

“The Less Evil Argument” by Noam Chomsky, John Halle: “The Left Vote for Neoliberal War-monger Hillary Clinton...”

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In today's edition of CounterPunch, [Andy Smolski](#) lays waste to the feeble and patronizing lesser-evil argument advanced a couple of weeks ago by Noam Chomsky and John Halle, which demanded that the Left vote for the neoliberal war-monger Hillary Clinton as the last bulwark against the fearsome Trump and his rampaging band of post-industrial Visigoths.

Hillary Clinton is a living refutation of the logic of lesser-evilism, since her candidacy as the most rightwing Democratic nominee since Harry “A Bomb” Truman is the inevitable consequence of decades of lesser-evil voting. This toxic political pragmatism engenders a process of natural selection in reverse, where the candidates get more-and-more retrograde because their opponents can always be painted as fractionally more odious. Well, let each pick their own poison in the privacy of the voting booth. Rationalizing, however weakly, a vote for Hillary Clinton isn't my main problem with the Chomsky/Halle essay.

The most noxious element of the Chomsky/Halle endorsement of Clinton is their paternalistic guilt-tripping that seeks to blame people who choose to vote for Jill Stein, Gloria La Riva, Gary Johnson or no one at all in the extremely unlikely event (one percent according to analytics guru Nate Silver) that Trump prevails in November. If HRC, who now enjoys support from both the Chomsky wing of the Democrats and the Kissinger-Goldman Sachs wing of the GOP, loses it will be the fault of her own record of mendaciousness and villainy, just as Gore was solely responsible for blowing the 2000 election, even though liberals continue to viciously scapegoat Ralph Nader.

It's an intellectually dishonest position and a morally indefensible one. According to the specious argument of their *Tractatus Illogico-Politicus*, Halle and Chomsky would not bear any responsibility for the deaths caused by the candidate (HRC) they support. But Greens, anarchists, socialists and anti-war libertarians who reject the Queen of Chaos would bear responsibility for the carnage caused by the candidate (Trump) they did *not* support. That's a textbook case of moral hypocrisy.

Halle has affixed himself to Chomsky like a sea lamprey on a sperm whale. Chomsky should, of course, be cautious about associating with political lampreys such as Halle. Noam, who knows his history, should consider the fate of Henry the First, who “ate a surfeit of lampreys which mortally chilled the old man's blood and caused a sudden and violent illness against which nature struggled”—struggled futilely, it turned out. Chomsky has a strong constitution, but these days it pays to be prudent.

Who *is* John Halle, you ask? Halle teaches music theory at an over-rated and over-priced institution for the trust fund children of liberal elites. Halle's political association with Chomsky is a tale of almost comical self-aggrandizement, on the order of Kenny G sitting in with John Coltrane. It's probably safe to assume that most of the false notes in their sophistic reasoning were struck by Halle. But that doesn't absolve Chomsky from affixing his name to an ethically bankrupt argument that is now also being made by Hillary's new friends: George Will, Henry Kissinger protégé Richard Armitage, Brent Scowcroft and one of the men who brought you the 2008 financial crash, Hank Paulson. A confederacy of lampreys, indeed.

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