
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Gretchen Borges ◆

A TWO-PART FORUM:

- **BRIEFING AND CLUB RESOLUTION**

on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)

**Guest speaker: Kian Frederick, NY State
Director of Citizens Trade Union**

- **8:30 PM FORUM AND DISCUSSION:**

Bill de Blasio's Agenda for Change

**A conversation about housing, jobs,
education, and stop-and-frisk**

JOIN US IN COUNTING DOWN TO VICTORY!

Thursday,

October 10th, 2013

* 7:45PM Sign-in

* 8:00PM Club Business and Discussion

NOTE LOCATION:

**Auditorium
Bank Street School
610 West 112th Street
(between Broadway and Riverside Drive)**

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President's Corner

Gretchen Borges

Cause for Hope?

Colorado Springs' Garden of the Gods at sunrise, with the magic of blue sky and red rock bewitching you, is astonishingly beautiful. Slowly the park fills, first with fit runners and walkers, then young women with baby carriages, and then all those cars from Kansas, and Oklahoma, Nevada and California. After once again paying homage to Kissing Camels and Balanced Rock, we exited the park into Old Colorado City, the Springs' chic western neighborhood, where we ate breakfast and decided to walk the main street. We found the expected groupings of gift stores and fudge shops, but what took our breath away were the signs with their odd juxtapositions:

Fresh Handmade Fudge
Buy one pound get ½ free

And underneath, a picture of a revolver accompanied by the words:

Come in
Open carry
or
Concealed Carry
Welcome Here.

And next door, a shop proudly announced its stock of conceal carry purses.

Colorado Springs is a conservative town. It is surrounded by Fort Carson Army base, Peterson Air Force Base, and the Air Force Academy. Retirees (many former military) have flocked to the city, for its agreeable climate and the natural beauty of the Rockies' Front Range.

It is so beautiful that on previous visits we have looked around and asked ourselves why we live in New York. Then we once again notice the preponderance of NRA clothing and pick up trucks with gun racks, and hurry back to Morningside Heights and its more familiar idiosyncrasies. But something is changing in Colorado Springs. And not just the marijuana dispensaries.

As many of you probably know, Colorado recently recalled two State Senators, Sen. Angela Giron from the traditional Democratic stronghold of Pueblo, and State Senate President, John Morse from Colorado Springs.

The Democrats had money from Mayor Bloomberg (\$350,000) and their Republican challengers were supported by the NRA (\$500,000). The issue was recently passed gun legislation requiring universal background checks and banning large-capacity ammunition magazines. Remember, Colorado was the site of both the Aurora and Columbine mass murders.

Nothing surprising yet. Western state punishes lawmakers for passing gun control legislation. What is surprising are Morse's numbers: 50.9% voted for recall; 49% voted against. It was incredibly close! In a conservative Western town, a pro gun control legislator almost retained his seat. In the big picture, maybe the change is nothing to get too excited about. But in the context of a town whose candy stores invite you to enter with your gun on display, Senator John Morse's almost survival is cause if not to celebrate, at the very least it is cause to retain hope that change is in the air.

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District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Due to production deadlines, this will be a brief report. As you know, a lot of great things happened on September 10th, but a lot of bad things are happening now or may happen soon. So, for now, congratulations to Bill DeBlasio, Scott Stringer, Gale Brewer and Mark Levine for their victories, to Tish James for her first place finish, and to Anil Singh, Peter Moulton and Debra James for their nominations at the Judicial Convention.

In the "awaiting developments" category, in decreasing order of likelihood of success:

-Our own Carol Sharpe looks like a winner at this Thursday's Democratic County Committee meeting for the nomination to succeed Peter Moulton on the Civil Court. Carol has a great resume, a great story, and the endorsements of the District Leaders of Broadway, Three Parks, CFD, Park River and Ansonia, plus the two Assembly Members representing the district, Danny O'Donnell and Linda Rosenthal.

-Tish James should be the favorite to win the Public Advocate runoff this Tuesday, but her desperate opponent Dan Squadron is spending tons of money building himself up and now, scurrilously tearing Tish down. I hope by the time you read this these despicable tactics will have been denounced, and Tish will be the winner.

-And then there is the fact that the Republicans seem intent on shutting down the government, costing the economy billions of dollars, throwing people out of work, endangering essential services, all so they can prevent people from getting health insurance. While I am confident this will ultimately work against the Republicans, there will be a lot of needless suffering first.

Will we have better news by the time of the October 10th club meeting? Stay tuned.

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From the Steering Committee

Ed Sullivan

Pause

As the United States of America hits the “pause” button in our military maneuvering with Syria, let’s go back over the issues that are presented to us in this confrontation. The first question is whether or not some international force should get involved with preventing crimes against humanity when they occur in international quarrels or in civil wars.

Because if the answer is No, if no matter what the crime, we decide that national sovereignty precludes any interference by forces from outside the subject country, then the case is closed.

Let the brutes hold forth, and let us all simply view their crimes from afar with impotent alarm.

The world did not come to this conclusion in Kosovo or in Libya recently, but precedent doesn’t really demand to be followed. There is always precedent for almost any action imaginable. But decision needs leadership, each time anew. To do the same as we did before, or to act differently – that is up to us. Precedent is merely useful after the fact, for the explanation.

If, on the other hand, the answer is Yes, that we should get involved in preventing or stopping internationally recognized crimes, even within a sovereign country, then the second question is this: Who should take that action?

The best thing would be a united international community – the United Nations, we might call it.

Of course, we already have a United Nations. But we have built so many brakes into it that the vehicle can’t move. A veto by one of the Big Five of World War II has rendered the United Nations immobile so often that the veto may have outlived its usefulness. But even if there were no veto, would the militarily powerful countries of the world really allow the United Nations to come inside their borders to stop “crimes against humanity” from occurring? Would China allow that? Would Mexico allow that? Would England allow that? Would the United States of America allow that?

Well, while waiting for the United Nations, and its component parts, the nations, to come up with an acceptable mechanism for deciding when a country can be invaded to prevent it from engaging in criminal behavior, we have to choose an interim, surrogate invader. But whom?

We spin the wheel, and it always stops at the United States.

Are we, the United States, the perfect sheriff? No. Are we generally trusted around the world? No. Have our recent actions reassured other nations that we will be truthful, fair and restrained? No.

Then why do nations look to us as the High Noon sheriff? Because we are hands down the most powerful nation in the world, and because no one can really stop us if we decide to interfere. That is one reason. But another reason is that, with glaring exceptions, we are generally an open country, with a powerful electorate, and we can be influenced. We are, for all our power and arrogance, a member of the world’s gang, with a citizenry made up of every religion and ethnicity in the world. And we can be talked to. The other world powers don’t have that quality.

Anyway, as we have seen over the past few weeks, the sheriff of the world is going to be the United States of America, or it is not going to be anybody.

The Washington press corps has trouble recognizing that fact, and their dimwittedness may even become part of the political reality of our country. But, in the meantime, President Barack Obama, who never liked the press very much anyway, doesn’t seem unduly dismayed by their fecklessness. He knows, and accepts: When constabulary duty’s to be done, To be done, A policeman’s lot is not a happy one.

There is a third question to be answered. Once it’s decided that a country may have to be physically forced to obey international norms of behavior, even with its own citizens, and once it’s decided who will be the enforcer in such an action, can the enforcer then decide not to take the action?

Getting down to cases, could the United States have decided not to take action in Syria, even after the chemical attack was confirmed?

That non-action would have upset world political equilibrium, negatively, more than we can imagine, and President Obama knew that, even if his press critics didn’t. We had a moral obligation to act.

It was a moral slam dunk for Obama to threaten Syria, if you’ll pardon the expression.

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Membership

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$20; senior dues are \$5.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Interests: _____

The Broadway Democrats
P.O. Box 1099
Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025

FIRST
CLASS

Assemblymember: Daniel O'Donnell
District Leaders: Curtis Arluck,
Paula Diamond Román
President: Gretchen Borges
Newsletter Editor: Gretchen Borges

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