

STOUGHTON, WI - These are troubled times. The glass is half empty and democracy is draining out of America. In a democracy the main power is the power of our vote – to throw the bums out OR to vote in folks we hope do NOT become bums. But our vote is becoming meaningless because swindlers are on the loose in both parties, while the prosecutors and courts along with elected officials sit on the side lines wringing their hands or stuffing handfuls of money in their pockets. Money dominates state and national politics – big money that expects big profits from the winners.

If you are not depressed and outraged by the last year of this pathetic democratic circus, you are not paying attention. We have two main candidates for president consumed by the greed for power and money. Everyone is a fool but them. They apparently believe the public can always be conned if big lies are repeated often enough. Many US papers read like Pravda, full of lies, during the height of the USSR empire.

But I think Studs Terkel's book Hope Dies Last: Keeping the Faith in Troubled Times is right. We must live with hope for without it we will wither and die – emotionally, morally or physically. Only by fighting back can we sustain hope for the future. No fight – then maybe no future.

Most Americans have a great capability to say well that didn't work, let's try this. They hope things will be better for their kids and grandkids than they were for themselves.

Right now a couple of days before the election we can see that we have major candidates who are duds as leaders. We have an option on the ballot. We can start fresh with Green Party candidate Jill Stein.

Will she win? Let me ask, would you have voted for Fighting Bob La Follette in 1924 or Teddy

Roosevelt in 1912 if one of them was on the ballot as an independent next week? I would. They both fought against their own corrupt Republican Party though the Democratic Party was just as corrupt and controlled by Wall Streeters and corporations.

Many voters may have thought La Follette or Roosevelt would lose but vote for them they did. Would you be voting for Bernie Sanders as a Green Party candidate if he had chosen to join the Greens? I bet many of you would. Both Clinton and Trump are pro war. Obama was anti-war until he sat in the Oval Office. Sanders now says vote your fear of Trump by voting for Clinton. Then after she's in the White House we'll pressure her to change her policies which will be like pressuring a tiger to change its stripes.

If you wish to live by fear and false hope, the choice is yours.

But if you wish to make a positive statement on the direction America needs to go, then vote Green. Help build a third party that will hopefully in 2020 and beyond start actually building a new America rather talk about doing so for decades. Who knows America with a Green president may even stop all the illegal wars, killing, destruction, torture and spying Bush, Cheney and Obama became 'so good at' or should that be 'so bad at"?

In this election November 8th, as in life, you can choose to do nothing, to go with the crowd or to fight back to protect your principles. The choice is yours, so please vote while you still HAVE the right to vote in this county.