marching for some real progress.

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Maryellen Simcoe commented January 23

M

Maryellen Simcoe

Baltimore Jan. 23

@Our road to hatred "Russia" used to be a no go among conservatives...not so much now. Anything can happen if the right people back it.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

sri commented January 23

s

sri

Santa Barbara, CAJan. 23

Extremely liberal? Really? What goes for extreme liberalism, namely high tax rate for the extremely wealthy and medicare-for-all is your run of the mill European centrism. No, this country has moved sharply rightward and it must be corrected.

Joe Barnett commented January 23

Joe Barnett

Joe Barnett

SacramentoJan. 23

Let's see. Supporting women's rights and Roe v Wade; supporting better pay; supporting Social Security, Medicare, affordable health care; wanting DACA participants to have a fair path to citizenship; and a strong desire to save the planet.....that seems pretty centrist to me.

2 Replies

Jackson commented January 23

J

Jackson

VirginiaJan. 23

@Joe Barnett. And that 70% tax rate? Or the world ending in 12 years?

Claire Elliott commented January 23

Claire Elliott

Claire Elliott

EugeneJan. 23

@Jackson

That's a 70% marginal tax rate on incomes over \$10 million.

It's hard to see how that's going to be financially burdensome on uber-wealthy people who, after all, use the infrastructure and social services just like the rest of us. And they don't have to live in fear of losing health insurance and jobs. I fear I'm finding it difficult to be sympathetic to their plight.

mkc commented January 23

m

mkc

floridaJan. 23

Et tu, Tom? Did you know that substantial majority of Americans favor Medicare for All and a 70% tax on income about \$10 Million? The American public is FAR more progressive than is reported in the SCLM.

<https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2019/1/15/1826447/-59-of-voters-support-70-marginal-tax-rate-proposed-by-AOC>

<https://thehill.com/hilltv/what-americas-thinking/425422-a-majority-of-americans-support-raising-the-top-tax-rate-to-70>

[http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/SunMo\\_poll\\_0209.pdf](http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/SunMo_poll_0209.pdf)

[http://www.pnhp.org/news/2007/may/new\\_polls\\_on\\_univers.php](http://www.pnhp.org/news/2007/may/new_polls_on_univers.php)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB112973460667273222.html>

<http://abcnews.go.com/images/pdf/935a3HealthCare.pdf>

[http://www.pnhp.org/docsurvey/annals\\_physician\\_support.pdf](http://www.pnhp.org/docsurvey/annals_physician_support.pdf)

DSS commented January 23

D

DSS

OttawaJan. 23

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This is not a sharp shift to the left. The GOP has moved the political spectrum so far to the Right that what we see are moderate Republicans that appear to be Democrats and progressive Democrats that appear as Socialists. However, that also means that right wing Republicans appear as fascists and fascism appears to be the party of Trump.

Sage commented January 23

S

Sage

Santa CruzJan. 23

One cannot shift to the "right" or "left", when such terms have long since been shredded of their traditional meaning, and when the actual positions taken are anyway so tepid and tokenist that it doesn't much matter which direction they are superficially oriented towards.

JL1951 commented January 23

J

JL1951

ConnecticutJan. 23

Any winning immigration policy starts with legal immigration, a party censure of sanctuary cities, those here illegally (without criminal records) getting back in the citizenship queue, and providing real resources to address those seeking sanctuary. We are either a society of laws or not.

Trump will flog the Dems with immigration...further divide us...and win. That is why we are knee deep in "the Wall". Anyone wanting to be a US citizen should understand and respect this. It is, in part, why they wish to be here.

Throw in Medicare for all, compulsory voting, Real ID as a national identity document, reducing military spending, and a return to progressive tax rates, and creating a jobs program that leads to jobs with a future...and you are getting somewhere.

Get rid of the Super Delegates and it's even better. Why vote if a party hack can overturn the outcome of your vote?

Be for something, Dems.

Bill commented January 23

B

Bill

Charlottesville, VA Jan. 23

These cautions should and likely will fall deaf ears. You quote people saying Democrats should be trying to woo independents and disaffected Republicans, when the election results show that they won by appealing to - get this - Democrats. The Times last summer ran a series of pieces showing that there are millions of more Democrats in America, but they just don't vote. Well, if you don't run an actual Democrat, why should they?

The whole "reach out" philosophy betrays a post-Carter mindset that regards being a Democrat as politically tenuous, if not morally suspect. This new generation knows nothing of that, and has no time at all for it. They are not on probation. They are taking charge. Sure, they'll reach out. But you reach out from where you stand - not from where the other side does.

Ronald B. Duke commented January 23

R

Ronald B. Duke

Oakbrook Terrace, IL Jan. 23

The more the Dems move to the left, the more clearly they signal their true program: expropriation; theft. Polite words for that are sharing; social justice, etc., but it comes to the same thing. To them, an election is a legalized stick-up by means of which they intend to empty your wallet into their pockets. One thing you can say for theft, it's quick and efficient. For people who don't want to work, save, invest, and build over time it's the natural answer to their needs. It leads to statism and ultimately undermines and destroys democracy, the very thing they profess to believe in. The right may be

accused of self-interest, but at least they're honest about it and it's synonymous with hard work and individual responsibility--still, I think, praiseworthy traits.

Trebor commented January 23

T

Trebor

USAJan. 23

One of the most important things to untangle for democrats and the public is what exactly moving to the left means. It is a disservice to the public to conflate all nominally "liberal" issues as equally supported among the "left".

There are some issues labelled as "left" which can realistically and logically be called centrist. Specifically, Medicare for All/ universal health care is broadly supported by the public including large swaths of otherwise republican voters. That is not reflected in either party establishment. Based on popularity shown by polls, it should be the law of the land. Similarly, strengthening Social Security rather than threatening it is virtually universally approved. Increased wages and guaranteed work opportunities or, absent that, a universal basic income is seeming practical and logical as people are tired of constantly increasing financial insecurity.

The identity political issues associated with left are less broadly supported and to some degree are the polarizing social issues where the ones above are unifying issues. It is important to bear in mind the role of the media in promoting polarization around identity groups on the right and the left. The vilification of the other is rampant in both directions but could legitimately said to be far more so from the right. But it is important to recognize also...who owns the media and who maintains power by this polarization of the public. The answer, of course, is the financial elite.

TC commented January 23

T

TC

BostonJan. 23

Dems really need to listen to the candidates who flipped Republican districts. And a "return to normalcy" after the tumult of Trump will have great appeal for many swing

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voters. There is still a deep distrust of the government's ability to manage things. I do NOT think we should adopt single-payer health care, abolishing all current insurance plans and disrupting the existing system. France and Germany have multi-payer health care that have good outcomes, universal coverage, and are affordable. Look to those types of models, and reform and improve the Affordable Care Act. Add a public option.

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

Paralysis from analysis.

The issues espoused by progressives resonate with everyone across the spectrum. Medicare for all, a livable minimum wage, a green New Deal, donor class money out of politics, strengthened gun laws are all winners.

The biggest winner of all will be if Ocasio-Cortez and the rest can explain how the high marginal tax rates of the 50's and 60's on very high earning individuals were used to pay down the debt from WWII and build the country into what it was before the last 4 decades when trickle-down economics, tax cuts that don't pay for themselves and a low wage economy ushered in the problems and wealth gap we face economically today needs to be returned to.

With 23 trillion dollars of debt already accumulated in this low wage economy there is no other resort but to be like Willie Sutton who said he robbed banks because that's where the money is, is to do the same to pay down the debt, rebuild the country and actually make America great again.

The forces against that will be many, like the highly paid and large megaphoned media elite like Sean Hannity and may others like him. Our economy has become corrupt and rigged and people have been seeing it for some time now. The impanelment of Donald Trump by the anachronistic electoral college is the result of running a low wage, tax cut for the rich society that everybody feels in their bones isn't working for them.

Shouldering a tax plan of the 50's & 60's like the "Greatest Generation" did will help.

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1 Reply

Stefan commented January 23

S

Stefan

PAJan. 23

@mr. mxyzptlk the Green New Deal is DOA

Terry Wells commented January 23

T

Terry Wells

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your sources at the end of this column made the most sense to me in saying that Democrats are returning to their roots by advancing the progressive cause. The Democratic Party at one time celebrated labor, income equality (albeit in those days, with the hateful caveat that you ought to be white to benefit...), paying a fair share in taxes (and to hell with Ayn Rand) and other issues today labeled as "progressive." Seems to me it was a reaction to the Great Depression that drove a lot of that, that the country had drifted as a whole too far to the right into corporate rule in the Gilded Age, even oligarchy. In modern times since Reagan, that trend back to corporate rule has been accelerating.

Yes, progressives hate Trump's racism, ignorance, narcissism, etc., but that's not the problem. When you look at what he's done -- massive tax gift to the rich, damage to regulatory agencies that protect the little guy, shameless pose as a populist, corruption on a vast scale -- he is the twisted epitome of an oligarch. It's funny that the rest of the oligarchs see him as a useful fool but not one of them.

I think the youthful and otherwise (Sanders, Warren) progressives are doing a great public service. We should make common cause and pull this country back to being the land of opportunity that it briefly was post-WWII. And this time, let's say for fun that whites are still welcome, but you don't have to be white to participate.

Len Charlap commented January 23

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Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@profwilliams - Well, property taxes are a local affair, but if we had a responsible federal government, it would help more with education which is the largest factor here.

As for the federal government, most people do not understand the relationship between government services and taxes.

Government services, militarily, infrastructure, research, etc. are NOT paid for or limited by taxes or borrowing.

The gov doesn't need your money. It can (thru the FED) create as much as it needs out of thin air. Just think about where YOUR money came from in the first place. Unless you have a printing press in your basement, it came from the federal gov. (This isn't quite right. Banks can create a limited amount, but we have just seen in 2008 what happens when they try to create too much.)

But there's a catch. If the gov needs to create too much money to do the things we want it to do, we may not be able to make enough stuff to soak that money up & will have too much money chasing not enough stuff, i.e. excessive inflation.

But that's easy to solve & where taxes come in. Taxes allow the gov to take back the excess money & prevent inflation. The purpose of taxes is to adjust the amount of money in the private sector. That is what max is telling us.

Now if the economy is constrained, if we cannot produce enough goods and services to soak up the new money, that's when we get excessive inflation. The usual cause of a constrained economy is shortages such of oil or food.

PJGeary commented January 23

P

PJGeary

Exton, PAJan. 23

This article slices, dices, and repackages American voters along race, gender and income categories in the same way subprime mortgage lenders constructed meaningless risk-ridden investments that crashed our economy and most of the world. Not only is it meaningless, but is is dangerous.

One reason the huckster in the White House won was because he is plain-speaking. These polls assume that college-educated white women voted because they moved right or left on the imaginary bell-curve of political analysts who cannot see the forest for the trees. So naturally they assume that some demented Bill Clinton pretzel act of seeking support from Republicans is required for victory.

The simple fact is the majority of voters recognize that the program put forward by FDR, globally identified as the Marshall Plan, provides people with the baseline of health and security required to adventure further in their capitalist dreams of creating wealth. Like the billionaires at Davos, this writer assumes that people can be manipulated endlessly by hucksters who proclaim the FDR-plan, which requires fair taxation of the Uber-wealthy, would deprive people of all ambitions and motivations for a better life. If Federal workers with reliable jobs cannot survive a loss of one or two paychecks, the bell curve has become non-representative of American lives and common sense.

Linda Miilu commented January 23

L

Linda Miilu

Chico, CAJan. 23

@Odo Klem

If UC is now costing \$30,000/yr. that is a significant leap from when I went, and when my daughter went. Why the big increase? Check out the salaries of administrators; check out the number of administrators really needed for a campus with a defined student body of 27,000. Administrators petition the State for increases in their salaries; they set the stage for tuition increases to pay themselves. UC had one Ad bldg. when I

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attended; it managed quite well. Department counselors were enough to help manage course planning and enrollment. This is beaurocracy writ large. Students do not need administration overload; professors do not need it. The use of "adjunct" teachers is going to lower standards of pay and professional skills. I was fortunate to attend when one of my professors taught at Berkeley and at Oxford. Starting in Jr. year, we had grad students in our classes; competition was tough. We had law school professors who also taught undergrad constitutional law. We had TA's who were very good as well. Books were affordable, especially used on Telegraph Ave. The emphasis was on education and teaching. It was not a for profit business. Is UC modeling itself on PG&E now? Investors and rentiers?

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

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I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

David Wahnnon commented January 23

D

David Wahnnon

Westchester MyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

It's time for higher education to stop being a business. Likewise it's time to stop electing leaders who are businessmen/women.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

Hmmm, how old are you Midwest Josh? There were student loans back in the 1970s when college cost me about \$400 a year.

Maybe something happened when that failed Hollywood actor spouted slogans like "Government is not the solution, government is the problem" (and, no, it was not taken out of context, he most definitely DID mean that government is the problem - look it up)

www.remember-to-breathe.org

Felix commented January 23

Felix

Felix

New EnglandJan. 23

@Michael

Could not have said it better myself.

mj commented January 23

m

mj

somewhere in the middleJan. 23

@Michael

Lucky for you. I went to the University of Michigan at roughly the same time and it was no where near that cheap--not even close. And housing? Don't get me started on that. Even then it took my breath away.

Blackmamba commented January 23

B

Blackmamba

IIJan. 23

@Michael

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was opposed to the eternal triumvirate axis of inhumane evil aka capitalism, militarism and racism. King was a left-wing socialist community organizer. In the mode of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. And the Nazarene of Matthew 25: 31- 46.

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America's military and prison industrial complexes are the antithesis of America's proclaimed interests and values. America is number one in arms, money and prisoners. MAGA?

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New JerseyJan. 23

@Michael

The cost of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security has increased as a fraction of tax receipts. Twice the as many people go to college as when you went, so the subsidies are spread more thinly. Colleges have more bureaucrats than professors because of multiple mandates regarding sex, race, income, sexual preference, etc. People have not been willing to see taxes raised, so things like college subsidies get squeezed.

The US decided in the 1940s that the only way to avoid a repeat of WW1 and WW2 was to provide a security blanket for Western Europe and Japan (and really, the world), and prevent military buildups in either region while encouraging economic development. The world is as a result more peaceful, prosperous, and free than ever in human history, despite "its continuous wars" as you put it. For the US to pull back would endanger the stability that gave us this peace and prosperity, but Trump is with you all the way on that one, so it must be a good idea.

Liberal reforms will mean tax increases, especially Medicare for all, but also more college subsidies, which largely benefit the middle class and up. Liberal reformers need to convince the public to send more money to the IRS, for which there is no evident support. Let's not confuse opposition to Trump with a liberal groundswell.

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23



@Michael

To me, the key sentence in your excellent post is that American needs to "refocus on domestic growth and health and pull itself out of its continuous wars." All politicians hoping for our votes in the future need to make clear where they stand on this. As to those who say that making all those weapons creates jobs, is there any reason that we couldn't instead start producing other quality goods in the U.S. again?

Reilly Diefenbach commented January 23

R

Reilly Diefenbach

Washington StateJan. 23

Outstanding post. America has to catch up with Europe. Democratic socialism is the only answer.

magicisnotreal commented January 23

m

magicisnotreal

earthJan. 23

@Michael

The increase in fees for education to include the books along with the lowering of standards for the classes taken is part and parcel of the reagan revolution to remake American society. One of the most problematic things for those seeking to undo what FDR did was the plethora of well educated and well read people American had managed to create.

How were they going to be able to overcome this?

You can deduce whatever methods you may know but I saw them tank the economy on purpose and prey on the fear that it created with more and more radical propaganda. Once they got into office they removed the best and brightest of our Civil Service and began making legal the crimes they wanted to commit and changing laws and procedures for how things were done so that people would eventually come to think of this as the "right" way when it was in fact purpose designed to deny them their due.

Richard Grayson commented January 23

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Richard Grayson

Richard Grayson

Brooklyn Jan. 23

@Michael Your \$128 a year would be more like \$414 or so in today's dollars. Still . . .

I went to Brooklyn College, part of the tuition-free City University of New York from 1969-1973. We paid a \$53 general fee at the start of every semester (\$24 for a summer semester), and that was it. Wealthy or poor, everyone paid the same amount (about \$334 in today's dollars).

Concerned Citizen commented January 23

Concerned Citizen

Concerned Citizen

Jan. 23

@Michael: first off, that was Texas paying for your college and not the Feds. Second....how many people lived in Texas in 1978 vs 2019? how many were illegals? how many students enrolled in college AT ALL in 1978 vs now -- because they could get a good paying manufacturing job instead?

You say you were only good to wash dishes at a Holiday Inn? (which is odd....they are not a restaurant, they are a MOTEL without food service....but whatever)? Not work at the local Ford plant?

I went to college roughly when you did (a tad earlier, not much). Here's how I paid roughly \$2500 a year tuition -- my family and I used savings for about half, then I worked part time (20 hours a week during the school year, fulltime the rest) and what was left we borrowed.

Why would YOU be any different? I know what tuition cost in those days, and how bad inflation was. There's no way you have college today for \$4 a credit hour. The AVERAGE, even in state schools, was closer to \$1800 a year in those days and again, that was to provide college for a much smaller number of people.

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NOTE: your college never really cost \$128 a year. It was subsidized by SOMEONE ELSE'S taxes, a person who probably never got to go to college.

D.j.j.k. commented January 23

D

D.j.j.k.

south DelawareJan. 23

@Midwest

Then the rich will only be eligible for college. Give me government intervention any time. I am retired military . Off base in Lewes De a mans hair cut is now 20.00 plus tips. Just a plain cut. On base with gov intervention it 12.00 . Capitalism you support is only for the 1 percent the 99 percent never gets ahead.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

mr. mxyzptlk commented January 23

mr. mxyzptlk

mr. mxyzptlk

new jerseyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Perhaps student loans made by the FED at the rates they charge the big banks in their heist of the American economy achieved back in 1913.

Allentown commented January 23

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A

Allentown

BuffaloJan. 23

@Reilly Diefenbach "Democratic socialism" isn't a thing, but implies two contradictory ideals. Social democracy is thing, a good thing, and in line with what Nordic nations have.

Edward commented January 23

E

Edward

Wichita, KSJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen For your information, Holiday Inns typically had a restaurant in the hotel in the days Michael is talking about so... whatever!

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

@Michael Gig'em dude. Class of '88, and I feel the same way. And as far as I can tell, the increase has been almost totally because state support has fallen in order to fund tax cuts for the people, like us, who got the free education. Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too? You just have to raid everyone else's plate.

Smartone commented January 23

S

Smartone

new york,nyJan. 23

@Midwest Josh Wrong!!! Tuition's have skyrocketed because for past 35 years States have slashed support for public universities. The Federal Government took over student loan business from predatory banks which was a very good thing but

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unfortunately have kept interest rates high ... Student loans is a profit center for Federal Government

Steve commented January 23

S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

Michael commented January 23

M

Michael

Rochester, NYJan. 23

@Concerned Citizen

Go ahead and check the holiday inn in Palestine Texas. It had a small restaurant in 1978. I was their dishwasher. There was no ford plant nearby.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

Lisa commented January 23

L

Lisa

NYCJan. 23

@Midwest Josh That is so NOT true Midwest Josh. The unattainable loans and interest problems are because the private sector has been allowed into the student loan game. The government should be the underwriter for all student loan programs unless individual schools offer specialized lending programs.

Whenever the government privatizes anything the real abuse starts and the little guy gets hurt.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@Michael I'm glad you said that because yes, tuition USED TO BE much, much cheaper. Guess why? No one is against "affordable" tuition, or student loans that get PAID BACK. We are against greedy colleges and universities and their professors making megabucks but claiming to be philanthropists and egalitarian. They would have you believe they are about sharing and altruism when in reality they are plain greedy. Think about your taxes and how much you have to EARN to pay these folks these salaries. Many of them produce exactly zero. Art teachers who have never SOLD a piece of art yet they make a six figure salary. I'm not against people who produce but even "Leonardo" had a benefactor who paid for it all.

Craig G commented January 23

C

Craig G

Long IslandJan. 23

@Michael Education is mostly (not entirely) run and operated by liberals. If their ideas ran up the cost of a college education to an unbearable level, what makes people think that allowing their ideas on a national level won't do the same? Lack of State Funding isn't why prices are so high. State Schools are a bargain compared to most Private Colleges.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@C Wolfe yes, but soaring tuition is a direct result of salaries and benefits i.e. greed, these folks receive. Moreover, many of them keep two sets of books. They don't tell you about their hidden revenues. Like broadcast channels that are allocated to "educational" uses that they then lease to private concerns. Land they own, patents they receive benefits from, etc., etc. Further, what, exactly, do they produce? I have no issue with departments that produce tangible, marketable, and even research oriented results that benefit us. However, I have a huge issue with their socialized, affirmative action, diversity, agenda to promote many "disciplines" that do little or nothing. I am totally uninterested in sponsoring, and do not sponsor, even though they ask me, these activities. They are not being paid to "change" the world, or promote themselves, they are being paid to teach - period.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm so sorry to hear that. Thank you for letting us know.

9 Replies

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@C Wolfe

Wow. Funky Irishman has been, for many months, writing about and presenting excellent data showing that the US is actually a center-left (if not strongly progressive) country. I used to present this evidence to Richard Luetzgen (where has he gone??) who kept insisting we are center-right (but never, as was his custom, presented any evidence for this).

your example is the best I've ever seen. I'm a member of a 4000-strong Facebook group, the "Rational Republicans" (seriously - a local attorney with a decidedly liberal bent started it and almost beat regressive Patrick McHenry here in Asheville). I've been making this point on the FB page for the past year and people are stunned when they see the numbers.

I'm going to post your example as well. Excellent!



Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJJan. 23

@don salmon

Richard Luetzgen expired Dec. 1 2018 at age 63.

Here is his NYT obituary.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

David J commented January 23

D

David J

NJJan. 23

@Fourteen, business is the operative world. In Canada caring is the operative word.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system were as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed by horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NY Jan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to

avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Mark commented January 23

M

Mark

ColoradoJan. 23

A Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree at U. of Wyoming, Laramie over 4 summers, completed August, 1968, basically in summer school; Tuition cost= \$509.00. Enabled me to support a family of four and buy an FHA home in Casper, Wyoming in 1969. Older daughter later earned an M.A. U. of Iowa, and younger daughter, a D.V.M. at Washington State.....

The way it should be.....Mark

John Chastain commented January 23

J

John Chastain

MichiganJan. 23

As the conservative establishment (politicians, institutions and the reactionary wealthy conservatives funding them) pulled the country right it pulled democrats along with them. When I look at both Clintons and Obama's administrations I don't see liberals, I see centralists that the times and conservative propaganda have incorrectly painted as liberals. As the leftists in the Democratic Party gain influence they will pull the party left while redefining the argument about what being liberal means. If this moves the country as a whole back to a more moderate centralism and reduces the conservative establishments influence that would be a good thing. I may be a liberal but I'm also a realist and have little use for ideological purity. Conservative ideological purity gave us Trump, I'm not interested in his liberal ideological pure opposite. Nor am I interested in allowing conservatives to define who and what liberally are, that too needs to be addressed as the Democrats move left again.

Charleston Yank commented January 23

Charleston Yank

Charleston Yank

Charleston, SCJan. 23

So Edsall wants to point out all the reasons that really liberal policies should not be enacted or debated thus allowing the middle of the road Democrats to stay in the party. So how come the Republican party doesn't give a hoot about moving rightward in its policies?

We need to press more liberal policies and over time more of the country will embrace some version of them. I say if a suburban women chooses to vote Republican then she doesn't care any about the Democratic values or having a say in her own body.. She rather be with Trump or his replacement. So be it.

Jeff commented January 23

J

Jeff

Evanston, ILJan. 23

I'm glad to see the Democratic Party winning with liberal ideas. Not long ago, starting with Ronald Reagan well into the George W. Bush administration, a politician had to avoid being labeled as a liberal. "Liberal" was almost a swearword. No longer, thank you. This said, I also want the Democratic Party to be a big tent. It should not expel moderates, but rather include them fully in the conversation. Democrats all agree that we want our country to be more equitable and a better place to live us all. Through negotiation and compromise within the party, we must come up with policies that achieve this and win support from a large percentage of America's population. Take it issue by issue, and work things out. We must nominate candidates who fit the towns, districts and states where they are running. This was done in the recent midterm elections, and it accounts for the great results.

Ed Watters commented January 23

Ed Watters

Ed Watters

San Francisco Jan. 23

"...Gallup found that from 1994 to 2018, the percentage of all Democrats who call themselves liberal more than doubled from 25 percent to 51 percent."

This left shift occurred at a time when the Dem politicians were moving to the right on economic issues - and importantly, during this time period there was a huge increase in voters identifying as independent.

With astronomical levels of inequality, and 60% of the public unable to financially withstand an unexpected \$1,000 expense, it is clear that a progressive economic

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platform would be quite successful electorally, probably coaxing a big chunk of the independent voters back to the once-great party of the New Deal.

Still, the Democratic Party establishment along with the liberal media is preaching moderation. You'd think that after 25 years of moderation culminating in the loss of all three branches of the federal government and an orange-tinted dumpster fire in the White House would lead them to reconsider.

Hopefully, the establishment Dems that have coalesced around Pelosi and Schumer will go the way of the dinosaur. If the Dems put up another candidate in 2020 closely associated with the status quo, as they did in 2016, we stand a good chance of a two term dumpster fire.

The party's base is demanding change. If the party's leadership is unwilling, then they need to step aside. truthfully, they should've fallen on their swords a long time ago.

1 Reply

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Ed Watters

"You'd think that after 25 years of moderation culminating in the loss of all three branches of the federal government and an orange-tinted dumpster fire in the White House would lead them to reconsider."

That presents a disturbing question no one asks:

Could they be Republicans in Democrat clothing??

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The only difference is the Democrats occasionally throw the People a bone while the Republicans leave nothing on the table.

Both feed from the same corporate trough. Both are paid by the same corporate masters. The Democrats serve to give cover to the Republicans.

There has been no progress for the People in decades but those in power keep getting richer and richer. Even healthcare, championed by the Democrats, primarily benefits the healthcare industry. The People pay twice what Canada pays but for much lower quality service.

And all those wars we pay for. The rich never serve.

Why haven't we been getting More democratic, rather than much less? The snake-in-the-grass Democrat politicians are not just Republican-lite, they are Corporate-lite. And they're enabled by so-called Democrat voters who are comfortably asleep, who counsel, "Don't rock the boat."

Camestegal commented January 23

Camestegal

Camestegal

USAJan. 23

If Trump is the face of the right the Republicans miscalculated. They alone bear the responsibility for a "sharp" shift to the left. To every action there is reaction. Not just in physics but in politics too.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NYJan. 23

@Tom

The problem with healthcare is not that it is paid for by your employer, which is not totally correct, but it is an insurance that is tied to your job. Your employer pays a portion of the premium to the insurance company and you pay the rest. An example would be, your employer pays \$450 a month towards your insurance and you pay as much as \$1900 for a month for the rest of the coverage depending on the plan. If you change jobs, your insurance changes. If you lose your job, you lose your insurance unless you opt to pay COBRA at an exorbitant rate for less coverage.

The problem with our healthcare system is that it treats our bodies as profit centers for the insurance companies. Their business is to maximize returns to their investors. Our health and well being is secondary to profitability.

Until we take a stand and demand that our healthcare is a fundamental right of all Americans and not a profit making business venture, we will continue to be a second or third rate country when it comes to healthcare.

Conservatives have to get over the notion about socialized medicine or whatever you want to call it. It rankles them to think that someone may get something for nothing. The something that people will get is a chance to lead a healthy life.

Take the insurance companies out of the equation, let the money that would go to them go into Medicare for all.

The Captain commented January 24

T

The Captain

St Augustine, FLJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Dear Dudley, please note the following:

The one and only way the United States will eventually improve for a very large and abused group of Americans on the dismal state of wages, ridiculously high health care- and prescription drug costs, exorbitant costs for education, racism/neo-nazizum, more equality, sensible immigration/justice/tax laws, the right of women for equal pay and their right to choose (to name only a few) can and will only be achieved via a leftist government.

For the average American being a socialist or leftist is like being a stupid, bad and unpatriotic person.



The Alexandrias, Ayamas and Rashidas are leading the way.

I hope you will get old enough to enjoy the good things coming and re-read your today's comment at that time.

Kind regards.

Olivia commented January 23

O

Olivia

NYCJan. 23

Americans will not vote to turn our great country into a socialist country. The failed socialist countries of this century and the last stand as a reminder that socialism only works until you run out of other people's money.

3 Replies

abigail49 commented January 23

a

abigail49

georgiaJan. 23

@Olivia So Sweden is a "failed state"? The "other people's money" meme is getting old. A balanced economy with a bigger middle-class with more spending power to create new business and more jobs, more power and security for workers, more access to higher education, and guaranteed affordable healthcare for all is not a model for a Venezuela.

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

Sure thing Olivia--failed states like Norway and canada. Thanks for the ringing endorsement of vulture capitalism. Not.

Eric commented January 23

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E

Eric

BremenJan. 23

America is not great when so many have so little and so few have so much.

Greetings from a middle-class man living in a country with healthcare for all and living wages.

John commented January 23

J

John

ConnecticutJan. 23

Edsall seems to write the same column over and over again: "Watch out Democrats, if you move too far to the left, you'll lose." How about pointing out how far to the right Republican primary voters have moved? Witness the 2016 Republican nominee. Ronald Reagan would be trounced in any Republican primary he entered today. Is this too far to the right for moderate white suburban voters? The 2018 election suggests that it is.

Meanwhile, Democrats ran to the right trying to catch up to the Republicans but were never able to move fast enough. They did lose touch with their roots: Bill Clinton's crime bill, now finally recognized as a bad idea by many on both right and left. The end of welfare as we know it; now the shutdown is exposing how many middle class people are living on the edge without enough of a cushion to be able to afford to miss one paycheck. Repeal of Glass-Steagal which paved the way for the financial collapse.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is not even to the left of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., let alone Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

cheerful dramatist commented January 23

c

cheerful dramatist

NYCJan. 23

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Hey, please also note one of the most significant differences between these new Progressive candidates who are pushing the Democratic party to the Hard ha ha left, is that they are not corrupted. Yep, they did not take corporate money. They answer only to the people, not big business or Wall Street or the Koch brothers and their kind. And they dare to really fight for regular people.

This is about money, not moderate or conservative. The only honest actors here are the Progressives, everyone else is beholden to donors. The policies which the moderate and the conservatives fashion are actually often cover ups for their corruption. Mostly our elected officials serve their own needs and their donors needs first. That is why they hate the Progressives. Their cover is being blown. Sure we get some crumbs from time to time, but oh Dear God the fact that wages have stagnated something terrible for forty years and productivity has skyrocketed should give one pause.

I know it is a strange and unsettling concept for DC. You think big boss Crawley was not on the take, oh boy he was a big taker. So this is between the corrupt and non corrupt. Please take that into account when you compare ideologies. Thankyou!

1 Reply

Robert M. Koretsky commented January 23

R

Robert M. Koretsky

Portland, ORJan. 23

@cheerful dramatist a very interesting take on the discourse, I sincerely like the way you use the word Progressive! The Regressives in office have puppet masters pulling their strings, whereas the Progressives like AOC are beholden to all the people, as a true democracy should be here in America. Bravo to you!

Roger commented January 24

R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 24

@dudley thompson

Vote your conscience. If you think another term of Trump is somehow preferable to another candidate, that's on you.

5 Replies

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@dudley thompson, if you are one of those elite moderate liberals against the "lefties" concern about college and medical costs, protections for workers and the environment, and progressive taxation, then in the end getting your vote isn't worth sacrificing the votes of all the other people who do care about those things.

Your "moderate" way may calm those swing voters who fear change, and allow them to vote for the Democrat, but it also demoralizes and disappoints the much larger group of potential Democratic voters that craves change.

bored critic commented January 23

b

bored critic

usaJan. 23

actually, the anti leftist progressive is pro trump.

The Captain commented January 24

T

The Captain

St Augustine, FLJan. 24

@dudley thompson

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Dear Dudley, please note the following:

The one and only way the United States will eventually improve for a very large and abused group of Americans on the dismal state of wages, ridiculously high health care- and prescription drug costs, exorbitant costs for education, racism/neo-nazism, more equality, sensible immigration/justice/tax laws, the right of women for equal pay and their right to choose (to name only a few) can and will only be achieved via a leftist government.

For the average American being a socialist or lefty is like being a stupid, bad and unpatriotic person.

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I hope you will get old enough to enjoy the good things coming and re-read your today's comment at that time.

Kind regards.

MIKEinNYC commented January 23

MIKEinNYC

MIKEinNYC

NYCJan. 23

Ocasio-Cortez is one of about 100 new reps elected to Congress.

So why is it that she is the only one we ever hear about?

scott k. commented January 23

s

scott k.

secaucus, njJan. 23

AOC will be president one day. Mark my words.

1 Reply

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

She will disappear long before she is old e Pugh to run. Hopefully.

Just Saying commented January 23

J

Just Saying

New YorkJan. 23

The basically libertarian “live and let live” attitude fused with opposition to all discrimination and sympathy for the less fortunate has been a cultural winner for the left. That culture war is over. Good job.

Patrolling how people talk, joke, think and dress is another matter altogether. That never ends well for the winners of any power struggle as they morph into occupiers.

China rulers did an amazing job of holding on power through replacing the symbol of Mao outfits with blue jeans and symbols such as Channel and Gucci and dumping campaigns against “hoarders” for allowing and encouraging money and wealth to wind up in “the wrong hands.”

The American left is now running on an agenda of little red books on how to think for everybody and campaigning against wealth winding up in “wrong hands.” They could just as well run on a platform outlawing sexual desire and preference for one’s own children.

William Neil commented January 23

W

William Neil

MarylandJan. 23

Wait: can the renowned Mr. Edsall actually title the article the way he did, and not mention the Green New Deal, and its blending of the old New Deal with the urgency and sweep of addressing the great Climate Disruption? Yes he can.

No polling on the importance of facing the climate challenge, its salience in the suburbs? This is the meeting of two great reform streams that actually pre-date the New Deal, go back to the Progressive Era, economic reforms and environmental reforms. Now the nature and scope of the economy is right in Nature's face, has put Nature's back to the Wall, and the two reforms must be carefully integrated to work together, which is what the six page Draft Bill on the Standing Committee for a Green New Deal tries to do, although the Democratic establishment evaded the challenge and put something much less focused and weaker on the table.

Still, I'm grateful that Mr. Edsall gave a cite to FDR's Second Bill of Rights, the direction FDR wanted the party to go in after World War II was won. Come to think of it, if one looks closely at the forces behind today's Green New Deal, it is the urgency and scope of a World War II like "mobilization" that it is hoped will drive the programs. The drama of "Paradise Lost," burned to the ground this fall, reminds us we are not dealing with imaginary threats. That fiery gauntlet that school buses ran to escape the wildfire brought up images of refugees fleeing the Nazis in World War II.

marxelektrik commented January 23

m

marxelektrik

maineJan. 23

Don't write off the rural areas, which have seen the greatest suffering from the attack on our health care by the enemies of working people. Nor the industrial heartland, which will benefit tremendously from the progressive 'green new deal'.

These dire warnings against 'radicalism' are just so much excuse-making by Hillaryites. 'Radical' Democrats are real Democrats, whose ideas just happen to make sense to educated folks who know their history.

vbering commented January 23

v

vbering

Pullman WAJan. 23

Terrible development for the Democrats and for the country.

The Republicans went around the bend around 2001-2002, giving the Democrats an opening, and the Democrats are blowing it, moving way leftward when swing voters are not.

Obama, a moderate, understood this.

This is not a left-wing country. Most people want better health insurance but are not willing to pay the taxes Medicare-For-All would require. Most Americans don't want open immigration. Most want environmental protection but think the current demonization of men is a moral panic.

The Democrats are playing right into Trump's hands. People like these new radicals in Congress can't see it, are completely blinded by their ideology. This is common among the un-experienced.

The Democrats need to focus on the economy. In particular, working-class income has stagnated for decades as a greater proportion of output has gone to the rich. Increase taxes on the wealthy. Rein in the investment industry through thoughtful legislation. A focus on these things would appeal to the white working class and would be a winners for the Democrats. The identity politics is a dead end, a politically suicidal move.

The prognosis is not good. My best guess is that the leftists will hand over the 2020 electorate to the Republicans on a platter.

markymark commented January 23

markymark

markymark

Lafayette, CA Jan. 23

Another old white republican lamenting policy changes that would benefit every American, not just white males and the racist white women that enable them. Same as it ever was.

pgd commented January 23

p

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pgd

thailandJan. 23

The awful truth is that the Democratic party is veering left only in strongly Democratic districts .

Many so-called traditionally Democratic districts have now become swing districts and these are the ones that actually made it possible for trump to win in 2016. Neither Warren nor Sanders could win them in a presidential election and they need to be won if a Democrat can hope to become President .

The only hope of the Democratic Party in the next election is to motivate as broad a spectrum of the electorate as possible to vote in as great a number as possible . A Party looking to the left its raison d'etre will not, unfortunately, achieve that goal .

just say no commented January 23

j

just say no

providence riJan. 23

Let's be honest: there is nothing mainstream about the GOP. They are the true subversives and radicals, and anyone who would vote for them is no moderate.

1 Reply

karen commented January 23

k

karen

bay areaJan. 23

Best comment of the day. All dems need to riff on the extremism and trump born cowardice of today's right wing GOP.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

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BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@C Wolfe I like your idea to pay adjuncts a living wage. Also I have an idea, instead of making cuts to the recreational areas, add more students by making it so cheap to attend that those who are motivated will not have economic factors as barriers toward their desire to seek higher education for any number of reasons.. I paid 179.97 student loan payment for a very long time. It was worth it for me, because I am resilient

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

A.G. Alias commented January 23

A.G. Alias

A.G. Alias

St Louis, MO Jan. 23

AOC is a phenomenon unto itself. Obama & Oprah also have been so. You can't mix AOC with Rashida Tlaib.

Nevertheless, It's difficult to predict how she will fare in the long run. So far she has displayed an uncanny maturity. Will she become reckless as Hillary Clinton had, for her to lose in 2016, and even in 2008 Primary, which was an unfortunate Ali-Frazier-1971 contest; 2016 was Ali-Spinks-1978.

In any case the progressive measures of "Medicare for All, free [public] college, a universal jobs guarantee, a \$15 minimum wage, an expansion of the EITC to the entire bottom half..." AOC, et al advocates are great indeed. It may take time for them materialize. But it's important not to take our eyes off this ball.

During the past several years I have been trying to write a book, about finished, "Vastly Discordant Remunerations: Case for a Fairer Progressive Taxation, to Ease Inequality" I thought a top rate of 70% on over about \$25Million, 50% on over about \$10 million. Now I feel the 70% may not fly because some 6 yrs ago, Robert Reich proposed 70% on >\$15 ML. Few liberals came to his defense & he was laughed at by conservatives. But when AOC said 70% over \$10ML, few dared to oppose - that's the impact of her personality. Reagan had that strength to cut the top rate of 70% on less than \$1ML to a

top rate of 28% in 1986 on over about \$64K both inflation adjusted. The populace at large yielded to his will. And Trump is a mini-Reagan.

1 Reply

MDCooks8 commented January 23

MDCooks8

MDCooks8

West of the HudsonJan. 23

I doubt few if any wealthy progressive people will publicly denounce AOC's 70% tax proposal in fear of the progressive media trolls.

John Locke commented January 23

J

John Locke

Amesbury, MAJan. 23

Michael, I read through the article quickly but didn't come away with the feeling that Edsall was opposed to this shift, just that he was recognizing a problem that we lefties will have to deal with.

Like you I'm an old guy who went to a state college very inexpensively. My last kid cost me \$160,000 for his 4 years over 10 years ago. That can't be sustained by the average American. I'd vote for AOC and Pressley in a heartbeat. It's the 72 year old duffer in Iowa who's cultural experience didn't even include the idea of going to college who needs to be convinced that these leftist policies will help his grand kids. That won't be an easy sell.

3 Replies

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@John Locke

Not everyone ought go to college. That everyone aspired to that simplistic path since the 1960s to deal with complexities of life and differences in abilities indicates the massive problem that was percolating over the last 50 to 60 years and has now burbled forth. It was always absurd that the Americans attempted to ladder jump social classes by kowtowing to higher education if their offspring were not so intellectually inclined.

The larger math-based framework was ignored: In constantly shifting world economies, how to maintain an equal number within each economic class such that all have a quality of life on their own without getting a government check.

The U.S. has failed miserably at this, as have most industrialized nations with bloated populations and unrealistic rob-Peter-to-pay-Paul short game economic policies. We need to look at nations that have maintained stable populations AND have a high quality of life.

BronxTeacher commented January 23

B

BronxTeacher

Sandy HookJan. 23

@Maggie I Agree and that is why we need to make college super easy for anyone to get into and have that opportunity. In addition to having a living wage so young people who do not go to college can shack up and start families knowing they have opportunities to move up a salary scale and will have healthcare and reasonable housing. Remove the impediments for the intellectual and creative energy that exists in our young people and enjoy all of it

Pottree@aol.com commented January 23

P

Pottree@aol.com

Joshua TreeJan. 23

... especially compared to the simple, cheap concepts of guns, abortion, foreigners, and the Wall. the great divide is perhaps between Americans who are mentally lazy and Americans who want to be awake and aware in the world.

Tom Daley commented January 23

T

Tom Daley

SFJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Those Covington teenagers made their parents proud too which is just one example of why I blame Republicans of all ages for the state we're in.

A therapist is sometimes quite helpful with an individual's lack of self esteem. But unfortunately older more experienced medical professionals are generally harder to find because people tend to value those characteristics when their life depends on it.

6 Replies

John Patt commented January 23

J

John Patt

Koloa, HIJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp I am a senior citizen heterosexual white male. I do not apologize for my race, gender, etc. In fact, I am proud of our accomplishments. I do apologize for my personal wrongs, and strive to improve myself.

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NYJan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Don't be so quick to condemn. The really old white men of today defeated Germany and Japan.

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Then those same old white men went into Korea and then Vietnam. Ok so maybe you have a point.

DSS commented January 23

D

DSS

OttawaJan. 23

@John Patt I am an American living in Canada and I call myself an American.

Robert M. Koretsky commented January 23

R

Robert M. Koretsky

Portland, ORJan. 23

There are two very regressive ideas put forth in this article. The first is that dividing Americans along the classic lines of ethnicity, wealth/income, education, and other social and cultural pigeon holes somehow describes their needs as individuals. That is a strategy of control and domination, a tribalism that benefits the few rather than the many. The second is that the code word “liberal” in some way can define social progress, which is a very dangerous trap to fall into. Again, using that word and deploying a discourse around it, and quoting all sorts of statistics, is a strategy of division aimed at destroying democracy. As the regressives become more and more regressive, the center moves in the same direction. The key is to destroy the two regressive ideas fostered here by Mr. Edsall.

marrtyy commented January 23

m

marrtyy

manhattanJan. 23

Sad part of AOC s that she really hasn't risen above name calling. Anybody can spout off about her political agenda but it's the person who gets the ideas into law is the true leader.

sm commented January 23

s

sm

new yorkJan. 23

@Gloria Utopia It works in Sweden because it"s a small country .

Bookworm8571 commented January 23

B

Bookworm8571

North DakotaJan. 23

I badly want a viable third party. The liberal wing of the Democratic Party has alienated me, as have the Republicans. I'm tired of holding my nose when I cast my vote.

Yoke of systemic GOPutin power abuse commented January 23

Y

Yoke of systemic GOPutin power abuse

has us all fight the Stockholm SyndromeJan. 23

Could it be that these 54% of Democratic voting respondents who, when asked, want the candidates to be more moderate, think rather of identity politics, and of not raising taxes on the middle class which is a phantasmagora threat that is not a real part of the more liberal agenda, but at the same time see a 70% marginal tax rate, Medicare for All, a minimum wage that is also a living wage, affordable education, affordable child care, affordable anything, consumer and environmental protection, social security secured instead of cracked by the deeply malicious trap of the debt ceiling lunacy enforcing spending cuts, freedom from active shooters with assault weapons, elementary humanity toward refugees, aspiring immigrants and the undocumented, corporations paying a fair share of taxes instead of being provided with impunity with an elaborate web of avoidance and evasion routes etcetera etcetera as very reasonable and moderate, as do many Republican voters? Could it be there is a lot of suggestiveness and faux fear mongering against the ghost of socialism, socialism, socialism going on, in order to prevent moderate politics and so to cement an extremist right-wing agenda of horrid debt financed ultrawealthy welfare (that shoves the financial black holes that



these yachting bonuses create to future administrations) sold as prudent conservatism and healthy economics?

Me thinks the winning messaging for moderate and reasonable progressive policies has only just begun to take off.

spb commented January 24

s

spb

richmond, vaJan. 24

One frightening takeaway from this is that today's debased political climate is such that it can be considered radical (by otherwise level headed main stream commentators) to vehemently oppose bigotry and racism.

BarryNash commented January 23

B

BarryNash

Nashville TNJan. 23

The Times finds somebody to warn us all of this horror daily --of not being Age of Reagan Democrat "centrists at All Costs" any more--which leaves the party about as "far left" as Harry Truman. Do you people ever get off of this stuff--or is there any chance you can all retire quietly?

Independent commented January 23

I

Independent

the SouthJan. 23

@Chris Young

There is nothing free in life.

Government provided health care, say Medicare for all, would be paid for by paying Medicare what we currently pay to insurance companies.

Add to that, your point of big profit margins by health care providers.

9 Replies

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MA Jan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtp Jan. 23

@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

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The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UTJan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subjection indicates the opposite is true.

JM commented January 23

J

JM

NJJan. 23

@Tintin -- Keep up the good fight. Those of us who work at jobs to make household incomes like this can't seem to get through to people that we are terrified of being asked for even more. Because of the SALT deduction cap, few of us got any benefit from last year's tax reform (I got an extra \$50 a week and then had to give it back because of the lower deductions). We know that we will be expected to bear the brunt of these plans, as well as being taxed for Social Security on 100% of our income. What's the incentive to work hard if you don't get the benefits.

I'm not asking to pay any less. I just don't see why we are constantly being expected to pay more.

MaryKayklassen commented January 23

M

MaryKayklassen

Mountain Lake, Minnesota Jan. 23

Let's see, the one program, Medicaid, that is free for 75 million Americans spends \$600 billion each year, and 38% of the money comes from the budgets of the states, which, as it increases, is affecting their bottom line. Wouldn't it make sense to shore up this program, which is supposed to run out of money to pay all the bills in between 2-3 years? You see, President Richard Nixon proposed a single payer health care system, but the AMA (American Medical Association) that had the lobby power, put that one out to pasture. It is very sad, as had we had that back then, we could have charged a sliding fee amount for income, and adjusted it accordingly as more expensive treatments, and the costs to a 60% overweight, and obese population necessitated it. Now, we have 8 separate government programs, where over half of the population (180 million) are on one of them, that is basically free, except Part B of Medicare, where the monthly premium is \$135. These 8 are 1. Medicaid 2. Medicare 3. Veterans 4. Current Military 5. Federal government employees current, and former 6. Native American 7. Federal Prisons 8. ACA (Affordable Care Act) How are all those separate bureaucracies working out for us, and the fact that our country is now borrowing 33% of every dollar we spend each year, are \$22 trillion in debt, and Congress has promised another \$30 trillion in underfunded entitlements (the legal definition of the programs under different titles) over the next 30 years?

Seb Williams commented January 23

Seb Williams

Seb Williams

Orlando, FL Jan. 23

AOC is the ubermillennial. She is to us what Reagan was to the Boomers. That's why the right is so terrified of her. They know that they've lost millennials for good. They are hurrying to rig the system to thwart the change that is coming.

We lost the battle in 2016, but we were always going to win the war. Gen Y is entering the electorate, now, and they're even more to the left than millennials, especially on social policy.

Let's hope, for the planet's sake, that it's not too little, too late.

1 Reply

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Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Seb Williams

So far, Ocasio Cortez is all social media hat and no cattle. It's amusing that most of her admirers refer to her as AOC...because they either can't remember or can't spell her name.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

The article quotes Isabel Sawhill as saying, "In my view, it's a trade-off between exciting the base thereby insuring higher turnout vs. broadening the base to include independents and Republicans that don't like Trump."

Well, the Democratic Party had a candidate who did both in the presidential primary but insiders rigged the primary to nominate someone who did neither.

Anne commented January 23

A

Anne

San RafaelJan. 23

I never cease to be amazed at the way Americans, especially in the media, conflate the terms "leftist", "liberal" and "progressive," as if they all mean the same thing. Trade unions are typically opposed to unfettered immigration and "free" trade, classical liberals oppose government intervention, and Medicare for all would not be considered a "leftist" idea anywhere else in the entire world. I think all high school students should be

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required to pass a basic political vocabulary test prior to graduation and then maybe we would all be less confused.

Bookworm8571 commented January 23

B

Bookworm8571

North DakotaJan. 23

@EdBx Thanks for defining the problem for me. I am definitely what used to be called a blue dog — a moderate, though some of my ideas are probably fairly radical. I care far more about economic issues. Someone should give me a pitch for single payer health care that still maintains the quality of the health care system or a guaranteed minimum income or price controls for pharmaceuticals or a New Deal government program that puts people to work or more funding for housing and child care and college. Be old style Democrats. Tell me what's in it for me and the people I care about.

I am not particularly interested in identity politics or turf wars over who is the most oppressed or who said something that offended somebody else's delicate sensibilities last week on Twitter. It's annoying, it is a major turn off, and will prevent the Democrats from winning. I am also in favor of border security and controlling illegal immigration. The Democrats are as bad as the Republicans at this point. Reopen the government already so my cousin can feed his kids and can stop worrying about paying his bills.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Amanda Jones

Hope you are correct. Still there are the 40% of Democrats who are not Liberals, are they secret Republicans? and the 80% of Democrats who are not progressive.

If you're not progressive you just sit there and that's regressive when the Republicans are marching for the alt-Right.

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Claire Elliott commented January 23

Claire Elliott

Claire Elliott

EugeneJan. 23

@Socrates

I was wondering where he went, too. Thanks for the info.

9 Replies

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@C Wolfe

Wow. Funky Irishman has been, for many months, writing about and presenting excellent data showing that the US is actually a center-left (if not strongly progressive)

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country. I used to present this evidence to Richard Luetgen (where has he gone??) who kept insisting we are center-right (but never, as was his custom, presented any evidence for this).

your example is the best I've ever seen. I'm a member of a 4000-strong Facebook group, the "Rational Republicans" (seriously - a local attorney with a decidedly liberal bent started it and almost beat regressive Patrick McHenry here in Asheville). I've been making this point on the FB page for the past year and people are stunned when they see the numbers.

I'm going to post your example as well. Excellent!

Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJJan. 23

@don salmon

Richard Luetgen expired Dec. 1 2018 at age 63.

Here is his NYT obituary.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

john michel commented January 23

j

john michel

charleston scJan. 23



Please everyone, get this straight in your heads: America makes its money off of war.

Unfortunately, most of that money goes to the wealthy upper percent and gives the middle class and poor just nothing.

We are indentured servants.

Paul Rosenberg commented January 23

P

Paul Rosenberg

Bethesda, MDJan. 23

Wow I thought I was pretty centrist but except for abolishing ICE I'm in favor of everything on that "liberal" agenda. Zeitz's point is very well taken: what we're calling "progressive" right now would be have been pretty centrist in the 1930s and 1940s.

Also very interesting that neither Pressley's nor AOC's victory was largely based on "identity" (code word for race and ethnicity). Instead, based on votes from young white liberals and yes, gentrifiers.

The times indeed are a-changin'

Trini commented January 23

T

Trini

NJJan. 23

Thanks to Bernie Sanders for his courage in speaking out in his quest for the democratic nomination on the true beliefs of Democrats before they moved to Center Right. Beliefs as Universal Affordable Healthcare, affordable education, decent minimum wage, equal pay for all, childcare etc. Now we are beginning to reap the fruits of his labor. Hopefully they will all come to pass in the not too distant future. Thanks, Bernie!! (And you did it with little or no help from the mainstream media including this paper)

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1 Reply

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, IdahoJan. 23

@Trini

Yes! And Bernie did it with no help from the Democratic establishment.

Deb commented January 24

D

Deb

Jan. 24

Ocasio Cortez was the lone Democrat to vote against leadership backed bills to re open government.

News not conjecture

Just saying...

Aging Optimist commented January 23

A

Aging Optimist

Upstate New YorkJan. 23

There is always a lot to chew on in Thomas Edsall's pieces, particularly if one is willing to follow some of the highlighted links into greater depth. (Or is it into the weeds?) He pulls at a lot of threads here, provides a great deal for us to consider and leads for further consideration.

Still, it would enrich our understanding greatly if he could add some temporal context the way Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman did with AOC's tax policy proposals

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yesterday. Or if this purported policy swing leftward were compared to longstanding policies in European countries, even moderate capitalist ones like Germany. Anything that helps us become less self-referential as a polity will contribute to the big debate we are trying to have and sorely need in the U.S. now.

Sure, that would be a larger undertaking, result in more notes and links, and have more readers pleading TLDR or MEGO. But it might be a hit a la Piketty. It would certainly be a service to the country.

How about it, Mr. Edsall?

Southern Boy commented January 23

Southern Boy

Southern Boy

CSAJan. 23

The rise of AOC is unfortunate for the Democrat Party. I watched a video of her talking about billionaires being immoral and the world ending in 12 years due to climate change. What struck me the most about her remarks was how many times she used the word “like” in a single sentence, at least 2 or 3 times, and ending sentences with a high inflection as if they were questions. Listening to her talk is like, and I am using the word correctly, listening to the dialogue of the movie Clueless or Frank Zappa’s song about Valley Girls. I am not impressed by people who talk this way, men or women; it demonstrates a limited vocabulary and a certain degree of shallowness. Polls indicate that if AOC were old enough many people would support her to become president! Can you imagine the State of the Union in which every other word was “like”? Maybe that accounts for her popularity because her followers talk like (again used correctly) that as well; they understand her, and if she didn’t speak that way they would not. Well, I am not impressed, and neither are millions of other Americans. We may be deplorable, but we can speak with proper diction. Thank you.

1 Reply

heinrich zwahlen commented January 23

h

heinrich zwahlen

brooklynJan. 23

@Southern BoyLike your oh so articulate president Trump?

Jackson commented January 23

J

Jackson

VirginiaJan. 23

@Andrea Landry. The Dems are the party of identity politics. Do you honestly think Dems aren't rich - Soros, Steyers, Zuckerberg, Buffet, Clinton, Obama?

Lucretius commented January 23

L

Lucretius

NYCJan. 23

Why is the media creating this AOC meme? She has now become "famous for being famous." Let's wait until she accomplishes something other than being a 29 year old twitter celebrity.

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Start taxing religion instead of gifting those businesses with umpteen paths of exemption, tax avoidance and tax shelters. Those businesses alone can fund via their taxes many municipal/state and federal programs.

abigail49 commented January 23

a

abigail49

georgiaJan. 23

The most important thing is that somebody take back the conversation from the right wing in this country. The capitalist, anti-tax, anti-government, interventionist war wing has had the microphone for decades now. Our still- broken healthcare system is a nightmare and literally killing people. Wages don't keep up with the cost of housing, medicine or any other essentials. Students and their families go into deep debt to break into or stay in the middle class. It is the right wing that are the extremists and they their microphones unplugged.

ManhattanWilliam commented January 23

ManhattanWilliam

ManhattanWilliam

New York, NYJan. 23

Untile AOC starts to achieve some actual LEGISTATIVE VICTORIES, I'm not prepared to follow her ANYWHERE. I'm willing to listen to what she has to say, some of which I agree with and some I question. I lean Left on most issues but I'm not a fanatic, and fanatics exist on BOTH sides of the political spectrum. I believe that one must PROVE themselves before being beatified. In substance, I'm open to the "new wing" of the Democratic party which I am, officially, a member of. Let me add that I will NEVER cast a vote for anyone calling themselves a Republican because that very label is forever tainted in my book. But I don't much care for the 'tit for tat' Tweeting from AOC either, writing about Joe Lieberman (whom I do not like) "who dat"? What is "dat", Miss AOC?

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@JRS I'm all for free healthcare as soon as the healthcare providers, which I used to be, start rendering the care for free. What you are leaving out is the COST of healthcare and the PROFITS being made. There is nothing "free" about healthcare when the hospital charges you \$50 for a bandaid.

9 Replies

APT commented January 23

A

APT

Boston, MA Jan. 23

@MIMA Yes, absolutely. I'm retired from the healthcare field after practicing 38 years. It is unconscionable that we question the access of healthcare to everyone. The complaint usually heard from the right is about "the takers." Data I've seen indicates that the majority on "the dole" are workers, who can't make ends meet in the gig economy or the disabled.

That some lazy grubbers are in the system is unavoidable; perfection is the enemy of the good.

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtp Jan. 23

@MIMA,

As a retired R.N., it is a priority that in my lifetime every American has access to free healthcare as a right, BUT, unfortunately the Democratic Party has very mixed messaging, like a child in a candy store; how can anyone hope to eventually secure free healthcare for our people when we continue to open our southern border, ports and airspace to indigent people from nearly failed states who have no hopes of ever supporting themselves and actually drain our social services from poor black, brown and white poor people.

The Democratic Party needs to have better financial responsible representatives.

Rob Ware commented January 23

R

Rob Ware

Salt Lake City, UT Jan. 23

@JRS

Democratic party leaders have been in favor of more border security and an overhauled immigration system for as long as I've been alive. The suggestion (clearly this comment's intention) that Democrats favor "open" borders, ports, etc., is a myth propagated by an ever more influential right wing. And it's working: it's been repeated so often that it's now virtually an assumption that Democrats favor open borders, despite that fact that any critical thought on the subject indicates the opposite is true.

Matt commented January 23

M

Matt

San Francisco Jan. 23

Is it true? have we finally become the party of borderline socialist Democratic radicals that Republicans have been accusing us of being for all this time?? Does this mean that the time to seize the means of production is finally upon us?!?

Independent commented January 23

I

Independent

the South Jan. 23

Those terrible far left Democrats!

They want universal healthcare like all the other first world countries.

They want to continue public education with two years of trade school or community college. Get people educated and working and paying taxes instead of paying for welfare and prison.

We are the richest industrial country on the planet GDP / capita. But we poverty those other countries don't and we have the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Those terrible liberals want to protect the air and water and stop global warming.

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They want to give women birth control so they don't have unwanted pregnancies and don't have to consider having an abortion.

Shades of Karl Marx!

We pay around \$10,000 per capita for healthcare compared to the \$4,500 to \$5,500 the other first world countries pay.

They get universal coverage and we have parts of the US with infant mortality rates of a second world country. Seriously, look it up.

With the savings to healthcare, we could pay for the additional two years of education.

And maybe that would decrease poverty and crime. Then we would get more people working and paying taxes instead of paying for prison and police and courts.

We have the highest incarceration rate in the world.

I can't believe how far left these new Democrats want to take us.

What would the Founding Fathers be saying today.

In the meantime, Republicans just increased the deficit.

Again.

G. Slocum commented January 23

G

G. Slocum



AkronJan. 23

Justin Smith Morrill was one of the founders of the Republican party and the act that bears his name established the land-grant college program. Texas A&M is one of the land grant schools, as is the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where I went. The country made an investment in me, and I've repaid it many times over.

Investing in education is radical only if you use that term to mean fundamental, as in "investing in education is fundamental to the long term survival of our society." (see the first definition of radical at dictionary.com)

Ricardo Marino commented January 23

R

Ricardo Marino

ParisJan. 23

If you label every alternative to a broken system as "Socialism", eventually you will get young people asking if this "Socialism" thing is indeed all that bad.

Derek Flint commented January 23

D

Derek Flint

Los Angeles, CaliforniaJan. 23

I'm so tired of the ordinary, New Deal policies that won Democrats five successive presidential terms being called bold and leftist.

Further, if courting suburban Republican women and self-described centrists were the path to victory, Obama wouldn't have lost the House, Senate, 12 governorships and 1,000 state legislature seats. And Trump would not have won a majority of white women.

What apologists for status-quo, DLC-type politics elide is the number of potential Democratic voters who stay home because they don't have a good enough reason to

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stand in line to vote. For every suburban Republican they win over, they probably lose at least two of those.

Noke commented January 23

N

Noke

ColoradoJan. 23

@David G., I'm imagining you as perhaps one of those unicorn-level-rarities, a "compassionate conservative."

I would agree that government ownership of the means of production, or really the centralized coordination of an economy is a really bad idea. What I'm afraid of is not "socialists" capturing government and then taking over the means of production; I'm much more worried about the apparently-imminent capture of government by the "means of production," or the current oligarch class who suddenly appear to own everything. Centralized control of our economy by those folks would be a very, very bad idea. Diversity and pluralism are undoubtedly a stronger path forward, but they need a strong government to allow the conditions necessary (human rights enforcement) to flourish.

So, I agree with you regarding the threat, but not the direction the threat is coming from.

Finally, back to the needy: the only thing I disagree with what you had to say there was the "become productive" part. Who defines what is productive? It seems pretty clear that with advances in technology, human labor is becoming less and less valuable. I believe we can either let this realization destroy us (if we cling to primitive views that we always must be producing for some internalized parental figure), or it can usher in the most revolutionary era of human peace, healing, and flourishing in history (if we stop fighting imaginary demons and let evidence guide us).

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Unworthy Servant commented January 23

U

Unworthy Servant

Long Island NYJan. 23

Ah yes, confirmation bias and inductive reasoning. If you read the many quality journals not nicknamed the "Gray Lady", you discover a whole group of outstanding freshman House reps. and current or former governors not on the activist left.

Contrary to the slurs and bias here, most of these battle tested Democrats won in hostile territory and it wasn't doing the radical chic dance step. It is so easy to be "down" with the flavor of the month fevered cause emanating from elite academia's social science wing when one is safely in a deep blue district. Preaching to the choir is hardly breaking a sweat.

Democrats need to win in hostile territory, whether it is taking back the Senate or holding on to the districts won in 2018. Only in the blinkered, and blindingly unrealistic world of the militant left, will these hostile places suddenly awake to the dynamic preaching of Ms. AOC or her cohorts. Truth be told

the self-described socialists would rather break apart the Democratic party which is a very old and discredited tactic. See the HHH/Nixon race of 1968. Try taking down Republicans instead and leave doctrinal purity to theologians and antiquarians studying the Middle Ages.

Denver7756 commented January 23

D

Denver7756

DenverJan. 23

“wields disproportionate influence over which issues get prioritized”. Actually any Democrat can participate if they wish. Apparently the whole party is okay with those who participate otherwise they would and should.

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Ronny

Too bad we've DOUBLED our population since the 1960s, and not with the educated, stable and well-employed of the world who value, build and live side by side in democratic prosperity.

Mclean4 commented January 23

M

Mclean4

Washington D.C.Jan. 23

Since she is so smart and so capable and so many innovative ideas, she may wanted to go to Puerto Rico to help and advice the troubled island there. They need more helps than us and since her family was originally from Puerto Rico. Our government is in bad shape under Trump but not as bad as in Puerto Rico. There needs more help immediately. During her later years she may come back to take over Nancy Pelosi's job. I still remember the first wave of Puerto Ricans coming to NYC during early 1950s when I was a student in New York uptown.

PK commented January 24

P

PK

AtlantaJan. 24

@Maureen Were you here as an illegal immigrant? I don't think so. Most Americans are not against legal immigration; they are against illegal immigration. As a legal immigrant myself, I completely support the Republicans on this policy - illegal immigrants should not be allowed to stay in this country when legal immigrants have to jump through so many hoops to live here.

kilika commented January 23

kilika

kilika

ChicagoJan. 23

She's new-give her a chance to settle in after the shut down.

Gregory Scott Nass commented January 23

G

Gregory Scott Nass

Wilmington, DEJan. 23

I posit that there is an underlying trend towards all of those "liberal" policies. They will occur because the people want them and have for a long time. Our government stopped responding to the people many decades ago. All of this noise and the shift to blatant theft and authoritarianism are the death throws of the establishment. There are so many (non-political) trends that you ignore. And yes, us liberals are highly educated.

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I have a BS in Biotchnology, summa cum laude. And an MBA from Wharton. I received Pell grants. Check me out on Instagram: @grevlingard. I am 54 and will a lot long than my mom's angry Trumpian husband who with congestive heart failure will not live to the next election.

Wayne Fuller commented January 23

W

Wayne Fuller

Concord, NHJan. 23

Left, Right. They are such meaningless terms. What makes confronting climate change or creating Medicare for All a 'leftist' or 'far left' policy? What makes bringing back the marginal tax rates of the Eisenhower era a 'leftist' policy? The whole industrial world has a universal health care system and even the most ardent conservatives around the world acknowledge the threat of man made climate change. Even the most brain dead pundit can recognize that 23 people having more money than the bottom half of the nation is a more than a little out of balance. Maybe we should change the labels to 'care', 'don't care'. It would be a much more accurate term. However, labels like leftist and socialist scare and by adding them and pasting them on politicians willy nilly men like Edsall seeks to suggest that somehow these young politicians are bringing the next beer hall putsch or October revolution into America. Ridiculous stuff.

RC Wislinski commented January 23

R

RC Wislinski

Columbia SCJan. 23

I'm glad to see the Ds move left and embrace POLICY SOLUTIONs for higher ed, health access and support for female leadership. Its about time!

I'm an older white guy who spent his entire adult life in the South. Centrists lite POLICY TWEAKS and WHITE MALE candidates alone don't attract support from the rural & white working class (a fav swing group of Dr Edsall for some reason).

Moreover, I'm tired of D Party sensibilities towards this group's profound & deep prejudices, simple ignorance and easy electoral distraction. Let Trump and the Rs embrace these constituencies' worst instincts. And so be it.

Attracting young voters, women & the college-educated, suburban voters, people of color and diversity - and encouraging their FULL participation and leadership - is fine by me.

Lead from the front friends!!!!

nicola davies commented January 24

n

nicola davies

new hampshireJan. 24

@shstl

Thank you for your comment . I too weary of the immediate response of those who live in "coastal liberal areas" as "racist".....I begin to understand those who did vote for Trump.

I am not one of these voters.

I just see their point of view on "some" days, others, not so much at all.

Anyway, I am no longer reflexively a DEM. further to the left, Every  
....Single.....Day...

5 Replies

Ron Cohen commented January 23

Ron Cohen

Ron Cohen

Waltham, MAJan. 23

@shstl

Right on!

Deb commented January 23

D

Deb

Jan. 23

@shstl

I agree and as a moderate Democrat, I already feel like an outsider, so imagine what independents are thinking.

AOC stated that she wants to primary Hakeem Jeffries, who is a moderate. With statements like these, made before spending a day in congress, who needs the GOP to tear apart the Democratic party?

Sanders didn't even win the primary and his supporters claim the primary was stolen. We lost the house and senate all by ourselves.

I already have AOC fatigue and my rejoice for the blue wave is still there but fading.

UTBG commented January 23

UTBG

UTBG

Denver, COJan. 23

Best comment in some time. I work and live too much in the 'big flat'. I am a very hard core Chicago Democratic Liberal from birth, but the distressed towns and small cities are facing extinction.



then what?

fbraconi commented January 24

f

fbraconi

New York, NYJan. 24

The findings that AOC did best in gentrifying areas with large numbers of young white voters, while Crowley ran strongest in working class Latino and African-American neighborhoods, gives lie to the charge that the Democratic Party has become obsessed with race and gender. It should make people question exactly which party is that really practices identity politics.

rtj commented January 23

r

rtj

MassachusettsJan. 23

@Joshua Schwartz

"A O-C is more interested in "national" issues and exposure than those of her district. What A O-C may have forgotten is that it is her district and constituents that have to re-elect her in less than 2 years (or not)..."

Just want to compare and contrast that with Ayanna Pressley, who has a laser focus on her district.

"My process begins with the residents of the MA-7 congressional district. They are my greatest counsel and my stewards in how I vote, and in what legislation that I introduce. It's by actively listening to them that I better understand not only the nuance and the complexity of the problem, but usually where I find the solutions. "

As long as she continues to walk that talk, it should assuage any doubts i may have about her.

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Chip Lovitt commented January 23

C

Chip Lovitt

NYCJan. 23

As the right wing Fox news echo machine and others try to demonize this freshman Congresswoman, I am reminded of the famous Oscar Wilde line, (sorry for male-centric pronoun. It was all Oscar had at the time) "You can always judge a man by the quality of his enemies." The fact that Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez drawing the ire of the DC swamp is a good thing.

Chris Gray commented January 23

C

Chris Gray

ChicagoJan. 23

Millennials are either unable to get a job that pays more than \$12 an hour because they lack the skills and education to succeed in post-industrial America, or they do have the skills and education but are weighted down by the debt of their education and are forced to live like paupers in cramped, overpriced apartments indefinitely.

It's only natural that they would want the kind of active government their grandparents and great-grandparents supported with FDR, when the economic system was similarly broken. Neoliberal, Reagan-Clinton capitalism may have seemed great for baby boomers. For anyone under 40, not so much.

1 Reply

Peter commented January 23

P

Peter

ChicagoJan. 23

@Chris Gray

I'm in total agreement Chris and sadly things are going to get unbelievably worse for everybody because the unstoppable economic trend is automation which is going to exacerbate the social plagues and fanaticism already destroying the nation. Actually America is ceasing to be a nation and regressing towards primitive tribalism and technocratic despotism. We resemble 17th Century Scotland more than 20th Century America.

jdh commented January 23

j

jdh

Austin TXJan. 23

Doesn't the rise of a significant-sized left within the Democratic Party realm provide an opportunity for eventually achieving beneficial policies (and ones that won't be quickly reversed)? Many so-called moderate Dems want similar progressive outcomes, though preferring slower pursuit. Other moderate Dems are closer to opportunistic blank slates, who could see which way the wind is blowing and support progressive policies.

Until recently I thought a progressive third party was the best hope for pushing good and potentially popular policies forward in public debate, for future legislative achievement. But now I am willing to give the Dems a chance for a while at least. Remember too that Bernie was fairly popular in white working class areas; I found the same among some non-doctrinaire Republican voters I know.

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@Bill

It is still yet to be determined how this administration won because all of the facts are not in. They could have garnered help and conspired with foreign powers. (Mueller investigation and others)

What is out of step is thinking that the rich and corporations are more deserving of tax breaks than the poor or middle class.

The United States is a decisively Progressive nation bordering on Socialism. Poll any Progressive idea or policy and they are wildly popular. (even among republicans) For too long though, the radical right has polarized, used wedge issues and divided any group that may implement said policies for all. (and not just for all of one kind - like white christian males)

There is 100,000,000 that sits out any given election. Why is that ? Are they that uninterested and maligned that they think that everyone is the same?

That is changing friend, starting with this Congresswoman and ultimately leading to massive Progressive majorities in the near future.

Watch.

Joe Arena commented January 23

J

Joe Arena

Stamford, CTJan. 23

I wish she would do a lot more following, and less trying to lead. I appreciate her spirit and tenacity in giving a voice to working Americans of all stripes, however if Democrats are to win in 2020, it will not be with AOC type policies. These policies may fly in deep blue states, but will not appeal to swing states. Instead, we need more modest democratic proposals, such as tax cuts for the middle class with slight tax increases for the wealthy (already proposed by Harris/Booker/Brown), modest minimum wage increases, a public option for health care (not single payer), jobs/skills training and incentives for STEM (not free college), etc.

Bill commented January 23

B

Bill

from HonorJan. 23

It is wonderful to see that progressive ideas are coming to the fore in the Democratic party. The future of America belongs to the young, those not bogged down by the worn out failed ideas and practices that have dominated political thinking for far too long. There should be no efforts to pander to people who are stuck with outmoded thinking. Instead, every effort should be made to educate them to the new reality. These newly elected representatives may be ahead of their times but they must hold fast and work for what they believe. It is up to others to catch up.

Joe Arena commented January 23

J

Joe Arena

Stamford, CTJan. 23

Can we dispel this myth that universal health care, raising taxes on the wealthy (after deep tax cuts and deficits), parental leave, gun control, expanding medicare etc are somehow signs of Democrats "moving further to the left?" People need a little history lesson. Here's a reality check from the Bill Clinton era, recall the centrist Third Way politician from the 90's. Let's look at a few things Democrats promoted and/or passed in the 90's:

- Made a significant push for Universal Health Care via Single Payer, and actually came very close
- Raised the tax rate on the top bracket by nearly 10%
  
- Medicare Part C
- Pushed for Medicare Part D (later passed in 2003, though with flaws)
- Expanded the Earned Income Tax Credit

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- Expanded Social Security by creating TANF and SCHIP
- Passed the Family and Medical Leave Act
- Enacted gun control via the assault weapons ban and Brady bill

Meanwhile, the signature accomplishment from "Democrats" 2009 - 2010, last time they were in control of all three branches of Government with SIGNIFICANT majorities in modern times, was to pass a Republican Health Care Plan - the Heritage Foundation plan (Subsidies for the purchase of private, for profit insurance).

AOC would be just another Democrat if the year were 1930 - 1993. Sorry, but the current crop of Democrats have moved so far to the right that even modest liberal policies now have the illusion of appearing to conservative Democrats as "far left."

Mkm commented January 23

M

Mkm

NYCJan. 23

@citybumpkin - We maintain the defense readiness and infrastructure that allows each of the countries you mention to divert billions from defense.

Richard commented January 23

R

Richard

New YorkJan. 23

Awesome! 2020 = 1972 - the only question is which Democrat will play the role of George McGovern?

Ron Cohen commented January 23

Ron Cohen

Ron Cohen

Waltham, MAJan. 23

I agree almost entirely with the left-wing agenda, but I also know if the left pushes too hard, too fast, it will end up with nothing. The Democrats will be consigned once gain to the political wilderness. And those who put us there will have to be satisfied with comments in The Times to vent their moral outrage.

The Democrats can win the Electoral College in 2020 only by replicating the big tent approach of 2018, where successful Democrats tailored their campaigns to the needs of their constituents.

To win (and keep) both houses of Congress and the White House, The Democratic Party needs to be a party of pragmatism, not ideology.

Any attempt to stage an "intraparty coup" and impose standards of thought and policy, will surely backfire, as we see now happening to the Republican Party.

Bob Laughlin commented January 23

Bob Laughlin

Bob Laughlin

DenverJan. 23

One of the geniuses of American democracy is the push and pull between Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians with that debate historically between the Democratic Party and the republican party. Since republicans have gone all Russia/fascist the debate has shifted to the various wings of the Democratic Party.

I was going to add that the Democrats aren't turning into Marxists but retracing our heritage back to FDR and LBJ; but Joshua M. Zeitz beat me to it.

SomeGuy commented January 23

S

SomeGuy

OhioJan. 23

For the 70% maximum tax rate, two suggestions:

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1) Bring back income averaging over a period of years, which was an option when the maximum was 70% previously.

2) Index the highest rate, as well as all other tax rates, to inflation.

Emphasizing fairness, rather than confiscatory policies, just might swing enough votes to get this through.

David commented January 23

D

David

CaliforniaJan. 23

Alexandria is the latest flavor of the month; the latest shining penny with a definite following that doesn't look very durable.

2 Replies

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@David

I completely disagree.

The United States is a decisively Progressive country that the founding fathers envisioned. However, conservative forces (up until now) have split the many factions in the Democratic party to the point of massive disparity that we have now.



There are no more taxes to cut, and no more expenditures to put off. There is continuous war and ongoing discrimination. The hardships have become too great. People have had enough and are being persuaded to leave a republican party that does not reflect American values anymore.

It is the policies that will last, and those that advocate for them unequivocally. (pretty face or not)

PJGeary commented January 23

P

PJGeary

Exton, PA Jan. 23

Perhaps you, Sir, you are the one who needs to move past the shiny face. Read her resume and listen to what she says. Her economic perspective is well-educated and supported by many economists. She has now been placed on two very important committees: Finance and Oversight. Plus she continues to push for a Green Infrastructure Program. Speaker Pelosi did not place her on those committees because of her shiny face; as always Speaker Pelosi's decisions are well-founded.

michjas commented January 23

michjas

michjas

Phoenix Jan. 23

There are 12 leaders of the Progressive caucus. 11 come from districts that are overwhelmingly Democrat. And most of these 11 districts were gerrymandered to maximize the number of Republican Congressmen elected in the states involved.

As we all know, Republicans have used geography to gain the upper hand in creating gerrymandered districts. Age and gender were not nearly as important. And the success of Republican gerrymandering has been substantial.

Representatives from heavily Democratic districts fashioned by Republicans are the stronghold of the Progressive movement and were designed to promote a Republican

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Congress. Following progressive policies fashioned in gerrymandered districts is pretty much the definition of bad strategy.

DaveD commented January 23

D

DaveD

WisconsinJan. 23

Here in Wisconsin, where Trump won 2 years ago, new Dem Gov. Evers won by barely 30,000 votes; about Trump's margin of victory. And he's decidedly MOR. Meanwhile the Assembly and Senate remain in even stronger Republican hands.

Takeaway: Trumpism remains potent here in the midwest and it will take more than essays by dreamy-eyed elite coast liberals to undo.

Mr. Moderate commented January 23

M

Mr. Moderate

Cleveland, OHJan. 23

"They include the determination to oppose all things Trump, especially his anti-immigrant policies..."

Didn't you mean to say his anti-illegal immigrant policies?

Bob Guthrie commented January 23

B

Bob Guthrie

AustraliaJan. 23

@Shenoa

With sincere respect I do not think you are moderate though you describe yourself so.

- being critical of Israel does not necessarily equate with those who criticise the Israeli government, the leader of which is under criminal investigation. There are many left wing Jewish people and left wing Israelis

- America has a wonderfully welcoming attitude to immigration. However since you bring anti-Semitism into the argument, expecting Honduran refugees to wait patiently for visas in Tegucigalpa is not essentially different to expecting 1940's German Jewish people to wait patiently at some office in Berlin for permission to leave and for visas

-Reckless proposals to look after people? What is in truth reckless, is raising USA debt by trillions to pay off aspiring American oligarchs with obscene trickle down tax cuts

- Brazen exploitation by immigrants willing to do work the locals don't want to do? I guess that would justify putting children in internment camps and effectively abducting them from their parents.

I respect your opinion and respectfully, and I think logically, disagree with it.

Robert commented January 23

R

Robert

FranceJan. 23

I don't understand the point of quoting "experts" who apparently aren't knowledgeable enough to recognize that the policies they're labeling as too leftist or liberal are only the policies that were taken for granted throughout the 50's, 60's, and 70's. Anyone who has so weak a grasp of history has no business being quoted in the Times. It was post-Civil Rights racism that was harnessed to bring about the Reagan Reaction. Only our civil war over race under Obama and Trump is preparing the ground to restore tax policies stripped by corporate America.

Johnny dangerous commented January 23

J

Johnny dangerous

marsJan. 23

If AOC isn't on Trump's payroll, she should be.

She has infused the Republicans with a new stimulant, which will probably take them to victory in 2020.

To think an absolute nobody from Westchester/Bronx, a freshman congresswoman, who will more than likely disappear in 2 years and capture a 7 figure private sector salary, has sent the Republicans in a tailspin is absolutely absurd.

Ray Dalio nearly had an anxiety attack in Davos yesterday when he was asked about AOC's Socialist Agenda.

To think that a silly little girl can cause grown men/boys to drop into a flop-sweat is really quite amazing.

JJM commented January 23

J

JJM

Brookline, MA Jan. 23

Democratic voters may have shifted to the left, but have voters as a whole? That's the key question if the party is to regain control of the White House and/or the Senate.

In 2019, many of the Democrats new to the House were elected on moderate platforms, by voters who are not much more liberal than they were before. A strong move to the left--however that may be defined--that loses many of those voters will be self-inflicted wound of major proportions.

Achilles commented January 23

Achilles

Achilles

Tenafly NJ Jan. 23

One question lefties don't like to ask is what happens when millennials grow up, move to the suburbs and tire of paychecks going to high taxes? Let's not forget the counterculture looked ascendant in 1972. Eight years later we got the Reagan Administration. Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's rule as intellectual leader of her party may, mercifully, be short.

1 Reply

Kathy commented January 23

K

Kathy

OxfordJan. 23

@Achilles Did you even read the proposition? High rates start at \$10M not to mention there are still legal loopholes. After a slow start in job market, few will reach that level but maybe, for a strong safety net and communities these millenials might just consider it a good deal.

Apple Jack commented January 23

A

Apple Jack

Oregon CascadesJan. 23

The problem with Democrats "going back to their roots" and returning to the programs & policies of FDR & the Golden Age of American labor is the lack of union representation for the multitudes in the private service sector that now dominates our economy.

Pre-distribution, which is a damned poor term, but a noble & righteous term to redress growing inequality is the way to go. Greedy foolish capitalists & sloughing Dems beholden to corporate bucks have made \$15 an hour a very possible reality.

We'll see how well the young newcomers are able to resist being bought. Maybe the national spotlight AOC is bathed in trumps & overshadows home district concerns as her drift will include the masses in every corner. She toyed with & resisted her ice-cream on the Colbert show, let's see if she can cope with the courting billionaires & their gifted bangles.

James Karkheck commented January 23

J

James Karkheck

Hawai`iJan. 23

@Socrates

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Thank you than you, O Socrates with a sense of humor!

9 Replies

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Socrates

I'm reminded of a poll I saw several years ago that presented positions on issues without attaching them to any individual politician or affixing labels of party or ideology. The poll aimed to express the issue in neutral language without dog whistles or buzzwords. When the pollsters had the data, they looked for the member of Congress whose positions best reflected the view of the majority of respondents. It was Dennis Kucinich, the scary liberal socialist bogeyman of his day.

don salmon commented January 23

d

don salmon

asheville ncJan. 23

@C Wolfe

Wow. Funky Irishman has been, for many months, writing about and presenting excellent data showing that the US is actually a center-left (if not strongly progressive) country. I used to present this evidence to Richard Luetgen (where has he gone??) who kept insisting we are center-right (but never, as was his custom, presented any evidence for this).

your example is the best I've ever seen. I'm a member of a 4000-strong Facebook group, the "Rational Republicans" (seriously - a local attorney with a decidedly liberal bent started it and almost beat regressive Patrick McHenry here in Asheville). I've been making this point on the FB page for the past year and people are stunned when they see the numbers.

I'm going to post your example as well. Excellent!

Socrates commented January 23

Socrates

Socrates

Downtown Verona. NJJan. 23

@don salmon

Richard Luetzgen expired Dec. 1 2018 at age 63.

Here is his NYT obituary.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/reader-center/a-tribute-to-a-prolific-times-commenter.html>

Andrew commented January 23

A

Andrew

BostonJan. 23

The younger educated progressive voters who swept aside Michael Capuano despite his liberal record and hard work have ignored the functional importance of seniority in Congress. Let us hope the cost of this ignorance isn't too great. We need every advantage in the fight against the Republican troglodites and their reptilian leader.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

@RoRoger-

I'm an Emergency Physician in your state, and a product of the public school system, and I graduated with 250K in debt- I'm the least opposed person to this you have ever met, trust me.

I think the point of what I am trying to say here is being blurred- we are experiencing (arguably) the most divisive and acrimonious time in our countrys' history.

We are suffering under (arguably) the worst president of all time. We need to focus on the bigger picture and get him out- and AOC's politics and ideas- again, right or wrong- are deeply polarizing and will NOT be accepted outside of the liberal portions of our country. Don't believe me? Drive 100 miles East and talk to anyone you meet. It's a different country there. I LIKE her. I LIKE her ideas. But try to get them to bear fruit when their promotion won't cause further rifts in the marginalized/swing voters we so desperately need to get Trump out.

All I am saying is please- not now.

You will say... when, then..?

And I will say WHEN WE ARE NOT SUFFERING UNDER TRUMP.

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.



will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

She's been in office less than a month. You want to shut down the conversation that is finally bringing real hope & passion to average people, & is bringing a new set of goals (& more integrity) to the Democratic Party? Paying for single-payer has been rehashed many times; just look at all the other 'civilized' countries who have it. For once, try putting the savings from ending co-pays, deductibles, & premiums into the equation. Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

I understand what you are saying, but please remember- half of this country thinks- rightly or wrongly- that AOC and many of her ideals are unobtainable and socialist.

Whether they are or are not is NOT the point.

We need ideas that are palatable to the mainstream, average American- not just those of us on the liberal wings. And I AM one of those.

Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

Lou Good commented January 23

L

Lou Good

Page, AZJan. 23

What doesn't get discussed very much is how these appealing ideas will be funded. Shifting funds under the new tax bill won't even come close. Young people always support programs they don't have to pay for. I did and was able to get a public university degree in California in the early 80's supported by financial aid and a few small government loans. Am still grateful.

But policy without funding is nothing more than conversation. Somebody has to pay for the chicken in every pot. How are these programs going to be funded?

1 Reply

Ed L. commented January 23

E

Ed L.

SyracuseJan. 23

@Lou Good

Crickets and magic, that's how.

Chris W commented January 24

C

Chris W

Toledo OhioJan. 24

@XoxarlePlease provide specifics, anyone can find random/anecdotal “polling” to support pretty much any argument. Also, what does “significant” mean? Depending on the demographic being polled and my definition of significant I’m sure I could provide the exact opposite argument. Like I said, when she does something of merit maybe she’ll get some attention outside of liberal world. Ethnicity and gender are neither inherently good or bad. Identity politics is absolute nonsense, end of the story

Tom commented January 23

T

Tom

New Jersey Jan. 23

Trump is getting a lot of liberals, women, and minorities elected. That's nice, but it raises the question whether voters are voting for liberal reform, or against the Trump GOP. If they're voting against the Trump GOP, they'll snap back to the new GOP as soon as Trump is gone and the Democrats raise taxes.

Because that's the problem. As France discovered, raising top tax rates to 70% doesn't actually significantly increase the tax take. The really rich people (like Warren Buffett) make their money as capital income, which pays at 22% and 20% for dividends and capital gains. There is significant doubt whether Americans are willing to raise their own taxes (as opposed to people richer than themselves) for any of these liberal reforms, and that's what it would take. When liberals making \$250K call for tax rises, but only for those who make more than \$500K, be suspicious that actual support for actual reform is not there. And that's inside the Democratic party. There's absolutely zero support for higher taxes on the general public in the general public.

.

The Democrats need to sell ideas like: We're going to raise all marginal tax rates by 5%, or put in a value added tax, but you will get your health care paid for by the government, not your employer. If that sounds like political suicide, then Medicare for all is a pipe dream, as are a lot of the rest of these ideas. Higher middle class taxes is the price of liberal reforms. Will people vote for higher taxes?

1 Reply

Larry commented January 23

L

Larry

Long Island NY Jan. 23

@Tom

The problem with healthcare is not that it is paid for by your employer, which is not totally correct, but it is an insurance that is tied to your job. Your employer pays a portion of the premium to the insurance company and you pay the rest. An example

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would be, your employer pays \$450 a month towards your insurance and you pay as much as \$1900 for a month for the rest of the coverage depending on the plan. If you change jobs, your insurance changes. If you lose your job, you lose your insurance unless you opt to pay COBRA at an exorbitant rate for less coverage.

The problem with our healthcare system is that it treats our bodies as profit centers for the insurance companies. Their business is to maximize returns to their investors. Our health and well being is secondary to profitability.

Until we take a stand and demand that our healthcare is a fundamental right of all Americans and not a profit making business venture, we will continue to be a second or third rate country when it comes to healthcare.

Conservatives have to get over the notion about socialized medicine or whatever you want to call it. It rankles them to think that someone may get something for nothing. The something that people will get is a chance to lead a healthy life.

Take the insurance companies out of the equation, let the money that would go to them go into Medicare for all.

Red Sox, '04, '07, '13, '18, commented January 23

Red Sox, '04, '07, '13, '18,

Red Sox, '04, '07, '13, '18,

BostonJan. 23

"...what is being proposed is a much larger role for government, and that those who are most in need of government support are in the bottom half of the income distribution and disproportionately minority." Yes, quite true, but Donald Trump is demonstrating daily that the United States as a whole, not merely the "sum of its parts," cannot continue to survive as a national community without government as its basic function.

I don't really think that many Americans wish to do away with the system of capital, but, certainly now, with Trump, income inequality has surged to the forefront as the issue that concerns just about everyone--who is not wealthy--across the political spectrum.

I agree with the contributors to Mr. Edsall's article that women, especially Republican suburban women, are much more likely to return "to their home" after 2020. The danger for the Democrat who will challenge him next year, whomever he or she may be, as well as for the party in general, will be avoiding a drift to what many might fear will be the extreme left. The party must hew to the moderate center if it is to attract those who saw

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Donald Trump as flawed but acceptable, hoping that seasoned Republicans would rein him in. The president wrestled the party from the hierarchy and forced it to become something it always wanted to be but has now become politically vulnerable because most citizens see it now for what it really always was. They can't go back.

The "New Democrats" must be cautious.

1 Reply

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Red Sox, '04, '07, '13, '18,

"The party must hew to the moderate center if it is to attract those who saw Donald Trump as flawed but acceptable"

You are suggesting that Hillary should just try again.

"avoiding a drift to what many might fear will be the extreme left."

There is nothing extreme about the left. It's not extreme at all to vote for \$15/hour and healthcare. That's getting back to normal. The so-called extreme left is normality. Nothing to fear but fear itself.

"The "New Democrats" must be cautious." Only if they want to lose again.

Pedal to the metal is what the People want and need. We want risk, not politics as usual. Risk and controversy get media attention and turnout and buzz.

Trump has changed everything, why is that difficult to understand? When there is change, you adapt or lose.

John Brews ..   commented January 23

John Brews ..  

John Brews ..  

Reno NVJan. 23

A move to the left is desirable, but can the Dems present such sensible programs and charismatic candidates as to carry the swing voter?

If the billionaire backers of the GOP want to disembowel the Dems, all they need is a good independent candidate to siphon off the swing vote from Dems, leaving Trump the winner in 2020.

Given the mastery of disinformation by the GOP, they easily could pump up support for an independent candidate. They know how to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, media in general. Already they define reality for 40% of voters. How hard would it be to refashion a tiny bit of their effort to achieve a similar success for swing voters?

Robert commented January 23

R

Robert

SeattleJan. 23

The Democrats' move to the left will more likely succeed to the extent that it is coherent, measured, and based on stated principles. These are the elements that are missing in our political landscape, and are crucial to restoring credibility to our dialog.

You wish to abolish ICE? What is the problem that such an action would address--and on what principle is the action based?

You wish to assure the right to housing for all? What is the accepted principle on which that is based--or what new principle will we be adopting if none exists now? And what does a society commit to, and agree to extend to all, when it agrees that housing is a right?

Similarly, the right to health care; the right to free education: On what principle are these rights to be extended, and what obligation do we, and our self-governance, incur in agreeing to them?

Effective and powerful rhetoric is essential for successful political candidacy, both for parties and individual candidates. The Democrats will be successful only if their rhetoric is based on clearly stated and widely appealing principles of governance.

Jesse The Conservative commented January 23

J

Jesse The Conservative

Orleans, VermontJan. 23

I wish Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and all of her acolytes the very best in their efforts. Let their economic and historical ignorance take them to a place most American will not follow. Heaven forbid what would happen to our economy if they truly gained power.

Ben commented January 23

B

Ben

NYCJan. 23

Voter turnout in this country, even in presidential elections, rarely exceeds half of registered voters. Telling the Democratic party that they must attempt to woo people who disagree with their policies based on the fact that those people voted in the past ignores the massive population that doesn't vote at all.

If the Democratic party can convince even 8% or 10% of the non-voting population to vote for Democrats then they will never worry about suburban white women again.

Steve commented January 23

S

Steve

San Francisco, CAJan. 23

@Michael

The state and federal governments made subsidizing college education easier before college administrators ran up costs and expenses for dubious majors, luxury recreation halls and new buildings. It's ironic that the colleges have priced themselves out of the market and need even more subsidies!

I'd give more credit to the left if they'd stop painting healthcare for all and college education as "free." It's not, hasn't been or will be some. Someone will pay (and since the rich can avoid taxes via global transactions), folks will the middle will get stuck with the check.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23



@Michael - cheaper tuition starts with getting the Federal Govt out of the student loan business, it's as simple as that. Virtually unlimited tuition dollars is what drove up tuition rates. Higher Ed is a business, make no mistake.

C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

@Midwest Josh

I don't think that's entirely accurate, and even if true, leaving students to the predations of private lenders isn't the answer. Although I'm willing to entertain your thesis, soaring tuition has also been the way to make up for the underfunding of state universities by state legislatures. At the same time, there's been an increase since the 70s in de luxe facilities and bloated administrator salaries. When administrators make budget cuts, it isn't for recreational facilities and their own salaries—it's the classics and history departments, and it's to faculty, with poorly paid part-time adjuncts teaching an unconscionable share of courses. So universities have been exacerbating the same unequal division between the people who actually do the work (faculty) and the people who allocate salaries (administrators)—so too as in the business world, as you say.

Larry Roth commented January 24

L

Larry Roth

Ravena, NYJan. 24

@A. Stanton If Hillary were president (as a majority of the voters wished), we would be somewhere in the middle right now of a Republican campaign to impeach her. It's how they roll.

5 Replies

michjas commented January 23

michjas

michjas

Phoenix Jan. 23

@A. Stanton

Since 1990, there have been funding gaps, shutdowns or serious threats of shutdowns almost every year. They have become routine tactics in the effort of each party to drive a hard bargain.

Mr. Slater commented January 23

M

Mr. Slater

Brooklyn, NY Jan. 23

@A. Stanton

Well, she's not the president (thankfully) and you can't predict hindsight only speculate.

fast/furious commented January 24

f

fast/furious

the new world Jan. 24

@A. Stanton

Don't make anything about Hillary.

That ship has sailed.

libdemtex commented January 23

I

libdemtex

colorado/texas Jan. 23

The Democrats need to get back to where they were—more liberal. Republican Lite is wrong and a loser. Clinton was wrong just as Newt was wrong.

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reju lavtok commented January 23

r

reju lavtok

Albany, NYJan. 23

We need the equivalent of a Fox News megaphone to educate the people that the terms Left/Liberal mean "for the people" and the terms Right/Conservative mean for the rich and anti-democratic. Such a 'magaphone' might also point out the ways in which the Right/Conservatives work to sow discord among the people and splinter them from their common good. That would mean raising the consciousness of the people about racism, misogyny, immigrants and all the ways in which people have been distracted or have been made to turn against one another. We can start by educating Trump's base about the wall they want and the man who wants it. Not all of them are lost to reality. But first, the Left/Liberals must have their equivalent in the media. Who could be better to lead this effort than former President Barrack Obama !!

1 Reply

JRS commented January 23

J

JRS

rtpJan. 23

@reju lavtok,

Surely you jest.

We do not need a Fox news for the left.

We need CNN to get back to its roots for they are currently undermining Fox News in its reach for the gutter.

We need a news media that is unbiased, more facts, less innuendo and opinion; leave the opinions to the public at large, the comments sections and talk radio.

The news media is the instigator of our dysfunctional democracy.

Yes a free press is essential, tell us the facts, leave your opinion in the anonymous comments sections of your local newspaper.

John B commented January 23

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J

John B

St Petersburg FL Jan. 23

@Cass Her ideas are not the only ideas, they are a starting point for a discussion. You even appear to agree with this.

Peter commented January 23

P

Peter

Chicago Jan. 23

@FunkyIrishman

“The United States is a decisively Progressive nation bordering on Socialism.”

What on Earth?! Funky Guinness perhaps?!

“Poll any Progressive idea or policy and they are wildly popular. (even among republicans)”

Polls are vastly overrated and discredited and useful only to social science eggheads

“For too long though, the radical right has polarized, used wedge issues and divided any group that may implement said policies for all. (and not just for all of one kind - like white christian males)”

As if there aren't always clear losers in any political fight

Steve C commented January 23

S

Steve C

Boise, Idaho Jan. 23

This article notes that some believe that demanding Medicare for All or a \$15 minimum wage is demanding "ideological purity" from politicians. Really? In fact, those demands are just common sense.

We've tried 70+ years of healthcare based primarily on private insurance provided by employers, and it's failed miserably to give us affordable, simple to use, universal health care. We've had Medicare for 50+ years providing affordable, simple to use, successful universal care for all seniors. Common sense tells us we shouldn't continue the 70+ years of failure of private insurances but instead expand Medicare's obvious success to all.

Nobody using common sense thinks \$7.25 an hour (\$15,000 a year for 40 hours, 52 weeks of work) is a living wage. Neither Obama's \$10.10 proposal (\$21,000 a year) nor Hillary Clinton's \$12 proposal (\$25,000 a year) gets you a living wage in most of the country, especially if you have dependents. Yet demanding \$15 is supposed to be reaching for "irrational purity" rather than for the obvious.

We have to see that some so called "purity tests," as the political center and right call Medicare for All and \$15 minimum wage, are necessities for the poor and working class, not extravagant, ideological indulges.

laura commented January 23

I

laura

SF Jan. 23

I'm troubled that the NYT gives platform to these hand-wringing opeds that wish to frame the recent "left" push as something radical and should be approached with more caution.

As a voter who votes D but desperately wished our party system were not so entrenched, I will support the candidate who demonstrates willingness to serve the people and not the party. I appreciate the complexity of analysis that goes into understanding and identifying swing voters to attract. Don't expect normal voters to choose a "moderate" and "safe" candidate in their mind because some DC technocrats told them to vote for this more viable candidate. THAT is a subtle way of robbing people of their true vote.

Furthermore, the new, young (fresh) progressives do speak to the base and have something to offer the giant bottom of the pyramid of our population--that is, us, we the people. To suggest otherwise is not being honest.

Odo Klem commented January 23

O

Odo Klem

ChicagoJan. 23

It's not the Democrats moving left of center. It's the Democrats moving to the center. It's just that with the Republican move to far right policies and agenda, when media or whoever treats things as 'balanced' the perceived center is center right rather than actual center.

Chris Rasmussen commented January 23

Chris Rasmussen

Chris Rasmussen

Highland Park, NJJan. 23

An interesting analysis of the divisions within the Democratic Party. My prediction: in 2020 the Democrats will nominate and elect a typical middle-of-the-road liberal who pretends to be progressive, but then governs like a typical liberal. Democratic voters will fall for it, and then be disappointed by the results. I venture no predictions about 2024 and 2028, except to say this: When Democratic presidents screw up, terrible things happen. LBJ's war in Vietnam led to Nixon. Carter's vacillation led to Reagan. Clinton's scandal led to Bush. And Obama's difficulties (admittedly, mostly a result of GOP intransigence) and support for Hillary Clinton led to Trump. So I hope that the Democrats find a way to succeed this time around, but I will believe it when I see it.

1 Reply

B. Rothman commented January 23

B

B. Rothman

NYCJan. 23

@Chris Rasmussen. Every one of those middle of the road Dems did a better job overall for the average American and our economy than any of the Republicans mentioned, who each left the nation poorer and economically less productive and in more debt — contrary to Republican propaganda. To believe otherwise is to live in La-La land where blaming the other guy, misogyny, racism and a variety of other unwholesome beliefs encourage the destruction of national cohesion: i.e. divide and conquer.

BorisRoberts commented January 23

B

BorisRoberts

Santa Maria, CAJan. 23

Since they're going to "Pull a train" on someone, and since she "used to be a bartender in NYC and can read guys like a book", I figure some scandal is going to pop up soon and derail her.

RH commented January 23

R

RH

WisconsinJan. 23

One way to get unreliable voting groups to get reliable is to have their candidates win. It gets self-fulfilling when they keep losing elections - why bother? So, a little success goes a long way.

Another way to discourage them from participating in future elections is to not keep campaign promises. Maybe they won't be able to get the results they want

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instantaneously, but at least show them that you are trying. AOC is just one of many impressive new Congresspeople. I'm impressed so far.

My wish is that they keep pushing for the policies they ran on, and don't disappoint their voters, like the tired old politicians always have in the past. It's the only way real change will be effected.

Ole Fart commented January 23

O

Ole Fart

La,In, Ks, Id.,Ca.Jan. 23

Increasing economic inequality makes America's form of capitalism less and less attractive to more Americans, especially the young who see their future evaporating. Repubs' so called populism is a sham and more Americans are realizing this. Trump surrounds himself with right wing billionaires who care nothing for the 99% who try to make their way through our rapacious economic system. We can do so much better and we had better get started before our democracy slips away from us. No more "republican lites" such as Hillary.

Gerry commented January 23

G

Gerry

NYJan. 23

Much has been made of the Trump-effect on the 2018 elections, but the impact of President Obama cannot be underestimated. The fact that so many younger white liberals voted for women of color against their more established primary opponents is the result of their coming of age during Obama's presidency. His competence and politics of good faith made it easier to imagine similar governing qualities in those who more closely resemble him, even if his policies were not as progressive as most liberal Democrats wished.

charles commented January 23

c

charles



minnesotaJan. 23

These ideas are our belated attempt to rejoin the civilized world. It will be a test of whether or not the voters can read past the label.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Ellen

Always a good point to remember. Our military is killing us slowly but surely like a chronic disease.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

Canada has a program like Medicare for All, and its bottom line health care statistics are better than ours in spite of a worse climate. We paid \$9506.20 per person for health care in 2016. In Canada, they paid \$4643.70. If our system we as efficient as Canada's, we would save over \$1.5 TRILLION each and every year. This is money that can be used for better purposes.

If one uses the bottom line statistics, we see that both Canada and the UK (real socialized medicine) do better than we do:

Life expectancy at birth (OECD): Canada- 81.9, UK - 81.1, US - 78.8

Infant Mortality (OECD)(Deaths per 1,000): Canada - 4.7, UK - 3.8, US - 6.0

Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Casual Observer commented January 23

C

Casual Observer

Los AngelesJan. 23

Your education was paid by others not by some free market tooth fairy type. Taxes must go up to support higher education both to pay for undergraduate educations and to support the government research and other programs that supported higher education before the “Reagan Revolution” set this country on the path to economic and political stagnation.

38 Replies

Ken commented January 23

K

Ken

New YorkJan. 23

@Michael. Pell grants and cheap tuition allowed me to obtain a degree in aerospace engineering in 1985. I'd like to think that that benefited our country, not radicalized it.

Midwest Josh commented January 23

M

Midwest Josh

Four Days From SaginawJan. 23

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C Wolfe commented January 23

C Wolfe

C Wolfe

Bloomington INJan. 23

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RebeccaTouger commented January 23

R

RebeccaTouger

NYJan. 23

Vote only for those who renounce corporate money.

The rest are traitors to the American dream.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@M. McCarthy

The US is good only for acute care medicine such as surgery and that represents 25% of healthcare. The 75% is chronic care and the MDs are idiopathic with that - cancer, diabetes, neurodegenerative diseases, heart disease...completely clueless so they manage or "treat" with drugs but never cure. Medical errors (primarily correctly prescribed pharmaceutical side-effects and not operating room or natural deaths) kill about 250,000 people every year (but don't worry, they have insurance).

Canada does better for everyday care than the US and at a lower cost. But many Canadians come to the US for specialty care. In fact rich people all over the world fly in for that.

The best doctors in the US are cash-only and can think outside the conventional medicine echo chamber. The Malpractice Doctors are those that take insurance and merely obey their pharmaceutical masters.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

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José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

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Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

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That indicates some funny business going on.

Nelly commented January 23

N

Nelly

Half Moon BayJan. 23

As an old Lefty, I love the discussion of new directions and a re-instatement of these social and environmental ideals, but I have heard some pretty dumb stuff that isn't helpful to this cause in the slightest.

The "open-border" stuff is just foolish to the nth degree. It is impossible to argue for. Utterly reforming ICE because they are cruel and ineffective, fine. But the simple call to eliminate border and immigration enforcement threatens failure of the whole new package of Democratic ideals.

Further, Nancy and Chuck haven't handled the messaging against Trump and his wall well at all. They have a crisp sound bite that they befuddle:

"The Wall won't work, nor can it ever be continuous with so much privately held border lands. But other security measures will work more effectively and that's why we won't waste money on a foolish Wall."

Just keep hammering that point. So, at it's start, the new Dem House isn't impressing me at all. They say many good things but these will never get through if the open border talk continues. In fact, it may be too late already.

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Good on the new young members, but their strong strain of ID politics further endangers us. The newbies are total rookies.

1 Reply

Nelly commented January 23

N

Nelly

Half Moon BayJan. 23

@Nelly

Further, Trump's Wall has an element to it that repulses Republicans: eminent domain and "stealing" private lands for the Government. Without doing so, the wall is totally porous and stupid.

The Dems should be hammering the point home that: "Trump wants to steal you land and there is nothing you can do about it!"

-----

The rookie Dems are just like baseball rookies: they throw to the wrong base, miss the cut-off man, and wildy strike out when all they have to do is make contact to score a run....

All of these mistakes stem from wanting to be instant heroes.

Unconvinced commented January 23

U

Unconvinced

StateOfDenialJan. 23

@Richard McLaughlin If they have none, they'll invent it. The party of Sen. Joe McCarthy, the John Birch Society, the 'swiftboaters', etc, are geniuses at the smear.



Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Seb Williams

So far, Ocasio Cortez is all social media hat and no cattle. It's amusing that most of her admirers refer to her as AOC...because they either can't remember or can't spell her name.

Rich commented January 23

R

Rich

St. LouisJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

This is completely correct.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mrfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mrfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A.Jan. 23

@Aaron

The majority of Californians during the 1950s and 1960s paid taxes. That's how you get to have a game of musical chairs where everyone is seated when the music stops.

Ugly and Fat Git commented January 23

Ugly and Fat Git

Ugly and Fat Git

Superior, COJan. 23

If Ms. Ocasio-Cortez runs for 2020 she will have me vote.

David MD commented January 23

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D

David MD

NYCJan. 23

"With all the attention that is being paid to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, Rashida Tlaib..."

Not noted, but especially important to many NYT readers is that each of these people are anti-Israel. The same is true as noted in these pages of the leadership of the Women's movement.

I was surprised to read that Republican mega-donor Sheldon Adelson had until a few years ago been a Democrat.

Also, notably, former Rep. Ellison, who was one of \*only 8 members of Congress to vote against\* funding for Iron Dome missiles for Israelis to shoot down rockets shot by Hamas at civilians, was almost made head of the DNC and was made its Deputy.

This anti-Israel trend, which many claim is anti-Semitic of the new Democratic Party to be addressed by the entire party.

WSJ (2012) : Sheldon G. Adelson: I Didn't Leave the Democrats. They Left Me

There is an anti-Israel movement among the rank and file, and the party no longer appears to value self-reliance, charity and accountability.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970204712904578092670469140316>

Richard Mclaughlin commented January 23

R

Richard Mclaughlin

Altoona PAJan. 23

I wonder how much 'oppo' the Republicans have on A.O.C., and are just holding it back for a more opportune time? She has been way to free a spirit up until now for there not to be oppo. Having jumped into the political arena on a whim, there's no way she was keeping her life as pristine as she likes to let on. Undoubtedly, she does talk about the most flattering 'escapades' in her life, but living in NYC for as long as she did under the radar so to speak. It's out there waiting.

4 Replies

renee commented January 23

r

renee

Jan. 23

@Richard Mclaughlin You are falling for the Republican's demonizing a new, left congresswoman and joining a now launched campaign to get rid of her. My guess is you are aligned with this approach and do not support her platform. She may fall but not because of her goals, but because of practices that should be beneath us.

Unconvinced commented January 23

U

Unconvinced

StateOfDenialJan. 23

@Richard Mclaughlin If they have none, they'll invent it. The party of Sen. Joe McCarthy, the John Birch Society, the 'swiftboaters', etc, are geniuses at the smear.

James Mullaney commented January 23

J

James Mullaney

Woodside, NYJan. 23

@Richard Mclaughlin As opposed to, say, the dirt the Russians have on Manhattanite billionaire playboy Trump?

Robert Roth commented January 23

R

Robert Roth

NYCJan. 23

It sounds like you are out there waiting, maybe dreaming, maybe aching to find out just what that could be. If so, why?

Frank Leibold commented January 23

F

Frank Leibold

VirginiaJan. 23

@Jason A.

I agree with you -100%

Ellen commented January 23

E

Ellen

San DiegoJan. 23

@Fourteen

I agree with your analysis of our medical care "system" that is so infected by BigPharma. Many journal articles are ghost written and busy doctors in corporate medicine haven't the time to separate the wheat from the chaff as far as prescription drugs go. Wise to follow Public Citizen's advice - wait until a drug has been on the market for at least seven years when its true side effect profile becomes clear.

Web link for this document: [Here](#)

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17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

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Maternal Mortality (WHO): Canada - 7, UK - 9, US - 14

Instead of worrying how we would pay for it, we will have the problem of how to spend all the money we would save.

BTW can you point to a period where too high federal debt hurt the economy? In 1837 the federal debt as a percentage of GDP was 0%; it was 16% in October of 1929. Both were followed horrendous depression. It was 121% in 1946 followed by 27 years of Great Prosperity.

José Franco commented January 23

José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

@JABarry Help me out since I'm new at this. Do you have any empirical data to support Social Security's sustainability? Do you have empirical data or a simplified argument for universal health care? I want this as much as you do. What I'm afraid of is people who rationalize their behavior because they're pursuing what they perceive as a noble cause only to realize the realities of the situation after the fact. In other words, I'm trying to avoid shooting my arrow at the direction I want to then painting a target (bullseye) around it. What is it that I don't see? Thanks in advance.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

Quite simply Canada's healthcare quality is ranked 16th in the world, while ours is lower ranked at 23rd. And we pay twice as much.

That indicates some funny business going on.

Roger commented January 23

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R

Roger

CaliforniaJan. 23

@Cass

She doesn't have a particular green new deal. She proposes that we find a way to follow the scientific consensus that we address climate change in an urgent way. There is nothing "radical" about it.

6 Replies

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Matthew D.

Actually, her ideas are to the left of Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. So yes, they really are to the left.

A thoughtful green new deal is a great idea. Her particular green new deal, not very well thought out, would bankrupt the country and bring about more internal and global chaos than Trump.

Increasing the top marginal tax rates to the extent that is economically necessary is a fine idea. Increasing these rates to a percentage that "feels good " is sloppy and could bring about the opposite results of what people would like.

These are radical ideas.

Urko commented January 23

U

Urko

27514Jan. 23

" .. This will be difficult, given the fact that what is being proposed is a much larger role for government, and that those who are most in need of government support are in the bottom half of the income distribution and disproportionately minority — in a country with a long racist history .."

Inconvenient fact, Mr. Edsall -- "government role" costs \$\$\$.

USA taxpayer debt is 2x what it was in 2008. Even the USSR had debt limits -- look up their old bond records.

Money isn't "racist" -- it just is.

You're welcome, sir.

John B commented January 23

J

John B

St Petersburg FLJan. 23

@Cass Her ideas are not the only ideas, they are a starting point for a discussion. You even appear to agree with this.

FunkyIrishman commented January 23

FunkyIrishman

FunkyIrishman

member of the resistanceJan. 23

@David

I completely disagree.

The United States is a decisively Progressive country that the founding fathers envisioned. However, conservative forces (up until now) have split the many factions in the Democratic party to the point of massive disparity that we have now.

There are no more taxes to cut, and no more expenditures to put off. There is continuous war and ongoing discrimination. The hardships have become too great. People have had enough and are being persuaded to leave a republican party that does not reflect American values anymore.

It is the policies that will last, and those that advocate for them unequivocally. (pretty face or not)

citybumpkin commented January 23

c

citybumpkin

EarthJan. 23

The refrain that "America is the greatest country in the world" is holding this country back. I say this because we have become so navel-gazing that we have convinced ourselves that we have nothing to learn from anybody else in the world, and live in our own little delusional bubble. The level of alarm at this supposed "sharp, left turn" is a good example.

This "sharp, left turn" by the Democratic electorate is actually just putting our country in line with most of the modern developed world. You take these economic ideas supported by new wave Democratic politicians to Canada, France, Germany, Japan, wherever...and they would be moderate center-left ideas. In fact, they would usually be in line with longstanding policies.

But we are so off in our own bubble our pundits are talking about it fearfully like these it's the unknown frontier.

1 Reply

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Mkm commented January 23

M

Mkm

NYCJan. 23

@citybumpkin - We maintain the defense readiness and infrastructure that allows each of the countries you mention to divert billions from defense.

Robert Avant commented January 23

R

Robert Avant

Spokane, WAJan. 23

If "progressives" are truly returning to their roots as some suggest then watch out below. The Great Society was an exercise in public service experts incredible hubris that accomplished far too little and created far more damage than even Jeff Goldblum in Jurassic Park could foresee.

Mgk commented January 23

M

Mgk

CTJan. 23

I worked for McGovern, McCarthy and others in hoping that this country would finally stop voting against its own self interest. What I got was Nixon, Reagan and the two Bushes.

I get it that the demographic shift is happening but two things mitigate against it---it will take three more cycles for it to actually happen and voter suppression will try to stifle it (especially in the South and Midwest).

I canvass for local candidates and stay active.

You politically fight but you also have to be practical.

We are in the middle of a social and economic mess of our own making---because many people in our own party thought Hillary was flawed, they voted against her and did not vote at all. You now see what that has wrought---the whirlwind.

Until the demographic shift is an actual reality this is a center right country. Our party won the House because they picked up suburban seats in Republican leaning districts--  
- I hope the progressives understand that.

In order to have power you have to be elected first, that is political reality. You also have to retain it. In a political sense, the Republicans do one thing better than we do --- support one another even if we disagree and are not entirely happy with the nominee. Litmus tests are a sure way not to win the election---I know because I have experienced it.

onlein commented January 23

o

onlein

DakotaJan. 23

Where we are now, few if any people can save enough for retirement, certainly not for nursing home care, should it come to that. Without some form of guaranteed medical care, most people can't afford it. The trend is toward more privatization, more profit making off services, less service for the dollar, more money heading toward Wall Street and away from Main Street. And many of us accept it like sheep. We have caved as though this trend is irreversible.

This old very liberal Democratic curmudgeon is heartened by the party not accepting this trend. My concern, though, is that we might have a presidential race similar to what the GOP had, with way too many candidates, and it might split the party, resulting in a candidate for a splinter group, in effect dividing the party--and giving the GOP another presidential win.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

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@Len Charlap

That number bears repeating so let me make it bigger: \$1,500,000,000,000 - per year every year.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@JABarry - Some data:

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José Franco

José Franco

Brooklyn NYJan. 23

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Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

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That indicates some funny business going on.

Tracy Rupp commented January 23

T

Tracy Rupp

Brookings, Oregon Jan. 23

Stop the killing of peasant people around the world. It's drained the treasury and made America more mean. We have some of the meanest Christians in the world, here. They voted for Trump.

Liberals have been waiting forever for the Democratic Party to notice them. It's time. If we win but don't promote the liberal philosophy - if our leaders don't preach it from their bully pulpits - then how will this country make the changes it so desperately needs (Even though so many are too politically and economically and spiritually ignorant to know it.)

Liberalism is correct in the modern world. We must no longer delay. Technology is putting increasingly powerful tools in the hands of individuals. But individuals can only be trusted to serve themselves - probably to the detriment of the masses.

1 Reply

Maggie commented January 23

Maggie

Maggie

U.S.A. Jan. 23

@Tracy Rupp

Start taxing religion instead of gifting those businesses with umpteen paths of exemption, tax avoidance and tax shelters. Those businesses alone can fund via their taxes many municipal/state and federal programs.

Alexander Bumgardner commented January 23



A

Alexander Bumgardner

Charlotte, NC Jan. 23

This trend should have been expected seeing the rightward shift of the Republicans. I applaud this trend because I have zero interest in watching the political center drift rightward on account of only one party controlling the debate. It seems we are moving in a multi-party direction, and that should go ahead and be embraced.

Eric Whitney commented January 23

E

Eric Whitney

Durango, México Jan. 23

It's an existential problem for the country. Keep going rightward, as we have for several decades, and the country will either fall apart completely or it will become unrecognizable as the country we knew as the United States of America.

Moderate measured change (Obama style, 5%) ain't going to cut it when confronted with the insane, fascist Republican Party of today.

It's time to go hard left.

If not now, when?

The answer to that question looks like, if not now, never, because it will be too damn late.

MDB commented January 23

M

MDB

Encinitas Jan. 23

And because Sweden is not charged with the military spending necessary to be the world's policeman.

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

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Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

@M. McCarthy - Some actual data instead of the anecdotes you mention:

1. Canadians mostly live near the border and have some familiarity with our system. In a a Globe-Mail & Canadian Broadcasting poll 91% preferred their health care system over ours.

2. 0.5% of Canadians receive health care in the United States a year, but only 0.11% come here for the purpose of obtaining health care. The rest get sick or in a accident while in the US. Practically all of the Canadians who come here for care are sent here by the Canadian system because they have some rare condition we see more frequently since we have 13 times as many people.

3. You mention "cancer survival rates." Survival rate is entirely the wrong statistic to use here. It depends on two events. First the disease must be detected, then the patient must survive 5 years. If the disease is not diagnosed, even though the patient has it for 20 years, she will not count as a survivor. Clearly any system (such as ours) that does a lot of testing will have a better survival rate than one that does less testing even if we kill more people by unnecessary treatment than we save by treating the disease earlier. The correct statistic is mortality rate, how many people per thousand die from the disease each year. Canada and the US have about the same cancer mortality rate.

I have also lived in London. I found the health fine. Since you seem to like anecdotes, I'll post one in a different comment.

17 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

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Brooklyn NY Jan. 23

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Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Len Charlap

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That indicates some funny business going on.

science prof commented January 23

s

science prof

CanadaJan. 23

Please write about some of the other excellent new representatives from non-typical backgrounds. The over-exposure and obsession with "AOC" is a tiresome distraction.

Charlie commented January 23

Charlie

Charlie

IowaJan. 23

Good Medicare for all and better funding for a university education (to avoid huge loans for parents and students) and taxing billionaires at a high percentage to pay for it is not leftist. It's what is going to help many middle class folks live a middle class lifestyle in retirement. Some of these billionaires are trying to transform our educational system with money so the upside of taxing them is the people have more say.

What scares so many people of all political parties about far left Democrats is that they think the far left Democrats are going to make people in around the 30% to 89% income brackets pay for their agenda.

Let's hope the far left Democrats get a little more practical about how and who has to pay for everything they want or we'll end up with Trump or someone like him for another four years.

The caucuses start in Iowa so these far left Democrats need to have some practical plans to present to the people that doesn't involve transferring income and savings elsewhere.

Communism and socialism by and large have not worked.

Custis "Buck " Langhorne commented January 23

C

Custis "Buck " Langhorne

Nor CalJan. 23

@stuart Yes, one of FDR's tenets was freedom from unfair competition...It is a disgrace that political corruption has allowed uber/lyft to roll over the taxi and livery industry ruining hundreds of thousands of American workers financially. These Silicon Valley racketeers have no regard for law or regulation or public safety. Only the mayors of London and NYC have the guts to stand up to them.

7 Replies

Glenn Ribotsky commented January 23

G

Glenn Ribotsky

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QueensJan. 23

@stuart

They used to call it the "Democratic wing of the Democratic party".

I was glad when Thomas Edsall finally got around, in this piece, to mentioning that what is often thought of as a radical leftist turn today, due to just how far to the right our general political discussions had gone, was actually pretty much mainstream Democratic policy for much of the middle 20th century.

Chris Young commented January 23

C

Chris Young

Chicago, IllinoisJan. 23

@stuart I agree to some extent but you must realize things have changed from that time to now, a lot. Education for example has become unaffordable for many due to the greed of these institutions. Students are left in debt for years if not decades. Professors and instructors making six figure incomes when THEY produce little or nothing of commercial value. I live near a major university for example where I'd be willingly to bet we have at least twenty professors of art each making over \$100,00 dollars annually that couldn't SELL a piece of their art if their lives depended on it. Moreover, we even provide loans to students now and like healthcare costs we need to investigate where and why this money is being made. They've turned it into a massively profitable business for them and government officials which WE get to pay for. It's ridiculous.

stuart commented January 23

s

stuart

glen arbor, miJan. 23

@Chris Young Briefly: CUNY, FDR. etc.

Patrick commented January 23

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P

Patrick

Richmond VA Jan. 23

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, you must now support Speaker Pelosi with her stance of no State of the Union address until the government is reopened and the Wall stipulation is removed. It is time to know the "would be king" off his imaginary throne and land him butt first in the dirt of reality. It won't be pretty, but it will be worth getting dirty. The sunshine of a positive and moral stance for all people, not just rich and not just white, will help kill the bacteria of corruption and the infection of deceit. By the way, I'm white.

sdavidc9 commented January 23

sdavidc9

sdavidc9

Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut Jan. 23

The new Democratic voters are the young, who need government help to overcome the systematic bias against youth. Today's young people have to fund their own college with debt, while college for people who are retired now was funded largely by government. High home prices again benefit present home owners and make it difficult for young people, in debt to pay for college, to achieve ownership. The growth of the gig economy and the shrinking of benefits also hurts the young.

Much of the current economy's tilt towards the well-off elderly is created by government policies, which have been around long enough that their effects are taken for granted as natural, the way things are. Any tilt towards the well-off is at the same time a tilt towards the elderly, since the elderly have had decades to achieve their position. A tilt back towards youth seems also to include a tilt towards the elderly who have not made it to being well-off, even though this inclusion is not necessary.

A tilt towards greater equality will involve a struggle between the affluent and the not-affluent of all ages, and need not turn into a struggle between generations. The former struggle can be based on a social vision that includes all, but the struggle between generations involves power without a wider, all-inclusive vision.

JM commented January 23

J

JM

NJJan. 23

@sm and because, until recently, it had a very homogenous population. You can see the strains on Scandinavian "utopianism" as more immigrants/refugees enter those countries.

MDCooks8 commented January 23

MDCooks8

MDCooks8

West of the HudsonJan. 23

The AOC movement and all the Democrats announcing their bid for POTUS in 2020 reminds me of the game "Pin the Tail of the Donkey" , spinning blindly then trying to win a prize.

sierrastrings commented January 23

s

sierrastrings

richmond caJan. 23

What about the studies that say the entire political climate in this country has shifted to the much more conservative way of governing over the past 50 years? I am a 67 year old lifelong Democrat and I have not changed what I call a moderate stance on all issues and I resent being called a leftist. Social security, healthcare for all, almost free higher education - those ideas were around 50 years ago. It is just the wealthy Republicans who have changed the narrative and are now calling these things -which the rest of western Europe and Canada have - far left.

s.whether commented January 23

s.whether

s.whether

montJan. 23



Nonsense, "...“big, bold leftist ideas” pose a strategic problem for liberals and the Democratic Party". Lets be honest, the ideals that have more in common with FDR & the New Deal, are a threat to establishment politicians who call themselves Democrats; those who have abandoned progressivism (ie their voters) and embraced Bill Clinton's version of corporate democracy.

This is not an endorsement of Sanders or an assault on HRC: Sander's revealed a path fwd. to attract the voters that this article argues are impossible to capture. 'Republican light' will not help anyone - irrespective of who wins and it's a legislative reality we see time and time again.

Both parties, since the 1970s have enacted legislation that harms the poor & middle-class while elevating corporations and the richest to unimagined heights. None of this is my opinion - it's all supported by economic & legislative data.

Unfortunately, the Right-wing, which is now radicalized under Trump's Cabal, has corrupted the narrative of America for all. We must get it back. It's not 'Communism' or 'Socialism' to determine Americans deserve more, that HC is a right, that wages not rising since the 70s when adjusted for inflation is wrong...

If we don't move to a new 'New Deal' you will see a revolution & nothing in what I know suggests it will be peaceful. The 'lesser of two evil' folks, ironically, will be tacitly adopting the status quo. Guess what? The status quo (and its leadership) is literally, killing us.

J Jencks commented January 23

J

J Jencks

PortlandJan. 23

@Orangecat - She has a lot going for her. Unfortunately, the way the Times covers her and a select group of others means other good people are going unnoticed.

Pete Buttigieg announced his candidacy for the DEM presidential nominee of 2020 yesterday. So far the NY Times has studiously ignored the announcement.

"Who is he?", you might ask. My point entirely. As of this morning we should all know. He is the DEM mayor of South Bend, Indiana, a DEM in the heart of the territory where DEMs need to make a strong showing in 2020.

Wherever Hugo commented January 23

Wherever Hugo

Wherever Hugo

There, URJan. 23

Gone are the days of Fiorello LaGuardia. A fierce patriot and also a magniminius defender of the "peoples rights". A republican.....who allied himself with his president, FDR. Both men, repub and democrat alike, had vested intrests in opposing the hopelessly corrupt DNC Machine of NYC.....then known as Tammany Hall(it still exists)..

Good Ole Fiorello could pass for any ethnic group and EVERY ethnic group in NYC.....just by inflated rhetoric about AMERICA. He never actually claimed to be anything else...and he could blend right into that proud, stand-offish, exclusive group known as "Boriquenos"(PRs to the rest of us).....in fact I was shocked to learn he's actually Italian, and claimed to have jewish ancestry.....Dont get more NYer and American than that.....I think the irish folks suspect he was descended from Irish kings.....

Not so for Sandy Ocasio who follows a narrow, "diverse" agenda.....making targets out of everyone who does not fit her definition of who she thinks she is.....a very, very bad move for a politician.

Jocelyn H commented January 23

J

Jocelyn H

San FranciscoJan. 23

Ocasio-Cortez is a catalyst, an agent of change. She is brave and determined. Why we worry that she might be moving too fast, let's not be distracted. Our feeble folks in Washington have contributed to a fast moving and expanding sinkhole.

Make waves my sister. You will never be able to  
offend  
disgust  
and spread global mistrust like our toxic POTUS .

Jbugko commented January 23

Jbugko

Jbugko

Pittsburgh, paJan. 23

More people participated in voting during the mid-terms, and they were informed and concerned participants. That is the shift Edsall is apparently having trouble defining in his not-so-sharp observation of what just happened.

Johnny dangerous commented January 23

J

Johnny dangerous

marsJan. 23

Let's not worry about a little thing like paying for it. We can have it all:

Free College

Free Health Care

Basic Income For All Citizens

No Borders

No ICE

Nationalize the Banks

Nationalize the pharmaceutical companies

Nationalize the oil companies

Nationalize the Press

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"The World is Going To End in 12 years," says AOC. What do the bookmakers in Vegas have to say about that?

1 Reply

Keir commented January 23

Keir

Keir

MichiganJan. 23

@Johnny dangerous Nobody has suggested any of these things. Change the "free" to "affordable," the "no" to "meaningfully managed," and the "nationalize" to "responsibly regulate." That would be more accurate. That last sentence... don't know what that is about.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Samuel. how well did that work out? Better than anyone expected, which caused the DNC to limit the amount of debates and schedule them during NFL games, to prevent Bernie from getting his message across. Even with all that, all polls showed Bernie beating Trump. So why do you believe America isn't ready for Bernie's common sense ideas? What, we need more time for the workers to suffer while the rich continue their spending spree, and then we'll be ready?

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

Actually, running a campaign and getting elected is a significant accomplishment. Before anyone decides about what bills to promote and means of paying for them, we need a momentum of discourse, and promoting that discourse is another major accomplishment. You and many millions of others, also, have good reasons to be frustrated. Let's just try to actually "work" at talking the talking and walking the walk, and maybe we will--or maybe we won't--arrive some place where we can see some improvement.

will b commented January 23

w

will b

upper left edgeJan. 23

@Samuel

She's been in office less than a month. You want to shut down the conversation that is finally bringing real hope & passion to average people, & is bringing a new set of goals (& more integrity) to the Democratic Party? Paying for single-payer has been rehashed many times; just look at all the other 'civilized' countries who have it. For once, try putting the savings from ending co-pays, deductibles, & premiums into the equation. Think about the savings from large-group bids, & negotiations for drug prices, & the savings from preventative medicine heading off more expensive advanced treatment. Bernie Sanders has been explaining all this for years now. 'Less rhetoric'? The conversation is (finally) just now getting started! You start by explaining what is possible. When enough people understand it, the needle will start to move. Watch.

Samuel commented January 23

S

Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

I understand what you are saying, but please remember- half of this country thinks- rightly or wrongly- that AOC and many of her ideals are unobtainable and socialist.

Whether they are or are not is NOT the point.

We need ideas that are palatable to the mainstream, average American- not just those of us on the liberal wings. And I AM one of those.

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Since you bring up Bernie- how well did that work out?

The country isn't ready for those ideas. And rightly or wrongly, pursuing them at all cost will end up winning Trump the next election.

VoxAndreas commented January 24

V

VoxAndreas

New YorkJan. 24

Why didn't you mention climate change as an issue? This issue dwarfs all others.

ErikW65 commented January 23

E

ErikW65

VTJan. 23

@Matt Williams, did you really read past the headline? This article analyzes data from three large national polls, quotes from writers at in-depth news analysis sites, authors with expertise in social and economic policy, and university professors, all providing their analysis of the trends in the polling that demonstrate the demographic wave that you apparently don't believe in.

And Reps AOC and Pressley are not used as primary evidence of these trends as you suggest, but rather as examples within the larger trend whose districts are diverse enough to further dissect and analyze. It's a great piece of writing with references that can be pursued lots of varied opinions to think about. But of course you have to actually read it to get anything out of it.

9 Replies

Len Charlap commented January 23

Len Charlap

Len Charlap

Printceton NJJan. 23

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@Matt Williams - You are ignoring the many statistics in the article that apply to the Democratic party as a whole.

For example:

"From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of Democrats who said the government should create “a way for immigrants already here illegally to become citizens if they meet certain requirements” grew from 29 to 51 percent, while the share who said “there should be better border security and stronger enforcement of immigration laws” fell from 21 to 5 percent."

There are many others.

Fourteen commented January 23

Fourteen

Fourteen

BostonJan. 23

@Matt Williams

But they are extraordinary, relative to their bought and paid for colleagues. That came first and the media is reporting it.

Their authenticity is naive, but it shouldn't be, and that's the story. It's a glimmer of hope for democracy that may be extinguished - let's celebrate this light in the darkness, while it lasts.

James Mullaney commented January 23

J

James Mullaney

Woodside, NYJan. 23

@Matt Williams Without the undue media attention we wouldn't be saddled with this cartoon character masquerading as a president.

Blunt commented January 23

Blunt

Blunt

NYJan. 23

@Eric

Bless you, Sir. We need more 65 year old electrical engineers in this country.

Maureen commented January 23

M

Maureen

philadelphiaJan. 23

My tuition was covered by a New Jersey state scholarship, but I paid for my books and fees with part time employment. I had universal health care with Medicare and Mass Health Common Health in Boston, but my steep entry fee was permanent disability caused by a massive stroke and severe brain injury. I always had a full time job with major medical. No one at the hospital asked for my green card when I was admitted as a comatose Jane Doe. My insurance was on file. I was a green card holder until sworn in 4 years after my stroke. Today many Americans would deny those interventions and opportunities to other immigrants.

1 Reply

PK commented January 24

P

PK

AtlantaJan. 24

@Maureen Were you here as an illegal immigrant? I don't think so. Most Americans are not against legal immigration; they are against illegal immigration. As a legal immigrant



myself, I completely support the Republicans on this policy - illegal immigrants should not be allowed to stay in this country when legal immigrants have to jump through so many hoops to live here.

Trans Cat Mom commented January 23

T

Trans Cat Mom

Atlanta, GAJan. 23

I think we should write off those Republican suburban women. They're a fluke, a function of distaste for Trump. And by 2020, they're probably going to revert to their mean (pun intended). Unlike many younger progressive women and minorities, they tend to have successful husbands. So not only do they not need government support the way we do, but government expansion poses a threat to their quality of life. And then you have the cultural aspect; as we increasingly expose the unbearable terribleness of white males, like we did with those monsters from Covington Catholic, they're going to protect their sons and turn against the greater good.

This is why we need to make a stronger case to both our older fellow Dems and our minority Dems that this path to the far left is the best one. For the minorities I think we're good. Is it possible to genuflect, to sanctify them, to wallow in guilt for being white any more than we already are? Some of them may roll their eyes at this for now, but once more of them see that they can extract material benefit from this I think they'll come around. Right now it's mainly just minority politicians who are taking advantage of this, but hopefully this spreads.

For the older moderates, we need to explain the sanctification and the guilt. So here it goes. I live in a gentrified hood. I've displaced minorities and they basically wait on me hand and foot. The fear that they'll one day turn on me is real, hence the humility and genuflection.

Cass commented January 23

C

Cass

MissoulaJan. 23

@Matthew D.

Actually, her ideas are to the left of Switzerland, Germany and Denmark. So yes, they really are to the left.

A thoughtful green new deal is a great idea. Her particular green new deal, not very well thought out, would bankrupt the country and bring about more internal and global chaos than Trump.

Increasing the top marginal tax rates to the extent that is economically necessary is a fine idea. Increasing these rates to a percentage that “feels good “ is sloppy and could bring about the opposite results of what people would like.

These are radical ideas.

jonpoznanter commented January 23

j

jonpoznanter

San DiegoJan. 23

Voting is for the most part an emotional function. Yes, we observe the candidate, measure his or her merits. But in the end we vote with our hearts. And the way to get to the heart is by laying it on the line, telling the truth about the state of our union. And let's face it, there are many things that need fixing like climate change, the buildup of weapons throughout the world, especially the nuclear arsenal, dangerous trade wars, racial tensions, political divide etc... But the one most important thing that needs fixing is the decimation of the middle class. And, yes, the truth of it is that there needs to be a redistribution of wealth like there was during the 1960's when for ten years our GDP averaged 5.5% and middle class America grew like a magic pea. Without a burgeoning middle class our democracy will fail and we will head into oblivion. And that's the truth.

GBR commented January 23

G

GBR

Jan. 23

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@Samuel

I completely agree! I had the [admittedly outlandish] thought yesterday that AOC is really a Russian bot, placed to dissuade all the moderates and independents out there from voting at all..... Seriously though, priority #1 is getting Trump out of the White House, and to do that, we need a moderate with wide appeal.

10 Replies

Barry McKenna commented January 23

Barry McKenna

Barry McKenna

USAJan. 23

@Samuel

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Samuel

Santa BarbaraJan. 23

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rawebb1 commented January 23

r

rawebb1

Little Rock, ARJan. 23

Democrats have a marvelous ability to forget that the first job is to win the election. They have allowed a party representing a small, wealthy, elite dominate politics since 1980. That is real incompetence. In all likelihood, they will manage to let this trend continue by getting too far ahead of the average voter in 2020.

David G. commented January 23

D

David G.

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WisconsinJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit You mix up the term socialism with welfare.

Socialism means government ownership of the means of production and distribution. Economically, socialism has always failed--see Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, Chavez, Maduro and sundry others. And socialism has always lead to violence and repression.

Welfare means unearned benefits. Like corporate welfare. Welfare for the needy may also be unearned but is a different matter, a matter of kindness and compassion, and can be structured to encourage people to become productive.

27 Replies

T.R.I. commented January 23

T

T.R.I.

VTJan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit Wow! Great points, why don't you run for office? I agree!

mfreeze6 commented January 23

m

mfreeze6

Seattle, WAJan. 23

@Bruce, have you ever considered creating a new "reality" network where the truth about things could be told? You're quite good at articulating and defining how the world works, without all the usual nonsense. I really appreciate your comments.

James commented January 23

J

James

St. Paul, MN.Jan. 23

@Bruce Rozenblit

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Absolutely correct. According to the Bible of Saint Reagan, Socialism for corporations and the rich: Good. Socialism for the poor and working class: bad.

fast/furious commented January 23

f

fast/furious

the new worldJan. 23

I was sorry for Claire McCaskill when she lost her Senate seat.

That is until I saw McCaskill clobbering AOC on social media and in recent tv interviews.

It's nasty that this long time Democratic Senator couldn't find it in herself to support this young woman newly elected to Congress and welcome her.

No best wishes there.

McCaskill doesn't get it that the Democratic party has moved on. Claire McCaskill is the past. AOC is the future.

McCaskill doesn't understand why she got beat. She couldn't motivate Democratic voters in Missouri to turn out in great enough numbers to keep her seat - after watching McCaskill in Missouri Democratic politics for over 25 years.

I'm sorry to see MSNBC has hired Claire McCaskill as a contributor.

I now change the channel every time she appears.

LTJ commented January 23

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L

LTJ

UtahJan. 23

@FunkyIrishman I propose that ecologically unsound urban areas become self-supporting or disaggregate, rather than relying on food and water being shipped in from outlying areas. And I leave it to others to be the judge and jury of what level of wealth is “fair,” and what should be taken.

Apple Jack commented January 23

A

Apple Jack

Oregon CascadesJan. 23

@Tintin A nurse working three jobs is probably over stressed & unlikely to perform adequately without endangering patients.

Same is true if two of those jobs are with a fast food outlet.