

The Delray* Democrat†

February 2020

It's *Obama's* Economy, Stupid

Michael K. Cantwell

The month Barack Obama was inaugurated, January 2009, the economy lost more than 783,000 jobs, and America stood at the brink of a second Great Depression. Although another 5 million jobs disappeared before the end of that year, more than 11 million jobs, net, were added during Obama's presidency.

Obama did not brag about the economy he bequeathed to Donald Trump, or about saving the millions of manufacturing jobs that would have disappeared if he had listened to Republicans and let the auto industry collapse. He understood that many people were still suffering from the economic disaster bequeathed to him by George W. Bush and the Republicans.

Trump is an ignorant, self-promoting, heartless blowhard, so it's hardly surprising he brags about the strong economy he did nothing to create and nothing to improve and in which millions are still suffering. The only "suffering" he's alleviated is that of multi-millionaires who whined they were overtaxed when they were actually taxed at a lower rate than their secretaries or the night manager at a Burger King.

What *is* surprising is that Trump has been unable to destroy Obama's economy yet, despite his tariffs and trade wars and tantrums, the operative term being "yet." Given another four years, the crash Trump creates will be bigger than Bush's.

So when you hear people parrot Trump's lies about *his* economy, tell them, "**It's *Obama's* economy, stupid.**" If they don't believe you, direct them to the data below, showing that the economy performed better on all key indicators during Obama's final 35 months than during Trump's first 35 months. And warn them about what's coming if he's reelected.

	Obama - final 35 months	Trump - first 35 months
Job growth total	7,847,000	6,146,000
Monthly job increase	224,200	175,600
Unemployment drop	2 percentage points	1.2 percentage points
Increase in wages (adjusted for inflation)	1.3%	0.8%

Source: The New York Times [op-ed](#) by Steven Rattner, with job figures updated from the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) database.

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Upcoming Meetings

February 13: *Is the United States a Democracy? Should it Be?* (Guest Speaker Dr. Mark Schneider)

March 12: *The Census* (Guest Speakers Dr. Corinna Balderramos Robinson and Janet Neeks)

April 9: *Addressing Sea Level Rise* (Panel Discussion)

May 14: *Amendment 4 Update and Criminal Justice Reform* (Guest Speaker Dr. Micah Kubic)

*You don't need to live in Delray Beach to read *The Delray Democrat* or to write for it.

†Democrat: 1. An advocate of democracy. 2. a person who believes in the political or social equality of all people.

What We Learned from the Impeachment

Michael K. Cantwell

The impeachment shone a light on what is the most striking difference between Democrats and Republicans.

By impeaching Mr. Trump, ***Democrats put country before party, and party before their own careers.*** Nancy Pelosi resisted calls for impeachment as long as she could because she knew that Republicans would never vote to convict and that an impeachment would weaken the party's likelihood of retaining their majority in the House. And the moderate Democrats from districts Trump had carried in 2016 resisted because they knew it would

compromise their reelection. But when Trump threatened an ally in order to damage a political opponent, their highest duty was to the country and the Constitution that the Sociopath-in-Chief sought to shred.

In stark contrast, and with the exception of Mitt Romney, ***Republicans once again demonstrated that they will always put their careers before their party or country*** by acquitting a man who they knew had engaged in criminal if not treasonous acts. They did so because they knew that to do otherwise would have put their "heads on a pike."

Yes, He Said That

In an article published in *Rolling Stone* titled [The Madness of Donald Trump](#), the brilliant and acerbic Matt Taibbi reported on a Trump rally that was held in Phoenix shortly after Donald Trump defended the "very fine people" among the neo-Nazis protestors in Charlottesville. Noting that attendees were a bit confused by some of Trump's rants, Taibbi asked:

Is this man losing his mind? And if so, what can be done about it? We've had some real zeros in the White House before, but we've never had a chief executive who barked at the moon or saw ghosts – at least, not one who was so public about it.

More than two years later the corporate media refuses to answer, much less pose the question, and it seems as if only a full-blown meltdown during a State of the Union address will force the issue. Still Trump's latest insane rant, delivered in West Palm Beach over the Christmas holiday, might move the ball along:

"I never understood wind. You know, I know windmills very much. I've studied it [sic] better than anybody I know. It's [sic] very expensive. They're made in China and Germany mostly, very few made here, almost none. But they're manufactured — tremendous, if you're into this, tremendous fumes, gases are spewing into the atmosphere. You know we have a world, right? So the world is tiny compared to the universe. So [a] tremendous, tremendous amount of fumes and everything — you talk about the "carbon footprint" — fumes are spewing into the air, right? Spewing. Whether it's in China, Germany, it's going into the air. It's our air, their air, everything, right?"

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Editorial Board: Michael K. Cantwell (Editor), Sandra Elaisen, David Kulick, June Neal, and Rob Resnick.

Address for submissions and letters: editor@thedelraydemocrat.com; letters@thedelraydemocrat.com or by snail mail to *The Delray Democrat*, 15127 Jog Road, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL -1251.

Rick Scott Must Go – 2024 Can't Come Soon Enough

Rob Resnick

Even though Florida Senator Rick Scott is not up for reelection until 2024, he inexplicably and unjustifiably released a campaign ad yesterday, and it is only January 2020. Of course, he is running the ad in Iowa as well. This is a blatant attempt to protect and support his political crony President Trump while smearing Democratic candidate Joe Biden. Scott's ad is wholly false, vitriolic, and a gross disservice to his constituents in Florida as well as the nation.

Voters can argue about Biden's record and viability as a candidate. They can question Hunter Biden's decision to accept the job on the board of Burisma. However, in the ad Scott looks into the camera and blatantly lies to voters. Scott states that Biden demanded that Ukraine fire the prosecutor because he was trying to stop the prosecutor from investigating Burisma and to protect his son Hunter. Scott certainly knows both to be completely false, yet he chooses to engage in the most dishonest and disingenuous political farce.

Scott's ad is wholly false, vitriolic, and a gross disservice to his constituents in Florida as well as the nation. . . . [He] unabashedly lies about Joe Biden in the ad when all the while it is he, Scott, that has a pronounced record of corruption.

The evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that Biden carried out the policy of the United States, NATO, the European Union, and the International Monetary Fund, among others, in demanding Ukraine remove a prosecutor widely known to be corrupt and failing in his duties. That prosecutor had already completed a review of Burisma without taking any action. If Biden were trying to help his son in any way, he would have left the matter alone. By demanding Ukraine replace the prosecutor with someone who would legitimately and fervently fight corruption, Biden put both Burisma and his son at risk. If Burisma or Hunter Biden were involved in impropriety, this new prosecutor would have filed a case against them, not protected them. And of course, this was the consensus policy of the entire

western world, not just the United States or Obama administration.

Surely the irony here cannot be lost on Florida voters. Rick Scott is among the most corrupt politicians in history. He impersonated a veteran when his service merely consisted of one partial enlistment that he manipulated to significantly shorten to avoid full service, and one in which his sole accomplishment was a cruise to Bermuda wherein he exploited fellow sailors selling soda.

Years later, Scott led a healthcare company that committed significant Medicare Fraud against the U.S. and taxpayers. They paid a fine of 1.7 billion dollars, the largest such fine in history at that time. Scott left the company with hundreds of millions of dollars in his pocket.

If stealing from the American people at large were not bad enough, the victims of his fraud included a

large veteran population who were denied proper health care as a result. As Governor, Scott made hundreds of millions of dollars from state contracts going to his own business interests and investments. Even in a world of extensive political corruption, this is an incredible amount of thievery.

Rick Scott unabashedly lies about Joe Biden in the ad when all the while it is he, Scott, who has a pronounced record of corruption. Biden does not. Scott's corruption is of such an incredible scale that it cannot be ignored or excused. It is no mystery why Rick Scott and Donald Trump are such close allies. Lie, cheat, steal.

Why did Trump Really Bomb the Iranian General? Let's Connect the Dots—or Bullets!

by June Sandra Neal

Trump's watery excuse for killing Iranian General Soleimani, "an imminent danger to Americans in the Middle East," was as ridiculous as the black Sharpie circle he drew around Alabama to "prove" his claim that the state was in the path of Hurricane Dorian, despite scientists saying no. Madman changes reality with a Sharpie!

Our own Dr. Strangelove ordered a baseless act of war without notice to our Congressional leaders. Why? Perhaps a favor to the Royal House of Saud?

Let's connect the dots (bullets).

- Saudi Arabia has long been Customer of the Year when it comes to buying arms from the U.S., including a 10-year, \$350 billion arms deal which President Obama approved to help the Saudis push back against feared Iranian aggression.
- However, Obama decided to hold up parts of the deal when Saudi airstrikes began killing civilians in Yemen, including 140 children in a school bus. Congressional Democrats and Republicans have objected to the arms sale, worried that the Saudi's real goal was nuclear proliferation.
- Trump didn't care. "I've got Article 2 and you don't!" In 2017, his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, now best buds with the murderous Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, hammered out a \$110 billion arms deal with his pal despite congressional disapproval. How? Trump, Sharpie at the ready, claimed Iran posed "an emergency." Familiar? Further, Trump would ignore Saudi crimes in Yemen and elsewhere, such as the barbaric murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. "I see nothing." But why?

Now we connect the dots (bullets)! A Congressional report found the arms sale to the Saudis was a "bonus for Westinghouse Electric, [the only manufacturer of

large nuclear reactors in the U.S.] which is owned by a subsidiary of Brookfield Asset Management, a real estate company that recently bailed out Kushner and his family's company in their ill-fated, \$1.8 billion purchase of a Manhattan office tower at 666 Fifth Avenue."

The Saudis, always hiding behind the trees, applauded Soleimani's assassination, a blow to its long-time foes, Iran and its proxy, al-Qaeda. And the specter of Iranian "imminent danger" added yeast to the argument that the Saudi arms deal was necessary.

Sadly, Congress's fears for Yemeni civilians were realized. Some of the weapons Trump sold to the Saudis were used to create one of the worst humanitarian disasters in a decade, with more than 100,000 Yemenis dead to date.

And nuclear proliferation? Right again. The investigations found "Trump met with the CEOs of several private nuclear power companies who sought his help in building power plants in the Middle East...that could put Saudi Arabia on the path to developing nuclear weapons, and further destabilize the Middle East."

Just as frightening, the report discovered that Saudi Arabia & Friends had transferred some of those weapons to "al Qaeda-linked fighters, and Iranian-backed rebels" and this illegal transfer "exposed some of America's sensitive military technology to Tehran... potentially endangering the lives of US troops in other conflict zones."

Dr. Strangelove was a satire about international mutual destruction ignited by a madman. Indeed, the Trump-Iran bombings sounded like the old Keystone Cops. "I'll shoot, but if you shoot back, then I won't shoot you after you..."

Then everyone went to bed. This time.

Monsters

Michael K. Cantwell

Monster: a person who excites horror by wickedness, cruelty, etc.”

In our November issue, we extolled the [heroes](#) fighting to protect the promise of Amendment 4 from Republicans hell-bent on preventing the “wrong people” from voting. This month we call out the monsters who inhabit the Republican Party. Like a fish, the caucus stinks from the head, but the stench extends to every cell.

Exhibit 1 is the 10-year budget Trump unveiled last March, calling for [steep cuts](#) in safety net programs like Medicare and Medicaid. If you missed it, that’s because it was dead on arrival in the newly Democratic House. Still it’s worth noting that the proposed \$1.9 trillion in cuts to these essential programs was identical to the \$1.9 trillion increase in the deficit estimated to result from Mr. Trump’s Orwellian-titled Tax Cuts and Jobs Acts.

A more accurate title would have been the Multi-Millionaire and Multinational Corporation Relief Act, since 60% of the cuts went to the top 0.1% of taxpayers and 80% went to the top 1%.

Let that sink in for a minute. Republicans pass a bill to further enrich the already obscenely wealthy, claim it will pay for itself, and when it doesn’t, expect the middle class and poor to foot the bill.

Although they have failed to date, Republicans have not given up on their Reverse Robin Hood dreams. Last summer [The Times](#) reported that Trump, when asked about cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, responded that it was a “second-term project.”

Moreover, the Democratic House is impotent against Trump’s executive powers. [The Times](#) recently reported that Trump has approved changes to the food stamps program proposed by his ethically compromised Secretary of Agriculture that will strip benefits from some 700,000 Americans. Two additional changes are expected to be approved before the November election, and these will result in the loss of benefits by an additional three million Americans, including nearly one million schoolchildren.

Some Republicans revel in putting children in cages, separating families, seeking to repeal the Affordable Care Act (and failing that, making health insurance unaffordable), and taking food stamps away from vulnerable populations. Others merely acquiesce out of fear, putting party before humanity just as they put party before country. Every last one of them is a monster

“IF YOU DON’T VOTE, YOU DON’T COUNT”

[“If you don’t vote, you don’t count”](#) was both the creed and the epitaph of Vernon Ferdinand Dahmer, Sr., president of the Hattiesburg, Mississippi, NAACP, who was murdered by the Ku Klux Klan on January 10, 1966.

Democrats outnumber Republicans locally and nationally, but we lose elections we should win because Republicans turn out in greater numbers.

Low turnout from Democrats in 2016 gave Republicans the White House, and high turnout in 2018 gave Democrats the House and many state Legislatures and Governors’ Mansions.

If you don’t vote, you dishonor the graves of the thousands who have died fighting for the franchise. Get registered if you’re not already, make sure your friends are registered, and get out and get them out to vote.

The Delray Election

Rob Resnick

Elections have consequences – all of them! The country has a huge election in 2020 centered on control of the White House, Senate, House of Representatives and many state governments. These are critical to our future and justifiably garner significant attention and resources. We in Delray Beach also have a big election this year – the Municipal Election on March 17, 2020. Although Donald Trump is not on the ballot, this election is crucial for our community. Everyone must register and vote. Elections have consequences – all of them.

Delray Beach is facing its own crossroads, and we need to ensure city government is led by competent leaders committed to the people, not powerful special interests. Seat 2 and Seat 4 on the City Commission are on the ballot, and are currently held by Bill Bathurst (a Republican) and Shirley Johnson (a Democrat), respectively. Three Democrats are running against Bathurst and two are running against Johnson. The Municipal Election is non-partisan, and members of the Palm Beach County Democratic Party cannot formally endorse or support any candidate who is running against a Democrat. That includes all of the Democrats running for Seat 4 as well as the three Democrats running to unseat Bathurst. That said, it is imperative that we vote out Bathurst, who has demonstrated that he is bought and paid for by the powerful development special interests threatening our community.

In a recent article (among others), the Coastal Star described the challenge. At that time, Bathurst had raised over \$60,000, well more than needed for the campaign, and by now has no doubt raised even more. He raises significant sums of money from wealthy development special interests who exploit

the community and the city and who most assuredly do not have our best interest at heart. His supporters include questionable individuals and “power brokers” that includes one convicted of public corruption. Bathurst’s questionable voting record proves his priorities lie with those funding his campaign and not with the people of Delray Beach. He votes for bad deals that result in flawed projects that cost the city but benefit powerful developers and special interests.

Bathurst has three challengers, each of whom would be an improvement, but collectively ensure his unfortunate reelection. With the vote to replace Bathurst divided three ways, he gets a plurality and undeservedly wins.

He won three years ago solely because he ran unopposed to fill the seat vacated by Jim Chard to run for Mayor. We can’t give Bathurst another easy win. Elections have consequences – all of them. We need to win in March just like we need to win in November. Come out and vote Delray!

As a postscript, just as we went to press we learned that Palm County Commissioners Robert Weinroth and Mack Bernard, both of them Democrats, have endorsed Bathurst. This seems not only a clear and unforgiveable violation of their oath as members of the Democratic Party of Palm Beach County but also a betrayal of the Democrats who worked hard to elect them. Voters need to remember these individuals who chose a Republican in bed with powerful special interests over the people who live in the community. More importantly, voters need to ignore these meaningless endorsements based on cronyism rather than merit.

Spreading the Word

Steve Fradkin

Abuse of power...looming war in Iran...racism and hate...lies, lies and more lies...tax cuts for the rich... obstruction of justice...unaffordable healthcare...crippling reproductive rights... The list of reasons to defeat Trump goes on and on. We've heard them all.

OK, so we know *why* we must win in November. Now, let's talk about *how*.

Will Robinson, a Democratic consultant and founding partner of The New Media Firm, says "This is the first time in US history, more significant amounts of money will be spent on social media than on broadcast." He compares the transformation to that of the 1960 Kennedy/Nixon battle when TV became the revolutionary political communications element.

Today, the traditional mass media of TV and mailings just aren't working like they used to. Robinson says "Broadcast TV viewership is at an all-time low." And, since only 6% of Americans will complete telephone surveys, political phone banking (a longstanding mainstay of get-out-the-vote efforts) is on the way out.

Hmmm...enter social media. The good news is that we all have access to social media. Facebook, Twitter and the like provide platforms for political opinion. We've all read the spoutings of the Trumpies online. Now it's our turn.

Next time you see someone ranting about the Donald, add *your* response to the forum. Give *your* opinions. Cite statistics and the views of others *you* respect. Contradict those conservative viewpoints with the *truth*: that *we Democrats* are going to save America. We are the ones who will truly *make America great again*.

Democrats have *always* been the ones who made America great, with innovations like Social Security, Medicare, the FDIC and the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"). Don't let the naysayers tell the world *their* fake news about the economy, tax cuts and immigration reform.

Florida is a key state in determining presidential elections. What's more, while 46% of people under 30 turned out at the polls in 2016, 71% of those 65 and older voted. And we know Florida has plenty of us Seasoned Citizens.

So spread the word. Donald Trump may seem (to us) to be stupid or mentally deranged, but he's neither. He is a shrewd political marketer and he plays his angry base like a fiddle. We can beat him at that game, because we have plenty of people who agree with *our* values. Go online. Tell the world. *Help make the blue sun shine on the Sunshine State*.

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Take the (Indivisible) Pledge

THE 2020 CANDIDATE PLEDGE.

We must defeat Donald Trump. The first step is a primary contest that produces a strong Democratic nominee. The second step is winning the general election. We will not accept anything less. To ensure this outcome, I pledge to:

Make the primary constructive. I'll respect the other candidates and make the primary election about inspiring voters with my vision for the future.

Rally behind the winner. I'll support the ultimate Democratic nominee, whoever it is – period. No Monday morning quarterbacking. No third-party threats. Immediately after there's a nominee, I'll endorse.

Do the work to beat Trump. I will do everything in my power to make the Democratic Nominee the next President of the United States. As soon as there is a nominee, I will put myself at the disposal of the campaign.

Democratic Club of Delray Beach 2020 Membership Application

Date _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Name/names of household members _____

Address _____

Community/Condo Name _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone number _____

(E-mail addresses are shared with the Palm Beach County Democratic Party so our members will be kept abreast of the latest County Democratic Activity. If you do not wish to receive this information, please initial here ___ and we will not share your E-mail address.).

Preferred method of contact: E-mail ___ Mail ___ Phone ___ Text ___

Send newsletter by: E-mail ___ U.S. Mail ___

I/we are in South Florida from _____ to _____ each year or are a permanent resident _____.

Payment: Individual \$25 _____ Household \$35 _____ Donation _____

Please make checks payable to Democratic Club of Delray Beach and mail to 15127 Jog Road, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL 33446-1251. Thank you and Welcome to our Club.