

Cannot accept the current internecine leftist debate about the election - *LTE Bisbee Observer*
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I'm sorry that I cannot accept the current internecine leftist debate about the election, but the equal-evil argument strikes me as facile, based on a superficial view of our political reality. Politicians deal with multi-faceted issues. In a democracy, the decisions they arrive at are by definition based on compromises. It is unrealistic to expect any law or policy to be ideologically clear-cut. In a right-leaning nation like the US, it is particularly unrealistic to expect clear-cut progressive victories. Social Security, the Voting Rights Act, the Pure Food and Drug Act, like other progressive laws, do not go far enough; their authors had to compromise to get as good as they got. Democracy is an ongoing process, and bad ideas never go away.

Given that unhappy societal condition, I find it equally unrealistic to base electoral decisions on personalities, especially personalities of candidates for President. Presidential elections are about parties; even under quasi-totalitarian conditions like the present (when the long boil toward the imperial executive has come closer to a head), the President is a puppet. In a neoliberal/authoritarian era like ours, rule by executive order is rampant, but it is always at the forbearance of the 1 percent handlers.

And the differences of the parties in office, despite both being subdivisions of a de facto Business/War Party, are very clear: the secretarial and departmental actions of the GOP compared to the Dems have been disastrous in every area of government -- Interior, Agriculture, Health, Housing, Labor, Defense, Education, etc etc. This disparity began with the conservative putsch under Reagan and has been especially obvious under Bush and Trump (since the Koch-type rise of supermoney in the global economy).

Clinton and Obama were far from progressive, let alone leftist, but they were not Bush and Trump. The 21st Century Dems and Repubs are both creatures of corporate capitalism, but the Dems have not, as the GOP has, so blatantly and systematically stripped away the rule of law in matters of environment and human rights (to mention only two). The Dems have certainly not always been a progressive force (not even during the FDR days), but they have generally pushed for, not against voting rights, environmental protection, unions, living wages, health care, integration, gender equality, and other progressive causes.

Incrementalism sometimes turns our stomachs and sometimes breaks our hearts, but in a democracy we go forward by inches, not by revolutionary leaps and bounds. (And the notion, advanced by some who profess to be leftist, that we will make progressive leaps following an utter collapse into complete trumpist fascism with its concomitant suffering of millions, even greater suffering than at present, is just preposterous.