

TORIE OSBORN REMARKS – Nov 10, 2019 at Team TO Resist & Rise Meeting

Hello! **THE BLUE WAVE CONTINUES!** How about that election Tuesday (Nov 5, 2019)? Virginia! Kentucky! Delaware County, PA! Tuscon! **WE WIN WHEN WE ORGANIZE IN THE FIELD!** Yes, we get to celebrate again!!.....

Today I want to talk about two books briefly – then give some updates on 2020 and end with a Call to Action.

One caveat: We keep hoping to be saved. First it was Bob Mueller. Now it's Impeachment. But neither Nancy Pelosi nor Adam Schiff will save us from the horrors in the White House and US Senate. We are up against powerful forces with infinite money, the willingness to lie, and the goal of crushing democracy and the American Dream. 2020 is the most important election of our lives. But WE ARE THE ONES WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR! No one will save us. ONLY the sustained electoral organizing we've been doing since the first Women's March will save us.

I've said this before, but the trauma of Nov 2016 keeps rising up, like PTSD. But the real past we need to reference is the **MIDTERM ELECTION** – where we won more seats than ever. If you had asked me to bet \$1000 the night before Nov 2018 on how many of the 7 targeted seats in California we would flip, I would have bet 4, maybe 5 if I was in a risk-taking mood. **NEVER DID I EXPECT TO FLIP ALL SEVEN!** We are the ones we've been waiting for! When we organize, we **WIN.**

So tune in Nov 13 for the public Impeachment hearings, and post on FaceBook or Twitter, but **PLEASE STAY ACTIVE** with doorknocking, grassroots fundraising, etc. More about that later!

OKAY, my first book...

Indivisible: A Blueprint for Democracy after Trump just came out. It's **TERRIFIC.** It's written by the founders of Indivisible, Ezra Levin and Leah Greenberg. Buy it. Read it. It's a book of this time and era, of the newly woke "resistance" – a brilliant analysis of the state of our democracy from the DC point of view. One example is their discussion of the current gridlock caused by the Republican

Party's zeal to advance their right-wing agenda and nothing else – in the old days, in this two-party system this was not true but today we need ALL THREE— The House, the Senate AND the White House in order to advance any legislative agenda. And of course then there's the Courts (along with the Supreme Court, the Reps have confirmed ¼ of ALL Federal judges under Trump!)

This book is BRILLIANT in its short and readable history of the takeover by its far Right wing of the current Republican Party.

p. 41: “The GOP has been captured by its extreme right wing, fueled by an unholy alliance between corporate power, Christian fundamentalism and white nationalism....with new levels of radicalism on every issue: health care, climate change, immigration, economics, foreign policy, and basic functioning of our democracy.” There are no more “dog whistles” -- it's now open racism.

That about says it. READ THIS BOOK. There are 19 individual lessons. Here are a few to tease your interest.

#3 --- People have opinions, groups have power.

#6 – Don't be boring!

#15 – Mobilizing vs. Organizing. Mobilizing is spending your power; organizing is building your power.

#19 – VOTE YOUR HEART IN THE PRIMARY, YOUR HEAD IN THE GENERAL ELECTION. P. 223 “Emotions in primaries can run high. People get attached to their candidate, and reasonable folks can disagree. There are real, important differences between different wings of the Democratic Party, and we have to have the space to have those debates. But at the end of the day, we're all here for a reason: we're taking our country back from the antidemocratic forces who are actively rigging the system to work against us. Yes, that means fighting for the best possible outcome in a primary. But it also means winning general elections. That requires supporting the eventual nominee, even if that person isn't our first choice.”

I happen to like the metaphor I heard somewhere: marriage vs. public transport. You are NOT getting married to the Democratic candidate for President! S/he does NOT have to be a perfect match. It's more like taking the bus. If the best bus doesn't come, you take the next best one!.....

And the book has a great reminder on the point I made earlier – that we need to look back NOT TO 2016 but to OUR WORK in 2018: p. 226 on The Blue Wave in 2018 midterms: “It was the largest midterm House vote margin for Democrats in American history, and the largest number of flipped Democratic districts since Watergate. Democrats gained 40 new House seats, more than 300 legislative seats, 7 governorships, and 6 new trifecta states where they control the governorship and state legislature. What had seemed politically impossible two years earlier had become political reality.

“The incoming House class would have the most women and most people of color ever elected to Congress. It would have the most immigrants elected in modern history. It would have the youngest woman ever elected, the first Native American woman ever elected, the first Muslim woman ever elected.

“It was more than a check on Trump’s power. It was a rebuke to his brutal, cynical, culture-war politics. It was a reaffirmation of the America we believed in.”

When we organize, we WIN.

I also wanted to take a look back at the small book ON TYRANNY: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century by Princeton historian Timothy Snyder, a book that burst onto the scene after Trump elected – we sold them here. I wanted to review it to see what jumped out at me. Of the 20 lessons, here are a few that struck me this time around:

#2: Defend Institutions. “Choose an institution you care about – a court, a newspaper, a law, a labor union – and take its side.” Working inside local government for Sheila Kuehl during and after the horrid Woolsey Fire, I’ve been again struck (as I was as a Deputy Mayor for Antonio Villaraigosa) at the naked hatred and mistrust of government, even among Democrats. The Republicans, as they’ve been taken over by the Right, have spent 30 years defunding government and dissing it. They count on that. I choose to defend local government!

#8: Stand out. Page 51. “Someone has to. It is easy to follow along. It can feel strange to do or say something different. But without that unease, there is no freedom. Remember Rosa Parks. The moment you set an example, the spell of the status quo is broken, and others will follow.”

#10 Believe in Truth. (That speaks for itself!)

#12 Make Eye Contact and Small Talk. P. 81. “This is not just polite. It is part of being a citizen and a responsible member of society. It is also a way to stay in touch with your surroundings, break down social barriers, and understand whom you should and should not trust....”

#19. Be a Patriot.

#20. Be as courageous as you can.

OK, my final words are some information and a Call to Action.

A few new projects teach me that the official Democratic Party is listening to the grassroots, to the rising Blue Wave....Their approach is to “arm the rebels” - -- The DNC has launched a wonderful new project staffed by former Obama for America organizers – ORGANIZING CORPS 2020 (website: OrganizingCorps2020.com) – training 1000 rising college seniors and deploying them in 8 key swing states to register and mobilize voters – AZ, FL, GA, MI, MN, NC, PA, WI. (See the article in the Atlantic: “*The DNC Army that Could Soon Descend on Swing States*”). They focus on people of color, LGBTQ and women. If you have money to give them, do it!

In California, new CADEM Chair Rusty Hicks has hired CA’s best field director Tracy Zeluff of Groundworks and is opening offices across the state in swing districts.

Finally, let’s help #KEEP CA 25 BLUE. CA Assemblymember Christy Smith has moved very quickly to consolidate support for the seat that Katie Hill has vacated. Christy is terrific and has been endorsed already by Karen Bass, Sheila Kuehl and many others. Gov. Newsome has not yet set the special election date BUT it looks as though the primary will be March 3, the regular primary for President, etc., and IF CHRISTY GETS 50%+1, she’ll win the seat outright. Then, she will have to run again in November to hold her seat, but at least there won’t be another election to fill it. So our goal is to help Christy win. More on that soon.

Finally, I commend to you Michelle Goldberg’s column in the NYTimes, “The Cure for Democrats’ 2020 Terror”. 67% of us are anxious about 2020. And as I’ve said many times, that PTSD can ONLY be counteracted by ACTION. Sustain the Big Blue Tsunami we helped build in 2018.

As Bayard Rustin said, “We need a group of angelic troublemakers” to hold CA-25. And to WIN the US Senate. And the White House. I’m ready; are you?

I want to end by quoting our wonderful Brian Colker, who posted on FaceBook: “The Blue Wave is NOT comprised of polls, trends, or memes. It is an aggregation of concentrated volunteer actions. That’s it. The pundits forecast Democratic momentum into 2020 as if it is an external force. Trump and Republicans may be unpopular, but translating that into victory takes volunteer labor. WE WIN IN THE FIELD. We need to outwork our opponents.”

And we will!

Thank you.

**Torie Osborn
Nov 10, 2019**