

Today is January 20, 2026. One year since Donald Trump took the oath again. We're 25% of the way through. Three years left.

Gavin Newsom says he doesn't know if there will be elections in 2028. Chuck Schumer calls this an existential threat to democracy. Nancy Pelosi warns that the republic is at stake. The talking heads on MSNBC nod gravely and tell us this is unprecedented, dangerous, a crisis.

And then they tell us to stay calm. Vote in the midterms. It's going to be okay.

Both of these cannot be true.

If democracy is actually at stake, if we're actually watching the construction of an authoritarian state, then "vote in the midterms and it'll be okay" is not a real response. It's what you say when you're too scared to do anything that might cost you something.

The Democratic Party's rhetoric and actions don't match. They scream about existential threats and tell us to remain calm. They're calculating and cowardly, so afraid that any real opinion might lose them an election that they try not to have one.

Hakeem Jeffries says he's "not ruling out" impeaching Kristi Noem. Not ruling it out. They treat justice like a card to be played in a negotiation, not a duty to be upheld.

Look at what's happened in just one year.

Trump signed a national security memorandum that builds a target list based on ideology—anti-capitalism, anti-Christianity, "extremism" on migration, race, and gender, hostility toward traditional views on family and morality. That's not crime. That's belief. That's who you are. Then it ties that framing to machinery: Joint Terrorism Task Forces, Treasury tools, IRS scrutiny, investigations into "networks" and "funders" and their employees.

They built a recruitment portal so Americans with law enforcement backgrounds can sign up to join federal operations. A specialized unit in the D.C. National Guard. A quick reaction force. Language about Guard forces being "available" for rapid mobilization to assist in "quelling civil disturbances."

Greenland—Trump says we need it, "whether they like it or not." Venezuela—we bombed Caracas, killed 80 people, kidnapped their president. When asked what limits exist on his power, Trump said: "My own morality. My own mind. It's the only thing that can stop me."

ICE agents shot an American woman in the face in Minneapolis. She wasn't the target of any investigation. She was a legal observer. Her name was Renee Good. After she was killed, a man's voice on the video said "fucking bitch." The Vice President demanded absolute immunity for the shooters. Kristi Noem called her a domestic terrorist.

This is one year. This is 25%.

Here's the thing people don't want to face: there is no line Trump will cross that will finally give us the courage and wisdom to act. There is no moment when everyone suddenly agrees it's time to fight. That's not how this works. It happens slowly, and then all at once.

But we are not powerless. And we are not waiting.

Primaries start in March. That's eight months of action before a single general election vote is cast. Eight months to decide who leads the opposition. Eight months to replace cowardice with courage.

Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries are not the future. They are the past. We have to make them the past.

The good news is we don't have to imagine what brave leadership looks like. It already exists.

Saikat Chakrabarti helped build the movement that elected Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and launched the Green New Deal. Abdul El-Sayed has been organizing and fighting in Michigan, building real coalitions. Graham Platner is running in Maine on exactly the kind of bold economic vision we need. These are people who understand the moment. People who will actually fight.

There are more. We're going to find them. We're going to support them. We're going to make sure that when voters go to the polls in the primaries, they have a real choice—not between two flavors of managed decline, but between the past and a future worth fighting for.

This is about being brave.

Brave in your home. Brave in your community. Brave in the voting booth.

If ICE comes to your town, hit the streets. We are all Renee Good. Protect your neighbors. Stand together.

And in the primaries, vote for people who inspire you. Not the candidates you think the “moderates” will vote for. Not the safe picks. Not the people who tell us to stay calm while democracy burns.

We need a Democratic Party that can win back the hearts and minds and imagination of the American people. A party that matches its actions to its words. A party that believes we can build highways and rail, that we can have an economy that works for everyone, that we can create a future that is just and comfortable and kind.

We beat fascism in the 1930s here at home. We beat it worldwide. By God, we can do it again.

But not by waiting. Not by pretending. And not by being led by cowards.

The next eight months are the fight. And then we do it again.

Corbin Trent