

What is Darkly Wrong with US Politics, USA Inc, Costly Representation, Georgia Congressional Election

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Featured image: (L) Democrat Jon Ossoff and (R) Republican Karen Handel (Source: [IVN.us](#))

Tom Price's vacating of a Georgia congressional seat set the scene for exactly what is darkly wrong with US politics. In the sprawling klepto-maniac entity known as USA Inc., with its distancing between the concept of representation and the money that backs it, a campaign for one congressional seat can cost tens of millions.

The Sixth Congressional District in Georgia was always set for an otherwise unwarranted degree of attention for its June 20 ballot. For one, it was a potential atmospheric "testing" of Trump-era politics, a taster as to how the administration had been going. Mid-term elections are scheduled for 2018, and political pundits and strategists are attempting to take the temperature with usual clumsiness.

As ever, the Democrats, still suffering the withdrawal symptoms of a devastating electoral performance last November, gave another show of denial and misreading. The Republican **Karen Handel** prevailed over her Democrat opponent **Jon Ossoff**. Those with an iota of political nous could hardly have been surprised.

The wet-behind-the-ears Ossoff had been primed as the man for the job of reversing the madly erratic Trump machine. On the surface, he seemed absurd, a child-like option to topple adult consistency. But it was entirely appropriate about a party that had entirely misunderstood its mission. The tide, so went the hoodwinked narrative, would begin in Georgia. Money poured into his electoral coffers, showing, yet again, the misguided assumption that finance is a substitute for strategy.

This left the *New York Times* to wonder whether the Democrats had missed it yet again, even if there was little chance that the seat would fall to Ossoff.

"So a party sorely demoralized in November is demoralized yet again – and left to wonder if the intense anti-Trump passion visible in protests, marches, money and new volunteers isn't just some theatrical, symbolic, abstract thing."[1]

If anything, this electoral moment showed how the anti-Trump voice becomes inaudible at certain registers, an elusive sound (dare we say tweet?) that moves the invisible and stalks the unwary. On the surface of scatter gun liberal criticism, the President resembles a populist in search of the next extremist cause, a dangerous buffoonish caricature who is

bound to raid womb, America's soul, and security.

But history shows that the political eccentric, bumbling clod, and in some cases, traditional fool, will do far better than an erudite charmer who believes in what might be termed "the better things in life" for his constituents. The comedian who runs for office and wins with a good-hearted streak is not that much different to the leering businessman with property, debts and younger spouse.

Even prior to Ossoff's ludicrously dear campaign, costing over \$23 million, a Democrat by the name of **Rodney Stooksbury**, with no financial machinery of note, let alone online or political presence, actually got more votes than Ossoff did against Handel. Price won in November, but found Stooksbury to be both a more formidable opponent and spectral.

"I was never able to get in touch with him."

Talk spread that the candidate was a phantom, a figment of the Democratic party imagination.

"We were never able to find him," explained **Heather Smith**, a Democratic official of DeKalb County, Georgia.

"He's like a ghost.... It's absolutely concerning." [2]

Trump, hardly the sharpest tool in the kit, should be supplying wide targets and easy scores for opponents. But opportunities to exploit are not being taken, and weaknesses are being converted into public relations triumphs.

His various platforms have stalled, if not fallen down altogether in a polemically charged Congress. At most, the reality show demonstrates that perception, reinforced by constant self-references (the "America" and "Great" become synonymous with Trump), transforms fiction to fact.

Handel's technique might become a model for GOP members in the elections next year. The party's relationship with its President is tooth aching in its torment. Trump parked his concocted allegiance in a spot that has proven less than convenient for the traditionalists. The best thing, then, is to use Trump - at a distance, preferably with tongs.

Never utter his name unless necessity demands it. Soften the extremism, while padding out the reactionary punch. Express disappointment at junctures to show an independent mind. (In Handel's case, disappointment at cuts in scientific and cancer research under the administration.)

Jim Galloway's observations on a Sixth District debate was prescient:

"the hour-long confrontation on WSB-TV: Both Karen Handel and Jon Ossoff would have us believe that **President Donald Trump** does not exist." [3]

Whatever Ossoff and Handel sought to chart out in the campaign, Trump remains far from invisible. He is the face of an America in denial, but also in shock, where a toxic froth has

risen to the surface, and shows little sign of abating.

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Notes

[1] <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/20/opinion/georgia-election-karen-handel-jon-ossoff.html>

[2] <http://www.newsweek.com/who-rodney-stooksbury-georgia-jon-ossoff-629827>

[3] <http://politics.blog.ajc.com/2017/06/07/in-a-sixth-district-debate-donald-trump-becomes-the-invisible-man/>

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