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Dear friends of democracy,
After a tumultuous week of events (Trump-Biden debate, Supreme Court's rulings on "Chevron" and "Immunity", as well as Project 25 finally getting exposed as a blueprint for dismantling our government) it is hard to know where to begin.

In the spirit of July 4th, I would like to start with a simple question:

What is it that we are most proud of as a country, and what of that do we want to preserve?

- Is it having a government of the people, by the people, for the people?
Or do we want a government of the rich and mighty, by the rich and mighty, for the rich and mighty?
- Is it our broad cultural diversity which has made us rich and resourceful, with people of many nations coming here to be part of the American dream and helping to defend that dream through international allegiances – even in wars outside of our own borders? Or do we want to reject our global commitments and responsibilities by torpedoing allegiances, such as NATO and the UNFCCC Paris Accord, while also denying social, religious and ethnic diversity which has been so much a part of our identity?
- Do we want a justice system based on the rule of law which is impartial to politics, subject to checks and balances as well as rules of ethics? Or do we want to dispense with the separation of powers between our three branches of government, consolidating king-like rule over the judicial and legislative branches who only do their bidding as one all-powerful lobby?
- Do we agree that all people, whether citizens or authorities, should be equal before the law, entitled to due process on a level playing-field of rules and opportunities? Or do we want to be ruled by the haves and held subject as have-nots to their vested interests, even when immunity from culpability for the harm they may cause through irresponsible management of our country's wealth and resources shelters them from prosecution and makes them only richer?

This election cycle is much more than just a choice between Biden (an 81-year-old veteran politician with over 50 years of experience in government) or Trump (a 78-year-old narcissistic sociopath whose language and demeanor know only hate, abuse, defamation and incessant lying). It is a critical moment of decision between democracy and authoritarianism. Behind each of them is an entire apparatus, driven by very different sets of ideals, and it is those ideals we will be voting for on November 5th, not just the two men who stand at the top of the ticket. From now until then, it is essential that we try and get clear about what is behind each of these choices, and accordingly make a choice for the world we want to live in.

In the current culture-war environment, sorting fact and truth from fiction and lying has become increasingly difficult. Alternative facts blur the lines between perspective and hypocrisy. Echo-chambers create cults of propaganda which self-perpetuate until they have become a bedrock of belief.

My intention with this Newsletter is to provide helpful information from authorities who are much more expert than I on the issues that concern us in advance to the coming election. If you have time over the weekend, try and read these pieces.

Should President Biden step down?

Here is a video clip of a CNN Abby Phillip interview with Allan Lichtman on 13 metrics that determine the outcome of a presidential election. Allan Jay Lichtman is a distinguished professor, historian and political scientist, known especially for having correctly forecasted the last 10 US presidential elections. In his opinion, booting out Biden would be disastrous. ([link](#))

Here is an interesting piece by Robert Reich on “How Old is Too Old” ([Link](#))

Robert Reich on why we still should be optimistic ([Link](#))

Heather Cox Richardson on the Biden-Trump debate ([Link](#))

Supreme Court’s ruling on Loper Bright – better known as the Chevron ruling:

Joyce Vance on “Why You Should Be Concerned About Loper Bright” ([Link](#))

Heather Cox Richardson on the Loper Bright decision ([Link](#))

Supreme Court’s ruling on Immunity:

Heather Cox Richardson on how fundamentally this decision changes the role of law ([Link](#))

Heather Cox Richardson on the founding principles of our constitution ([Link](#))

Joyce Vance on presidents becoming kings ([Link](#))

Justice Sotomayor's dissenting opinion "We fear for our democracy" "making presidents king's"

Links to articles from ([The Hill](#)) ([AP Press](#)) ([USA Today](#)) ([WaPo](#)) ([The Guardian](#)) ([ABC News](#)) ([AXIOS](#))

Here is a Robert Reich piece on Justice Roberts’ comment about “Fearmongering” ([Link](#))

Robert Reich on how the Supreme Court has guaranteed Trump will not be tried ([Link](#))

See also this New York Times editorial by David French ([link](#))

Another good article from the New York Times ([Times](#)) on what this immunity decision means and how unprecedented it is.

Project 25 (Blueprint for dismantling our government):

Joyce Vance Interview with Congressman Huffman about his task force on what is being done on the issue of Project 25, and what can we as citizens do about it. ([Link](#))

Age, experience & performance vs.

Age, sociopathic behavior & chronic lying and how a panel of scholars rated the presidencies of Biden vs. Trump as of February 20, 2024: Biden 14th of 45 and Trump last ([Wikipedia](#)).

Archive of previous Links:

Election Denialism ([Article in THE CONVERSATION](#)) millions still believe 2020 election was stolen, even when all investigations prove the opposite. If there was an election that was stolen, it was Bush vs. Gore.

46% of Americans trust Trump more than Biden on the economy ([THE HILL](#)) 21% said they trusted neither. Only 32% favored Biden. The facts tell a different story. Actually the economy has “*functioned significantly better under Democrats since WW II*” ([Article in THE BALANCE](#)).

Impressive achievements of the ([Biden-Harris](#)) administration, despite an adversary congress vs. ([Trump White House Tally](#)) with majorities in both house and senate, which can be summarized into three main issues: 1) tax reform favoring the richest 1% of Americans while causing a major increase of the national

debt; 2) sweeping deregulation which gave the dirtiest industries carte blanche to challenge restrictions and avoid litigation while slashing budgets for consumer protection agencies ([New York Times](#)); 3) appointing a slew of federal judges, and most significantly, three to the supreme court, which brought us recent reversals of long standing precedents: Roe v Wade (50+ years), Affirmative Action (46 years), Chevron (40 years), and most recently granted presidential immunity, the executive above and beyond the law, fundamentally reversing one of the most basic principles of our constitution.

Seminal sources of fact-based information on current issues:

- 1) **Heather Cox Richardson** is an American historian, author, and educator. She is a professor of history at Boston College, where she teaches courses on the American Civil War, the Reconstruction Era, the American West, and the Plains Indians. She publishes a daily newsletter that is free of charge. To subscribe go here ([Substack Letters from an American](#)). Rather than proselytizing, she expounds the on the historical background of current events, giving historical perspective that illuminates how we got here and where it could lead us. Here an example from June 25th: “Political power of the mythological image of the American cowboy” ([Link](#)).
- 2) **Joyce Vance** is an American lawyer who served as US attorney for the Northern District of Alabama from 2009 to 2017. She was one of the first five U.S. attorneys, and the first female U.S. attorney, nominated by President Barack Obama. She also writes a daily Newsletter entitled Civil Discourse. Her particular expertise is the judicial system and political events pertaining to it. Here a particularly significant letter from her Substack, June 26, 2024 entitled “Let’s Read Project 25 Together” ([Link](#)) Go here to ([sign up](#)) for her substack.
- 3) **Robert Reich** (1946) is a prominent American professor, author, lawyer, and political commentator. He worked in the administrations of presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, and served as Secretary of Labor from 1993 to 1997 in the cabinet of President Bill Clinton. His daily Substack addresses, among other things, the economic side of current events. Here are two entries especially worth reading ([The Taxing Difference](#)) and ([Why I’m scared sh*tless about Thursday](#)). Here is the place to go for his ([Substack archive](#)).
- 4) **Project 2025 – Mandate for Leadership (The Conservative Promise)** ([Download](#))
The Heritage Foundation, sometimes referred to simply as Heritage, is an American conservative think tank based in Washington, D.C. with strong ties to the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, the Tea Party movement and Libertarianism. This is their 920-page blueprint for dismantling American democracy and installing an autocracy that would essentially consolidate power in the hands of a cabal of ultra-conservative elitist. In my mind, this is the true deep state, and it is part of their genius to strategically and hypocritically create myths that demonize liberals for being the ones and doing the things that they themselves are all about. Their plan is sophisticated and their people very highly placed. Their roots stem from the most elite colleges of our nation. Their members hold prominent seats in our courts and legislatures and institutions of higher learning. With the present ultra-conservative supreme court, that the Heritage Foundation essentially created, our judicial system has finally reached a tipping-point. With overturning Roe vs. Wade, for the first time in history, the court has begun taking rights away from citizens, instead of granting them.

Thank you for your attention.
If you don’t want to receive these letters
simply respond with a simple “No, thanks.”

If it is helpful – please forward
to others who want to be informed.

With best wishes from Berlin
Paul Kustermann

p.s. this and former letters are available on my website
www.paulkustermann.de/