

By Norman Pollack

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Never has a candidate for President been so solicitous—and transparent about it—of major wealth, what the New York Times (stepping out of character) admits is her appeal to the Ultrarich. In Chozick and Martin's, "Where Has Hillary Clinton Been? Ask the Ultrarich," Sept. 3, we find the most lopsided appeal to wealth—at the expense of normal campaigning—in US electoral history: estate after estate, party after party, closed doors, the pampered and selfish, coming out of the woodwork, to bask in the love of one who gravitates to them like moths to a light.

Hillary Clinton has no shame. Forget press conferences. Brazen out FBI findings of duplicity, criminality (though the Agency demurs from the charge), inadvertence in destroying evidence, a bottomless well of rotten practice—and this the darling of liberals and so-called progressives. Weighed in the scales of decency and social justice, how is she better than Donald Trump? Both are fascistically-inclined, both have contempt for working people and minorities, both have chauvinistic militarism in their blood. How can there be a choice of the lesser of two evils when each vies for the pinnacle of Evil-ness?

Whore? For \$125,000, you get dinner and a meet-the-candidate (some as high as a quarter \$M)—and if under 16 years old at the gathering, for \$10,000 you can ask the candidate a question. Auction-block politics, except that it is the American people on the slave-block. In this hothouse atmosphere, the host ensures Clinton will not be embarrassed. Why should she be, they're all bosom buddies, all see eye-to-eye, gatherings of the self-righteous that make a Mafia summit look like a children's tea party.

What is to be done? Trump is hardly an alternative. The plebeian billionaire is capable of anything. Clinton has disqualified and perjured herself as unworthy of any office. She and her husband, the Bonnie & Clyde of Mammon worship (even Trump, hard to believe, seems to have more character). As for the decisive area of foreign policy, there is little to choose: the sophistication of liberal think-take, national-security genocidal adventurism on one hand, gut-authoritarians, simple-minded zealots on the other. Of the two, the former may well be the more dangerous.

Is the Third Party a valid alternative? To many, yes, but here we still do not have a clean break from the Cold War mentality. (And Bernie Sanders wins a medal as outstanding disappointment with his ersatz Revolution funneled into the Clinton camp.) America is a declining Empire, desperately grasping for straws. Anything to stand on top, its strategic focus on counterrevolution, its political focus on structural-ideological hierarchy to keep the poor at bay and in their place. At some point, the malaise of fascist boredom will possibly solve our problems for us, with the mushroom cloud. There is nothing to indicate a spirit of freedom in the works, except possibly on cultural issues which—everything else the same—do not and cannot translate into authentic democratic feeling.

I may overstate the gloom-and-doom scenario, in which case CounterPunchers might find incentive in promoting fruitful ways of radicalizing America. Thinking small will not do it, whether the commune or political capture of a single town. Power has been centralized at the bayonet-point of perfection, easily able to absorb when not crushing societal dissidence. But the very least one can ask of any human being is not to support either major-party candidate. Militarism is in the air—the stench, overpowering. Ditto, plutocracy. The two go together, and any alternative must tackle them both, shrink and ultimately destroy the cancer metastasizing in the American body politic.