the nacsent demographic

a story of the American disengaged and an argument for democratic nationalism

PREFACE

This report has been produced by considering the testimony of many different individuals, from many different educational, financial, and ethnic backgrounds. While demographic categories such as *poor* or *middle class*, *African-American* or *European-American*, *male* or *female*, *Christian* or *Jewish*, *Boomer* or *Millennial* may be helpful for addressing the challenges which these individuals face, none of these categories can be said to describe their collective voice.

Of course, it may be believed that a narrative which unites the individuals across these demographics may be impossible, and that the challenges which these individuals face cannot be reduced to a single cause, or that a common worldview or ideology can be said to unite them. Any demographic category which does unite them would be too general for public policy makers. Likewise, it may be believed that the demographic categories in common use today are the best we have for addressing our challenges. To be sure, this would be true if usurping the "White supremacist capitalist heteropatriarchy" would end suffering and usher universal happiness on earth. Despite the dramatics, and even when acknowledging the suffering of the authors of such dramatics, we can be sure that this is not the case.

At the same time, it can also be argued that we lack the public resources to address every problem which every individual faces, and because of this, we must prioritize public policies which benefit those who are *most in need*, letting the others produce and provide for themselves. To be sure, we do use demographic statistics to prioritize the needs of one over

another. Demographic categories such as *people of color* or *single mother* may come to mind. This practice achieves the much-needed efficiency which public policy makers need. At the same time, this efficiency is costly. In the worst of cases, public policy which is built upon statistics featuring racial disparities encourages "us versus them" thinking. Such efficiency not only encourages dissension within the public, but may also forfeit the possibility that African-American, Asian-American, and Hispanic individuals may suffer from the same ailments as their European-American counterparts. This report exists to expose a common set of discontents. The hope is that with these discontents in hand, a novel unifying demographic description can be proposed.

The discontents by which we will begin our demographic description can be preliminarily characterized by **the various discontents with our inherited representative democratic institutions**. These can be characterized by a lack of trust in government officials and a de-legitimization of authority in public opinion. Today, courtesy of the internet, we have access to many more sources of information than any previous generation. This was initially understood as a moment of liberation for public education. However, conversely, what we have seen is that the authoritativeness of our information sources has gone down. We are free to cherry-pick the sources which support our moral intuitions, as well as when and where we think the legitimacy of these institutions come into question. This state of affairs has come to be popularly known as "post-truth." However, post-truth is generally regarded as a news media crisis and, as such, does not describe the larger social condition in which it exists. Therefore, this report will venture to diagnose a **crisis in world disclosure** as the more pervasive cause for the discontents with our democratic infrastructure. As an example of this crisis, we can consider the case of the elected public official. Remembering back to

the summer of 2020, we can recall the highly publicized calls for governments to "defund the police." However, contrary to the activists' message, surveys such as the July 22 Gallup and June 11 YouGov showed very little support for defunding the police, even among minority groups and including many young people. Because social media presents an exaggerated and false picture of public opinion, "the public" which elected officials engage with may not be representative of their constituents' values.

Given the crisis in world disclosure—among public officials and their constituents alike—we should not be surprised by the recent social turbulence across the political spectrum. Public protests make clear that many individuals have been led to last-resort options. At the same time, it is highly questionable that the passionate chants from dire activists are the most appropriate to implement. Perhaps we should understand their activism as a call to action instead—one which begins first with an investigation, then a diagnosis of the root causes, followed by strategic proposals for alleviating the ailments. This report is an attempt at one such implementation of this process of investigation, diagnosis, and then proposal. The recommendation for the reader coming away from this report is threefold,

> Firstly, it is recommended that this report be used to inform public policy platforms which address the needs of the voices represented throughout.

> Secondly, it is recommended that this report be used to inform platform communication strategies for election campaigns at various levels of government: municipal, county, state, and federal.

Lastly, it is recommended that this report be used to inform strategies for campaign fundraising.

Ultimately, our goals aim at the higher purpose of maintaining a sense of democracy in the United States. By publishing this report, I hope to issue a tool for addressing the long-standing cynicism and apathy towards public institutions. Insofar as our democratic institutions are only as good as the investment and trust we have in them; I understand that reports such as this are necessary.

Finally, I should say that it is impossible for me, the author of this report, to know who holds this report in their hands. Nonetheless, because I understand the United States as a democracy, I also understand that each one of us holds the burden of responsible citizenry—and even the burden to act as a politician. I speak to you as a politician invested with the power to affect the political, social, economic, civic, and democratic fabric of our country.

—Justin Carmien, January 6th, 2023

THE NASCENT DEMOGRAPHIC

In the late second millennium, following WWII and the Bretton Woods institutions, the United States Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau stated that the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) marked the end of "economic nationalism." Later, in academic circles, "neoliberalism" came to refer to the market-oriented reform policies which eliminated price controls, deregulated capital markets, lowered trade barriers, and reduced state influence, especially through privatization and austerity. Alongside such liberal economic policies, the American Ideal followed suit. From the vantage of today, we can see that *"life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"* manifested principally through individual careers, accruing personal wealth, and securing financial security for one's family. When looking back to the late second millennium, we can find evidence of this claim in popular American entertainment. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's *"what doesn't kill me, makes me stronger"* was repeated throughout pop songs, testifying to an American Spirit which idolized individual strength and self-reliance. Of course, this story may be convincing, yet it would be naïve to suppose this was the whole of it. Not to be overlooked, besides such "individualism," we also find a counterpart worldview. The figureheads of this counterpart are well known to all. We may call to mind civil rights activist Martin Luther King Junior. This worldview can be epitomized by concerns over non-violent conflict resolution, race and gender equality, and a volunteer culture—generally, civics of philanthropy (literally, *a love for the human animal*). Perhaps we can speak of these twofold complimentary worldviews as comprising a whole. On one hand, the postwar American Ideal championed individual strength, and on the other, it championed civics of philanthropy. This ideal had stabilized such that it was fit to raise generations of Americans spanning several decades. However, and despite this stability, unmistakable today is that career-mindedness and self-sustainability cannot wholly satisfy a sense of the good and the just—and this is the case even if complimented with philanthropy. To be sure, when looking back to around the time of the collapse of the USSR, we can find ourselves resonating with stories which tell of a liberation for a global market, such that the legislative powers of government had become a mere auxiliary. Taking the words of French

philosopher Étienne Balibar as testimony from this period, we can understand that the legislative power had devolved *"from a protective function to a function of destruction of its own civil society."* A destruction *"not in the 'totalitarian' form, but in the 'utilitarian' form, which is hardly less violent."* That is to say that our democratic infrastructures are in service to market mechanisms, and possibly, above all, the profit motive. And although these passages are reproduced here by way of his essay, *Our European Incapacity*, it is not hard for us to extend this to any state subjected to federal structures in service to market demands. This subordination of the state to market mechanisms is echoed in the words "the democratic machine" or "the system." And while many may not have the taste for populist rhetoric such as "the deep state," anyone should be able to admit that participating in politics is a luxury afforded only to those who can raise the money to participate. The suffering from within this machine is indicated by the apathetic youth who are disenfranchised from civic participation, or by the cynicism of the parent who does not have the luxury to voice his concerns at a local town hall, but nevertheless voices his concerns among like-minded people echoing their sentiments in internet forums. The suffering from within this machine is indicated in *you* and in *me*, and in our insecurities which follow from an eroding state infrastructure and with it a loss of our democratic mechanisms. From Chicago to Los Angeles, corruption related to corporate lobbying, gerrymandering, and election fraud deepen the cynicism and apathy towards the public sector and our future liberties more generally. Through both popular comedy and dystopian narrative, Generation X marks a pronounced moment of apathy towards the American government. Indeed, from there onwards an acute period of democratic disengagement began.

While apathy might be the first indication of the democratically disengaged—or simply, as will be referred to throughout this report, *the disengaged*—we must also note that this diagnosis is not exhaustive. Democratic disengagement is actually quite uncharacteristic of the American people. We can consider the words of the French diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville as true of Americans today, as those living in the early eighteen-hundreds. De Tocqueville was well-positioned to contrast the American political economy to that of the European nations. He remarked that the European models of centralized government could never govern the people more efficiently than the collective strength of the people. For de Tocqueville, this was the case no matter how enlightened the statesmen of the government may be. *"The Americans will always conduce more efficaciously*

to the public welfare than the authority of the Government" were his words.

Of course, historically, the political economy of the United States is mixed. State democratic mechanisms and free markets are woven together into a single piece of civic fabric. This tapestry of American political economy is present in its founding documents. Classical liberalism values freedom for self-governance—a governance which includes the social and economic governance invested into the market. Our French admirer noticed that,

> In the United States, there is no limit to the inventiveness of man to discover ways of increasing wealth and to satisfy the public's needs. The most enlightened inhabitants of each district constantly use their knowledge to make new discoveries to increase the general prosperity, which, when made, they pass eagerly to the mass of the people.

Therefore, the question arises: what does an American do when faced with democratic disengagement—a disengagement not limited to state economy, but also resulting from the giantism of the market, such that the state democratic mechanisms have been compromised? The answer is not surprising. We do what we have al-

ways done. *"Americans group together to hold fêtes, found seminaries, build inns, construct churches, distribute books. They establish hospitals, prisons, schools by the same method…"* and alongside such cooperative governance, de Tocqueville also noticed that,

> …if they wish to highlight a truth or develop an opinion by the encouragement of a great example, **they form an association**.

For de Tocqueville, the formation of America's social sector was a thoroughly positive phenomenon. However, for us things may look differently. Today, many social critics are quick to remark that the American people have become increasingly individualist and fractured. Within each "association" formed, we find a unique story—and accompanying each story is a unique solution. We will now turn towards the most pronounced of the narratives in our time. We do so in order to understand the attempts individuals have taken to address their disengagement from civil society, even if we must also admit those attempts have done so unknowingly or inexplicitly.

IDENTIFYING THE DISENGAGED IN AMERICA

The story of the disengaged is multifaceted. The "associations" formed are just as varied. To be sure, as political tensions escalated in the United States during the Trump presidency, the disengaged leaned further into either Right or Left narratives. During this period, the disengaged manifested as **the dissident**—that is, a person who opposes official policy, especially that of an authoritarian state. However, we can also trace a history of the democratically disengaged which reaches further back into the past, and has beginnings which are much earlier than what was emphasized in the national media following Trump's 2020 presidential defeat. This is also with good reason. Historically, the disengaged have manifested in "the margin." We can characterize this demographic by way of the various civil rights and social justice movements following WWII. To be sure, decades of intellectual effort has been put into understanding the histories of the African-Americans, Jewish people, women, and the LGBTQ+ community. Such efforts sought to expose historical discrimination. Many activists cautioned against hate groups and speech. Ultimately, these activities aimed to liberate individuals into the market, so that each may compete fairly, being equal alongside any other. That is the promise of liberalism.

Later in the history of the Marginalized, coalitions of minority groups saw the need to ban together. Following the death of George Floyd, and when visiting the Google Docs drive of the Black Lives Matter movement during this period, one could read a call for Latinx and LGBTQ+ allies. Various literature painted European ("White") culture on one side and the various cultures from people of color on the other. "Black Villages" were contrasted to "the nuclear family" and the supposedly bland food of Europeans contrasted to the spicy food of the many nations of the Global South. We can assume that such a coalition manifested in order to reach a critical mass required for action. Of course, it can be argued that such a coalition of minorities jeopardized the very thing it sought to preserve: ethnic preservation. Therefore, we can ask, what suffering could have caused such a coalition, and which validated a temporary sacrificing of one's own unique identity? To answer this, we need to consider the world in which the Marginalized had found themselves— a world which was not their own. They were suffering from a *crisis in world disclosure*. In order to understand their suffering, we will now consider the crisis more fully. To do so, we will temporarily set aside the history of the

Marginalized and consider the philosophical framework which allows for the diagnosis of this crisis.

What is World Disclosure?

When thinking of the "crisis in world disclosure," the word *crisis* likely draws our attention. To be sure, *crisis* is a dramatic word. Yet, in order to understand the "crisis," it is necessary that we first understand "world disclosure." Of course, we might think of disclosure as something which occurs principally by way of language. We *disclose the world* by way of language. Yet, language occurs in many forms: bodily, verbal, or written, for example. So, a good question to ask might be, what is the essence of language? As abstract as this question may appear, answering it will help us to understand the Marginalized.

It has been argued that the world itself is constituted by the language which we take up in talking about it—that the world is the total collection of objects talked about; and furthermore, that those objects themselves are nothing other than what we are able to say about them. What falls outside of language has not been *brought into the world*. Another argument suggests that language is to be understood anthropologically. In this case, language is like a tool. Much like the hammer that drives the nail, language disturbs the molecular composition of the air in order to affect another material object—a human ear, a human brain, a human body. However, we must also acknowledge that prior to such language as material tool, there also exists a ground for the possibility of speaking. Following the work of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, intellectuals have referred to this prior condition as *discourse*. We might think of discourse as something of a pre-linguistic or pre-cognitive (to use the scientific word) *wheeling and dealing with the natural world*. According to this theory, language (whether bodily, verbal, or written) is a mere refinement—a further-articulated form of discourse. In addition, this theory holds that any one of us is "thrown" (perhaps we could say "born") into this discourse. Inasmuch, this pre-intellectual and pre-cognitive economy conditions the projects and the ends which any individual might strive to accomplish. In other words, discourse conditions the individual and conditions possibilities of who they can be. In this report, we have already referred to this primordial commerce by analog, calling it a political, social, economic, civic, or democratic *fabric*. We will not venture the question as to which description most appropriately describes the primordial commerce. That is a question which is outstanding even within the discipline of metaphysics.

Now, to be sure, the roots of this thinking can be traced back to the nationalist literature which arose in continental Europe. We can also understand why nationalists living in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe might argue in favour of such a philosophy. Once we admit that groups of human animals living in cooperation produce their collective world, then it is reasonable to argue that these ways disclose the world uniquely from others. Furthermore, we can derive something prescriptive: those unique ways of disclosing the world might be worth preserving, and especially for those who found it useful. Obviously, European people hold on to their national heritages just like Americans, but their political jurisdictions are also drawn upon that national heritage, unlike in the United States.

If we set aside European nationalism, we also notice that the philosophy of discourse is also apparent in international movements too, such as that of the sociological tradition. To be sure, Heidegger's discourse was understood by Karl Marx as *praxis*. Both Heidegger and Marx studied the ancients. The Ancient Greeks understood that stable states of human conditions are evidence of an underlying communion. The Ancient Greeks understood this communion as *koinonia*—often translated as "a joint share which anyone has in anything." Of course,

Marx's political prescriptions may feel ungrounded today—and because of this, we may believe that the philosopher has nothing to offer the modern economist. Yet, it is the suffering which Marx identified which has retained its value. We only need to replace Marx's nineteenth-century industrial worker, deprived of the right to think of himself as the director of his own actions, and of the right to determine the character of his actions, and to own the items of value produced by his own labor. If we can accept that African-American individuals, for example, found themselves confronted with a *koinonia* in which their share was deficient, then we can understand Marx's *alienation* as relevant today. We should expect that many peoples of non-European descent might have found themselves handicapped in an alien *koinonia* to which their share was lacking. This story is especially persuasive following European imperialism and colonization. Returning to the events following the death of George Floyd, we can remember that social justice activists adopted language of the "Black community," the "LGBTQ+ community," and the "Latinx communities." To be sure, the word "community" in each of these cases refers to a pre-intellectual way of wheeling and dealing with the natural world, but also indicates something critical: the deficiency which each of these communities face in disclosing the American world.

THE PROGRESSIVE LEFT

An argument can be made that during the 1990s the "associations" of which de Tocqueville spoke were simpler than they are today. Then, one could identify as Left, Liberal, Progressive, and vote for the Democratic Party. Or, one could identify as Conservative, on the Right, and vote Republican. This would have made perfect sense for any American during this time. However, today these possibilities are no longer viable. Returning again to the time following the death of George Floyd, we can see that tension between the Liberal and the Progressive agendas became more explicit. Many Progressive Democrats claimed that liberalism's "colorblindness" had not delivered on its promises. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream had not been realized. For these Progressives, this meant adopting a strategy which seems in direct conflict with King's dream.

Now, no matter where you might personally fall on the spectrum between Liberal and Progressive, any American should be able to sympathize with the Progressive strategy. After all, when analyzing the statistics, we see that, on average, African-Americans are less financially successful compared to their European-American counterparts. Because of this, many have sought to explain the statistical disparity. The popular explanation is that African-Americans are "disadvantaged"—meaning they have not been provided the equality of opportunity which liberalism promised them. Such data interpretation has resulted in activism which is usually referred to by both proponents and detractors as "social justice," "critical social justice," or "being woke." The object of critique for this strategic movement goes under the popular name "systematic racism"—meaning that the data shows racial inequality, even when no instances of individual punishable racism can be found. The activists then champion policies of race and gender preference. The British cultural critic Helen Pluckrose provided a concise and popular definition of the activism of the Progressive Far-left,

> " Wokeism has been defined as the belief system which holds that all of society is permeated by systems of power and privilege like White supremacy, patriarchy, imperialism, hetero/cisnormativity, fatphobia, and ableism, but that most people cannot see these systems. This is the belief system that insists that we are all unavoidably socialized into holding racist, sexist, homophobic etc beliefs as uncon-

scious biases. It asserts that we need to be trained to see them, affirm our own complicity in them and commit to dismantling them using the methods of people calling themselves 'social justice activists' or 'diversity, equity, and inclusion trainers.' It does not generally focus very much on socio-economic class unless it is a compounding factor in the oppression of people who are not straight, White men.

Now, it can be argued that the Progressive strategy, social justice activism, and the woke narrative are succeeding. Pluckrose has remarked on the market value of the woke narrative, which is *"supported by major corporations netting trainers an estimated 8 billion dollars a year in the US alone."* Of course, market value may be only one barometer—and it might also be a false one. The real success might be shown in the closing of "the racial gap." In fact, reports showing more comparable household incomes across racial demographics are already appearing. However, we should also be willing to admit that these reports would be meaningless if not also accompanied by a felt sense of *koinonia* among African-Americans and other minority demographics. Of course, the "joint share" of *koinonia* is something difficult to gauge. In trying, we may look for statistics following surveys using various metrics for quality of life. We may also need to graph the results over a fifty to one-hundred-year period to be sure. Yet, such efforts may not be necessary. We have other evidence available to us today. Consider that outside of Progressivism, those who raided the Capitol building on January 6th were primarily composed of European-American men. It can be argued that these raiders understood that even their "White male privilege" cannot answer the suffering which results from a disengagement from civic economy. The phenomenon of Donald Trump should be proof that the European-American male can suffer alongside, say, the African-American female, or the non-binary individual, in feeling alienated within the modern world. It could be that equality of opportunity (and thus, the joint share of *koinonia*) may not have as much to do with race and gender as the Progressives suppose. This might also be evidenced in the suffering represented by postmodernist works of art—those produced by European-descended men, and principally by them. We can recall our sympathy for the apathetic characters of Donn Pearce's *Cool Hand Luke* and Marshall Mathers' Eminem. It seems that the super-sized technocratic empire has marginalized not only the indigenous cultures, but also the individuals comprising majority demographics as well. We will now turn towards those majority demographics as we continue to understand the pervasiveness of the crisis in world disclosure.

THE DISSIDENT RIGHT

It can be argued that the Dissident Left and the Dissident Right belong to two polar extremes. On the Left, we might find challengers to White supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism. On the other side of the spectrum, we might find European-descended men, employed in investment firms or stock trading. And yet, despite this, we can also venture to diagnose an ailment common to both. After all, and when looking beyond the forms of Dissident activism, we find that both suffer from a deficiency in the "joint share" of *koinonia*. In order to understand this claim, let us refresh ourselves of the story of the Dissident Right. We venture down this path understanding their activism as a call to action—one which begins with an investigation and diagnosis of root causes, followed by strategic proposals for alleviating the ailments. To repeat, this report is an attempt at one such investigation, diagnosis, and proposal. Our goals aim at the higher purpose of maintaining a sense of democracy in the United States.

When looking to characterize the Dissident Right, we might call to the suspicion towards modern science and historical narratives. We may recall "outlandish" internet phenomena such as the Flat Earth and Tartaria conspiracy theories. Even well-educated individuals entertain these theories. In many cases, individuals with higher education do so. Of course, we may think of these conspiracy theories as only permissible within "the dark corners of the internet." However, it is in these dark corners that latent fears and concerns find form. To be sure, and when looking past the content of any one conspiracy theory, what we find is a pervasive fear of technocracy—a rule by industry experts. Of course, this fear may seem unjustified to the critics. Yet, ignoring reasons for the fear of technocracy may prove unhealthy for our civic economy—let us not forget the COVID-19 pandemic. To be sure, the actions and communications from government officials had tested the greater public's trust in medical expertise. According to a 2021 poll by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, less than half of Americans have a great deal of trust in state and local health departments. The causes for this are complicated, but one contributing factor is the inconsistent messaging coming from public health experts. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, in February and March 2019, both the Surgeon General and Center for Disease Control made unequivocal state-

ments that the general public did not need to wear face masks. The statements implied, or even said outright, that masks are ineffective for preventing disease, despite some evidence that face masks can be effective for protecting against respiratory disease. The motive appears to have been to prevent hoarding and thus save a limited supply of masks for frontline health workers. In this case, and as well-intentioned as this "noble lie" might have been, the wide availability of information made it easy for people to question this guidance when first released and, of course, to point out the contradictions when later guidance encouraged masks.

Now, a critique of the Right on account of an apparent "anti-science" or "anti-intellectual" position is nothing new. Yet, when characterizing the Dissident Right, we can look within academia too. For example, and within certain intellectual circles, we can see the resurgence of a previously unspeakable idea—illiberalism. In 2018, American historian Ronald Biener had written on the rising popularity of illiberal values evidenced in Far-right movements—not limited to the Alt-Right and the Charlottesville *Unite the Right* political rally. What might be surprising is that in his book, Beiner confesses that *"there is a spiritual void at the heart of modernity"*—that modernity's commodification and machination of life can still be felt today. Yet, Beiner repeats the forfeit rhetoric of the postmodern spirit, *"...Fine. And with what are we supposed to replace it?"* Well, on the world stage, we could point to the rise of nationalist movements as one such spiritual replacement. Even if they are regressive rather than progressive, Victor Orbán's illiberal Hungary, Brexit, and Giorgia Meloni's 2022 election to Prime Minister in Italy may count as evidence. Within the United States, we cannot ignore the appeal of Donald Trump, who offered the Dissident Right relief through populist narratives. In the distant past, populist narratives pitted the German people against the Jews. In the recent past, populist narratives appeal to Americans' fears of authoritarian rule by "the deep state" or the one percent. The identification of opponents such as the deep state encouraged the appearance of QAnon at political rallies and eventually the raid of the Capitol building on January 6th. While many may be quick to blame Trump for inciting "a politics of hate," this efficiency would do the American people no favors, and specifically those who were "incited." We understand that the American people are not pawns at the hands of ideologues. Rather, the trumpeters are merely the spokesmen. If we genuinely honor the democratic ideal, then we also honor each American, sympathize with their suffering, and also their best attempts to answer their suffering. This must be the case,

and even when that suffering manifests in grotesque form. Because of this, we cannot say that Trump and his international populist contemporaries had "incited" the suffering of those who are dissident; they only gave the dissidents a form by which to release their suffering. Trump's populism speaks to those who understand that our current democratic institutions are encouraging the wrong conversation—institutions which can be said to have resulted in a democracy of 325 million strangers—and a democracy where mere tolerance for one another was set as the highest bar. Acknowledging this allows us to sympathize with the quarter of the American population who had been called "deplorable" by Hilary Clinton. Acknowledging this also allows us to answer the suffering of this demographic more fruitfully than what has been done up to this point. As evidenced by the 2016 presidential election, harnessing the potency of this fraction of the democratically disengaged has the power to transform the political landscape in the United States.

Learning from History: The Case of European Nationalism and Rootlessness

What should not be overlooked is that early in the twentieth century, during a literary period which has been named "the German Conservative Revolution," this form of alienation had already been identified. In the words of the interpreters and translators of this period, we read of a *rootlessness*—an estrangement from that which is produced in the proximity of the workshop, through trades, guilds, apprenticeships, and characterized as being "of the people and of the land." If Karl Marx's alienation is characterized by a detachment from one's labor, then rootlessness is characterized by the question, "Where do I belong?" In order to answer this question, the German Conservatives romanticized the ancients, whose agrarian economy calls back to a time we imagine as being characterized by a harmonious feedback loop between labor and the proximal phenomenal experience. (The American may think of the Jeffersonian agrarian state as an equivalent romanticization.) In Germany, talk of a "third way" became popular. Author Moeller van den Bruck was a German Conservative Revolutionary. On one hand, Moeller van den Bruck critiqued Marx's communism for reducing human work and destiny to machination. On the other hand, Moeller van den Bruck critiqued Western liberalism for its nihilism. It can still be argued that an overvaluation of the free market creates a culture where business success speaks of one's character more highly than virtue. Of course, even when admitting this, we still have hesitations in sympathizing with Moeller van den

Bruck's Third Reich. We can be sure that the announcement of a "Third Empire" was premature and bound up with the modern ideal and its imperial political economy. It was also later used as a tool for justifying genocide.

In the time between now and then, fascism has retained the stigma it earned following the atrocities of the twentieth century. However, we should be mindful to not let ourselves become dissuaded by our disgust. After all, flattering ourselves with "utter disgust" will grant us no favors in sympathizing with the spirit of early twentieth-century Europe. To truly learn from those apocalyptic wars, we must commit ourselves to the distance necessary, such that we are neither offended by those movements or naïve enough to believe that the imperialism and genocide of those fascist governments could ever answer our problems today. Only with a great deal of distance can we understand the conditions which bred Nazism. Only with this understanding can we consider the fact that those conditions were never resolved, such that many still suffer from a sense of rootlessness today.

Understanding the American Dissident Right: Estrangement and Apathy

Today, rootlessness may seem like a mere self-diagnosis and battle cry for the ethnonationalists. Yet, we turn towards this period of German conservatism in order to borrow more language for further identifying the deficiency in the "joint share" of *koinonia*. When returning our considerations to the United States, we find that "democracy-loving Americans" are not exempt from a sense of rootlessness. If we read the work of American social critic Walter Lippmann as testimony from the same period, then we find contentions with an impersonal "public." This public was a *you* and a *me*, yet at the same time, it was a *no one*. And what should not be contested is the consequence of such an impersonal object—a coddled people. It seems that the liberated had become, quite perversely, sheltered from one another by way of the "public"—or rather, by way of the world image held by this *no one in particular*. It seems that without the necessary fora for sincere and meaningful encounters, truth had been stripped from the human mouth. The modern state was a nation without a campfire, so to speak. If we consider the effect of this void—if we are to be truly honest with ourselves—then we must admit that the modern state had encouraged a harmful appeal to the distances and differences between its people—a *"pathos of distance"* (Friedrich Nietzsche). Undoubtedly, the liberated had come to enjoy the fiction of the misguided stranger—that individual who is respon-

sible for electing the corrupted politicians and the self-defeating legislation. However, today, we are too mature for such a characterization. Instead, we must admit that any failure of democracy can only be an indication of an unhealthy civic economy—an indication of an unhealthy democracy of strangers.

Understanding the Dissident Right Statistically: The Dispossessed

According to some reports, men are more alone, single, and without a family than previous generations. Men are less likely to own property than their fathers and grandfathers, and women are out-earning men in many careers. While this story may sound like a dramatization of the "red pill" narrative, statistics can be used to verify this picture. According to the nonpartisan fact tank PEW Research Center, major metropolitan areas such as New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles are among the cities where young women are earning the most relative to young men. In both the New York and Washington metro areas, young women earn 102% of what young men earn when examining median annual earnings among full-time, year-round workers. In the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim metro area, the median earnings

for women and men in this age group were identical in 2019. These statistics and others have been used by Right-leaning media to characterize a demographic called **the dispossessed**. "Dispossession" refers to a deprivation of land, property, or other possessions. This demographic identity has since been used by Right-leaning media channels to explain the many disenfranchised young men who are susceptible to dissident rhetoric today. It is also used to project a dire future for the young men of tomorrow. And while it may be questioned if the excitation of young men is warranted, there may be grounds for this projection. This is certainly the case if we correlate education with earning potential. For example, it is a popular belief that boys perform better in subjects like math and science. However, a review of 308 studies involving more than 1.1 million children across the globe has challenged this stereotype. When looking at data from 1914 to 2011, the University of New Brunswick found that girls do better in school than boys in the classroom regardless of the material. The trend also continues into higher education. According to an article published to the PEW Research Center, young women are more likely to be enrolled in college today than young men, and among those ages 25 and older, women are more likely than men to have a four-year college degree. The gap in college completion is even wider among younger adults ages 25 to 34.

CONCLUSIONS, CONCERNS, AND POTENTIALS

Of course, even when sympathizing with the suffering of the dissident, we can also admit that acknowledging this demographic in political narratives could lead to quite radical and, therefore, quite dramatic changes to the direction of the American political economy. Concerns about "shocking the system" may be warranted. The occupation of Seattle's Capitol Hill district together with the violence which followed and the January 6th raid of the Federal Capitol Building in Washington D.C. may each serve as a warning. Yet, it is the appearance of the dissident which has called attention to the need to address the democratically disengaged. We remember the cynicism of those Americans who do not have the luxury to voice their concerns in protest, but nevertheless voice their concerns among like-minded people within internet echo chambers. Also fresh in our minds is the apathetic youth, disenfranchised from civic participation. In the spring of 2023, this neglect to youth was felt when violent riots appeared in the streets of Chicago—rioting with "no apparent reason."

Despite these dire images, and the many others which have been presented throughout this report, we are guided by hope. We have identified the demographic which suffers from the crisis in world disclosure as *the disengaged*. With this demographic category in hand, opportunities present themselves. Next, we will document those opportunities. The opportunities presented in the next sections aim to address the alienation, rootlessness, estrangement, and apathy of the disengaged. At the same time, these opportunities aim to unlock the talents and potentials of American people. The hope is that with these opportunities, we can become confident enough to fantasize about a future in which the disengaged are explicitly addressed in political narratives and that their suffering is understood *from the inside*. In this fantasy, we also imagine the mobilization of a transformative power more potent than what Donald Trump and the Republicans have done up to this point. Political scientist Michael Lind has identified that ideological paradigms do not belong to one party or another. Rather, each one moves together and assumes opposing and competing poles (often due to outside forces). This explains America's New Deal era as much as its neoliberal one. For those of us who wish for a healthy transition to the next paradigm of public policy, we understand that this potency can no longer be neglected.

A NEW DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

To be sure, many Americans find solace from the crisis in world disclosure by engaging with their family, their work, or their church—cynically, we might even say their social media, gaming experiences, and their various iPhone apps and Instagram filters also. But even when this is the case, most Americans must find themselves at a loss when understanding how they might participate in weaving the civic fabric of the American nation. In order to answer the disengaged, we must aim at a future in which each and every American has been offered the opportunity for a more robust and fulfilling life.

We have already identified the American civic economy as woven by state and market mechanisms. This history is recorded in de Tocqueville's travelog. Therefore, when looking to offer the American people opportunities for a robust participation in their civic economy, effective opportunities for engaging in a mixed economy of democratic and market mechanisms becomes paramount. Of course, there is no greater opportunity for engagement in the whole of the American economy than what can be found in local regions and municipalities. Participation in regional or municipal processes may provide for a sense

of wholeness, releasing complexity from the world. Such participation may also produce a sense of affectivity and inclusion in the joint share of what is at stake in whatever is within proximal reach. A felt sense of *koinonia* not only brings with it a sense of personal investment, but also feelings of identity as well as physical and emotional security.

Precedent for Bolstering Local and Regional Civic Engagement: Buttigieg's National Service Plan

Federal, state, and municipal governments are well-positioned to provide infrastructure for civic engagement. Through policy, government offices are also positioned for bolstering civil institutions at various levels. In fact, we can find precedent for a nation-wide civic engagement proposal in the Democratic Party's 2020 presidential primary campaigns. To be sure, national service was a recurring theme in campaign appearances of Pete Buttigieg, who served in the Navy and was deployed in Afghanistan. In televised town halls and campaign

speeches around the country, Buttigieg spoke of the connections he formed in the military with people from different backgrounds. In a 2019 interview with the digital newspaper *Politico*, Buttigieg recalled the inspiration he took away from this experience,

> " I served alongside and trusted my life to people who held totally different political views. You shouldn't have to go to war in order to have that kind of experience. This is why I am proposing a plan to create more opportunities for national service.

Buttigieg's proposed National Service Plan would have increased the number of available national service positions to 250,000 opportunities, up from the current 75,000. Buttigieg's proposal also called for establishing grant funding programs for "service ecosystems" focused on local and regional issues. Buttigieg was quite specific. He imagined a Climate Corps, Health Corps, and Intergenerational Service Corps. When thinking of Buttigieg's plan, we might recall Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, including the Federal Arts Program, the aesthetics of which also celebrate labor, regionalism, and ecology—themes which announced themselves in art deco murals found on United States Post Office walls, still to this very day. Much like traditional military service recruitment strategies, Buttigieg's plan emphasized the recruitment of students at high schools, community colleges, historically black colleges and universities, and vocational schools. His plan also targeted Americans between 16 and 24 who were not working or in school.

The reasons for Buttigieg's withdrawal from the 2020 presidential contest cannot be considered here. Neither can the possible shortcomings or challenges of his proposal. Nonetheless, Buttigieg's nation-wide civic engagement proposal has established a precedent—one which we may refer to when envisioning opportunities within local public offices. Next, we will consider opportunities for bolstering civic engagement within local jurisdictions. Not to be overlooked, local public offices are well-positioned to perform as the "glue" of the community. This community glue not only includes elected officials, but also non-profit institutions such as the Chamber of Commerce. While innovations made in the private sector are often discussed, a stable civic economy is the foundation for healthy market activity; and a stable civic economy is grounded upon a trust in the democratic system. Therefore, we commit ourselves to the understanding that only upon a robust civil infrastructure can the private sector flourish.

PLATFORM OPPORTUNITIES

This section will offer platform opportunities for elected officials and for candidates of public office. Throughout, we will refer to "local government." However, the opportunities presented here are not limited to the lowest tiers of public administration. In some cases, the city jurisdiction may be limiting. Officials working in or running for office in a police district, congressional district, civil township or county, for example, may find the opportunities presented in this section valuable.

Public Sector Transparency and Recruitment

When considering opportunities for bolstering civic engagement through civil infrastructure, one obstacle which presents itself may be the entry point. Because of this, we must consider opportunities through the lens of public sector transparency. However, another obstacle might be attracting talent into these sectors. We can admit that, for many, the American Dream may still be owning your own business and being your own boss. It may be that entrepreneurship—that is, individuals disrupting the market with a new product or service—principally characterizes the nation we refer to as America. Plus, we cannot ignore the motivation which comes from self-serving activity. While often criticized, growing and maintaining social and financial capital are real motivations in the social dynamics of the human animal. Because of our awarenesses, we must consider opportunities for bolstering civic engagement through the lens of public sector recruitment. By addressing both transparency and recruitment, we seek to establish a two-lane highway between the people and the larger civic economy of the United States.

Civic and Capital Asset Mapping

When thinking about public sector transparency, one answer for an elected official or candidate might be to consider mapping the existing "civic assets" within their constituency. A Civic Asset Map is a horizontal visual communication tool which can be used by associations, institutions, advocacy groups, and small businesses. Mapping a local civic network of public, social, and private sector assets may not only release the perceived

complexity of these sectors, but also strengthen the already existing relationships within the constituency as well. This sort of social mapping is promoted by the Asset-Based Community Development Institution (ABCD) at DePaul University, Chicago. ABCD believes that starting with a community's social assets can help a community establish a realistic community-driven development process. This may have great advantages over other forms of development processes, such as those which start with a community's potentially unrealistic wishes.

Another opportunity for public officials and local government offices is to catalog and map the capital assets within their jurisdiction. Reports published by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) may be helpful for understanding the process. According to GFOA, local governments around the United States have used GIS data on publicly-owned properties to create a Capital Asset Map. Once created, governments can then identify key investment opportunities. Once the investment opportunities have been identified, local governments can procure a private partner to found an Urban Wealth Fund (UWF). Such a fund may develop real estate assets such as parking lots, vacant lots, former industrial areas, or any building that could be used for better and higher use. Through a mix of tenants, the UWF may generate a diverse revenue stream which could then be used to invest into the maintenance of the water system, airport, public schools, library programs, parks and recreation, or beautification. Importantly, those revenue streams could help to fund opportunities for flexing our civic responsibility.

Establishment of Civil Projects and a Civic Master Plan

Civic and capital assessments can offer elected officials and their constituency with a catalog of available resources. Plus, mapping a constituency's assets will allow candidates for public office the opportunity to construct realistic campaign platforms. With these assessments in hand, a community would be able to create a catalog of Civil Projects. Communities which have gone through the process of prioritizing its Civil Projects will likely benefit from a Civic Master Plan.

In the private sector, Project Managers use a Project Master Plan to document the goals of their projects by outlining their key milestones, intended accomplishments or deliverables, and establish the criteria for success. A Project Master Plan might also be used for

assessing fluctuations in the human resource demand. Local government offices may benefit from a similar type of tool. A Civic Master Plan can provide stakeholders with transparency and can function as a horizontal communication tool between various Civil Service Commissions, social sector associations and institutions, and private sector businesses.

Establishment of Civil Service Commissions

Many local municipalities already make use of input channels such as advisory councils and neighborhood associations to gather feedback during the decision-making process. However, in the private sector, accountability, input, and decision power are often clearly delegated across various departments and roles. While a local government office may choose to retain accountability of the Civic Master Plan, decision making during a community-driven development process might be better invested into a Civil Service Commission. A Civil Service Commission is a body created to protect the non-partisan nature of a public or civil service. Delegation of decision-making power to a Civil Service Commission would expand the civic engagement circle and help to secure community-driven development.

Establishment of Civic Advisory Councils

Another opportunity for local government regards the input or proposal function, which may be invested into Civic Advisory Councils. These councils may be tasked to research and document project feasibility. Proposals might include project budgets and opportunities for funding, either through an Urban Wealth Fund (UWF), federal grant, or private donation. We might consider the Civic Service Commission as a community's own think tank. With accountability invested into local government offices, decision-making power invested into Civil Service Commissions, and the proposal process invested into Civic Advisory Councils the number of meaningful positions within the civic infrastructure increases. This may also increase the number of entry points by which the public can engage in the greater American civic economy.

Opportunities within Ballot Reform and Referendum

We should understand that reforms to the electoral process such as rank-choice voting or quadratic voting cannot answer the crisis in world disclosure. Casting a

ballot for any candidate is insufficient for resolving the alienation, rootlessness, estrangement, and apathy toward government in the United States. This is the case no matter how much nuance has been given to the data collection and no matter how much a candidate's values may be aligned with the public. We can remember that the crisis stems from a sense of lack of affectivity in the process of producing the world picture. No "savior candidate" can satisfy the disengagement of the American people. Despite this, electoral reform may be one option for bolstering civic investment. For communities which have gone through the process of cataloging potential Civil Projects, yet require further data for prioritizing those projects, referendums may be beneficial. Not only would a referendum bypass polarizing value- or identity-based candidate elections, there might be post-electoral benefits as well. Consider that once a Civil Project has been elected, a local government may stipulate that a contractor must fill a set number of positions from the local talent pool. In this scenario, a voter could elect for a Civil Project and then also have an opportunity to work in the execution of that project too. In other words, a voter may be casting a vote for the creation of his own future job; if not his own, then that of his neighbor. Through Civil Project referendums, voters are empowered to direct the local economy.

An example comes from the City of Evanston, Illinois. In the summer of 2023, the city offered voters a selection of proposals under the banner of participatory budgeting. Options included a community small-business incubator, urban farming program, and an Asian-American art and cultural center. Proposal budgets were also featured on the ballot, with budgets ranging from 150,000 to 2,500,000 USD.

Addressing corruption and the Establishment of a Citizens' Jury

Thus far, we have considered various opportunities for encouraging civic engagement through transparency and by institutionalizing civic engagement opportunities within local government. However, we can also acknowledge that corruption to this infrastructure may be a concern for many. Earlier in this report, we acknowledged that private-sector lobbying jeopardizes the purity of our democratic processes. Likewise, concerns of social-sector lobbying may give reason to outright reject the idea of Civil Project referendums. We should admit that the integrity of California's direct democracy movement, which has produced hundreds of referendums over the past 100 years, has been recently jeopardized by special

interest groups. California voters also have issues with the ballot itself, stating that the wording is often confusing and there are too many propositions on offer. We should learn from California. One option for local communities looking to elect Civil Projects by way of referendum may require the establishment of a Citizen's Jury. A Citizens' Jury is a public body formed from randomly selected citizens to deliberate on important issues. It is a mechanism of participatory action research that draws on the symbolism, and some of the practices, of a trial by jury. Advocates of Citizens' Juries believe that the legitimacy of a decision is increased if that decision is preceded by authentic deliberation. The members of a Citizens' Jury spend significant time learning and collaborating throughout facilitated deliberation. This is required for fulfilling the responsibility to educate the public on issues appearing on the ballot. In the case of Civil Project election, a Citizens' Jury may inform the public about budget, financing, and expected outcomes.

The non-partisan research and action institute Democracy Next has published The Assembling an Assembly Guide for those interested in forming a Citizens' Jury. More information is available at https://assemblyguide.demnext.org/.

Building a Broad Public and Private Sector Workforce

Our considerations thus far have regarded opportunities for bolstering the number of unpaid or stipend positions within the civil infrastructure. However, government offices are also well positioned for educating a workforce with a broad understanding of the larger civic economy. This may be at the heart of overcoming the sense of alienation, rootlessness, and apathy symptomatic of an industrialized workforce. One option for local government managers is to encourage parallel career shifts within the public sector. Much like private-sector employers in finance, tech, and professional services, local governments can build career ladders intentionally, both up within public service and across to other public sectors. This might be easily accomplished within managerial roles. However, non-managerial contributors in finance and tech are professionals with a high level of expertise and subject matter knowledge. Public-sector managers can develop senior-level non-managerial tracks for these professional careers as well, addressing the often-unsatisfactory employee experience of career stagnation and dissatisfaction.

Rethinking Public Education as Civic Engagement

Another opportunity for government offices and candidates for public office might fall within public education. Introducing trade education into public school systems may be an option. Educators working together with managers employed in the public sector can develop an education-to-career pipeline, blurring the distinction between student and worker. To begin the collaboration, public sector managers might utilize higher-education tuition assistance to build out a work-to-school-to-work program to meet demand in roles that typically require a certain level of education or certification. This might be done by developing training programs to promote workers from sub-Bachelor's degree jobs into roles that typically require a Bachelor's degree. An example might be found within public finance. A payroll and timekeeping clerk's market experience is relevant for someone interested in returning to school to become a compensation, benefits, and job analysis specialist. Public finance employers can connect work to college credits or post-secondary degree programs in business administration, human resources development, finance, accounting, or economics, among other relevant degrees. Tuition assistance and a program to hire workers back at the job level for which they pursued education would make these transitions much more likely.

Rethinking Law Enforcement as Civic Engagement

Another opportunity for public sector recruitment might be found within law enforcement. One option is the recruitment of non-academy professionals into law enforcement offices. For example, employing white-collar professionals into clerical positions to work alongside the police force may help to reduce the division between law enforcement and the public. Police reform projects and public safety commissions, or other police accountability initiatives might also present similar opportunities. At the same time, calls for "defunding the police" require critical attention. One solution among activists is to reallocate law enforcement funding to an agency specially trained for handling mental health crises. Of course, in this strategy you will have done nothing to nurture positive opinion about the police. In regards to a healthy civic economy, this is unsatisfactory. Rather, and in order to encourage healthy relationships between the public and law enforcement, the outward face of the police must be considered.

In 2021, the Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) published a videobook offering strategies for community-involved public safety initiatives. Former Chief of Police, Mike Butler shared his experiences from Longmont Colorado. In this video, Butler acknowledged the role of community in public safety. However, Butler also acknowledged the tension which is perpetuated by police accountability initiatives. Butler suggests police transformation as one option for answering that tension. Over the course of his twenty-six-years at Longmont, the Police Department adopted new strategies for recruitment, focusing on candidate profiles which showed potential within social work practices and community building. Butler also favored promotion along the same criteria. During this period, the metrics of success were also considered. Rather than response times and other metrics related to law enforcement, the Longmont Police Department adopted metrics based upon community self-sustainability. The philosophy of community self-sustainability is that the true metric of a safe community can be gauged in how little the police are needed. Butler attests to the fact that with these recruitment practices and metrics of success, the role of the Longmont police force changed from law enforcement to community building. Such a change to the outward face of the police may not only reduce the tension between the police and the public; it may also help

recruiters to meet the law enforcement officer demand. We can also expect police transformation to increase job satisfaction among officers and improve retention within the police force. Any elected official or candidate for public office promoting this type of strategy will likely also need to commit to a progressive police funding budget.

Remarks on Public Healthcare Reform

Until the American people see their prosperity as belonging to a shared economic future, suspicion towards social welfare programs will persist. It is not coincidental that high-functioning socialist states are found in more culturally homogenous nations, where levels of trust are reportedly high, such as those in Scandinavia or in southern Europe. Therefore, any proposals for the nationalization of the healthcare industry must be seen as premature, if it is not also coupled with a strategy (whether public or private) for encouraging sincere and meaningful encounters among the American people. Nationalizing public health will only encourage resentment for those who require trust and communion as a prerequisite. This section has offered opportunities which may become the foundation for later healthcare reform.

CAMPAIGN NARRATIVES

In a certain sense, the opportunities presented in the last section follow the pre-figurative approach to political action. They have been presented to address alienation, rootlessness, estrangement, and apathy through public engagement, education, and law enforcement. At the same time, platforms and policies which seek to institutionalize civic responsibility might be considered a radical departure from the talking points common within today's polarized political climate and ideological warfare. While civic engagement was foundational at the birth of the United States, calls for institutionalizing civic responsibility are pronouncedly novel today. Insofar as this is the case, any platform or policy inspired by the opportunities presented throughout this report will appear distinct from traditional Liberal or Progressive agendas. Public officers or candidates for public office may wish to animate that distinction. For those who do, the name **National Democrat** may be useful.

Of course, for us the word "nation" does not refer to some supposed American identity. Our nation is not dyed in American patriotism and nostalgia. However, civic nationalists do understand that democratic institutions require a common identity in order to function optimally. Civic nationalists also understand that a common identity secures individuals for leading meaningful, autonomous lives. For us, a "civic nation" is defined by its political institutions and is open to every citizen by citizenship. Those who share the value to uphold the nation's democratic institutions are considered members of the nation. Rather than the ethnic nationalism of Europe, we can assume "civic nation" describes the political, social, economic, and civic fabric of the United States. The weaving of this fabric constitutes the character of our national identity. The American nation is felt in each intersection where the rich histories within the public body confront each other. We understand that to encourage the American nation requires nurturing those intersections. When we take the name National Democrat, we chose to emphasize **National Democracy**, understood as a rule by a people who understand themselves as able to presence their national spirit in each unique encounter, when one American confronts another.

VALUES OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRAT

Within National Democracy, elected officials perform as Project Managers who facilitate national discourse by promoting an institutionalization of civic responsibility and by facilitating public engagement events. Yet, the question remains as to how the National Democrat stands regarding contemporary issues of American interest, especially to the positions within the Liberal and Progressive movements and the Democratic Party particularly. The final section of this report may be read as a guideline for triangulating the values of the Liberal, Progressive, and National Democratic positions.

• Like the Progressive Democrat, the National Democrat understands that the historical socio-economic condition remains a defining factor in individual outcomes. Therefore, policy built upon an over-reliance on individual liberties and rights is narrow and neglects the social and economic conditioning of individuals. The National Democrat seeks to answer the crisis in world disclosure through inclusion and economic prosperity. However,

• Unlike the Progressive Democrat, the National Democrat understands that the rights of the individual and minority identity group must be balanced against the values of the remaining majority. At the time of writing this report, transgender participation in public and private sports as well as pronoun identification in public and private workplace are talking points in news and social media. Those issues may serve as an example of social value which presents an opportunity for decision and community conversation. In order to act upon those opportunities and others,

• The National Democrat encourages sincere public discourse. Public engagement events are only as good as the quality of the discourse. Discourse produces its best results when a representation of alternative and competing viewpoints are present. Even the majority viewpoint needs help in addressing its blind spots. Plus, mixed representation at civic engagement events prevents "us versus them" thinking and discourages subsequent unfair discrimination.

• Like the Progressive Democrat, the National Democrat acknowledges that a hard separation between church and state is impossible. No one can separate what they
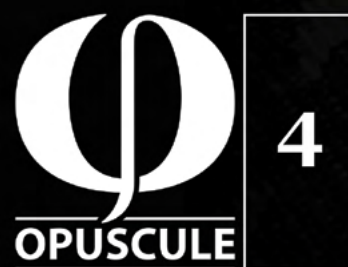
believe from their actions. This means that the federal government is not the neutral law body which federalism promised the union. We can also be sure that social sector influence over the public sector jeopardizes faith in representative governance tantamount to the private sector buyout of the public sector. Yet,

- Faithful to Liberal Democracy, the National Democrat understands the United States as secular. This means the National Democrat values discussion on the inclusion and exclusion within this secularity. It also means discouraging social advocacy groups from dominating public discourse and thus becoming a hardened national identity. Importantly, the National Democrat understands that there are no harmful or dangerous ideas; only appropriate or inappropriate forums for discussion. Recognizing an appropriate forum means that the National Democrat advocates for discussion at the lowest levels of public organizing and institutional management, but no lower. In each of these cases, we must commit ourselves to exercising good judgement.

- Unlike either the Liberal and Progressive Democrat, the National Democrat does not promote the virtue of justice. Class affirmative action and black reparations can serve as an example of efforts for past repayments which are insufficient for resolving the crisis in world disclosure.

- Unlike either the Progressive and Liberal Democrat, the National Democrat chooses not to die on the hill of gun control. It is insulting to have every mass shooting tragedy as an opportunity to pounce on repealing the Second Amendment. Likewise,

- The National Democrat does not choose to move the needle on federal abortion law. Advocating for the rights of local peoples, the National Democrat leaves reproductive rights where it is, with the state legislator. In addition,

- The National Democrat enforces a criminalization of the United States' border policies and considers immigration an economic management tool. The capacity of both local civic projects, federal civil engineering projects (such as those conducted by the United States Army Corp of Engineers), and the private economy must be considered.

- Finally, the National Democrat understands that foreign policy must be considered carefully. Foreign military intervention comes at the cost of domestic civil projects.

Ⓟ OPUSCULE | 4