

The Vote Not Taken

by Paul Gallagher

The election's getting very near,
And millions now are gripped by fear
That Trump or Harris could get clear,
And be President.
The only difference is which world war
They represent.

World war, when wars themselves explode—
Our “war allies” are on that road
With bombs and fires that *we* load
Into their guns;
You ask to whom all this is owed—
We are the ones!

You want to vote for the wars to cease,
For human life and goods to increase,
But there's no way to call for peace
On this ballot;
The halls and streets and squares are the place
To go tell it.

Billionaires made rich by war
Are funding many a political whore;
The people's votes will be spoken for
Before they're cast,
Unless they rise for their rights once more,
And do it fast.

Now, there are leaders who want peace,
But we have multiple thought-police
Who attack, to silence them at least,
If not imprison;
But if they fight for speech, they increase

The Feds charge Ritter, the brave Marine
Who's warning of nuclear war from Ukraine—
But he calls the people out on the green
And gives his word;
Instead of silenced, he's now more seen
And much more heard.

They stole the votes from Diane Sare,
But in the streets and over the air
From Buffalo to Union Square
And across the ocean,
She uplifts people everywhere,
Gets them in motion.

When Wall Street told the cops to clout
And silence the students who stood out
For Gaza—though they were lied about
And vilified,
They were America's only vote
Against genocide.

Your rights can rise resisting wrong;
The persecuted are the most strong
To puncture it with speech and song,
And lessons taught
To bring the nation's mind along
To a better thought.

What is it that's worth voting for?
Build nations up and end the war;
But you can't vote that any more—
You organize it;
Get the neighbor's mood up off the floor
And surprise it.

The truth is liberty of speech;
For peace, you need the right to teach,
And happiness means you must reach
To other lands,
And make companions, each to each,
Of the human bands.

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