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The meme shows the words Bill held on a hand-drawn sign, at the USS Iowa.

Protesting Donald Trump an all-American experience

(San Pedro, CA) – Sept. 15, 2015 – I certainly wasn't the lone protester when real-estate-mogul **Donald Trump** came to San Pedro to deliver a speech on board the **USS Iowa**, but I was the only protester close enough to see the guy get out of his SUV, at the fantail of the ship, with his blue blazer and **red cap** saying "Make America Great Again." He squinted my way as he gave a deft combo of a thumbs-up and index-finger point to the guy next to me – who had been yelling how he loved the **tycoon** – so I gather that mine may have been the only protest sign Mr. Trump read on his San Pedro stop.

Why spend time marking up a sign – "Greatness does not flow from the noxious exhaust of a blowhard" – cross the bridges, and stand silently across from the fantail of an old battleship for hours, staring at people waiting in a ticket line?

I went because like most Americans, I have a strong view about Donald Trump's campaign tactics, and his misunderstanding of the peril to America's greatness.

As I told hecklers, America's greatness is always a subject ripe for discussion in politics, but Mr. Trump is wrong about this nation's future. **Our peril is Americans drinking from a common pool of bitterness.** No nation retains its greatness when her people can only yell at one another. We need to build bridges between Americans, and learn to work together again, on endeavors great and small.

Let's **save the bees**, and **explore the oceans**. Give a **gym card** or **service dog** to returning **service personnel**. Let's finally change the **faces on the money**. But, as Americans, let us finally do **SOMETHING**, big or small, and do it together.

Being a Californian, I also went to the **USS Iowa** because we are of a people drawn to **media circuses**, to **rubbernecking at car wrecks**, and to watching hopeless saps on **reality shows**, and Mr. Trump's visit had a little of all those things.

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With no insult to the performers and animals of the Ringling Brothers, or any other circus, Donald Trump is the only Republican politician drawing crowds by walking a high wire act of *death-defying rhetoric*; jumping through hoops of fire *without the aid of an apology*, and wrestling *stupid* eagles and *stupid* bears without messing up his hairpiece. Who else rents a battleship for a glorified photo op?

The car wreck is the clash of angry Americans. Ironic how a real estate tycoon from New York has struck a thick vein of anger using words alternately called **hateful spew** or **talking honestly**. But as people on both sides at the USS Iowa openly **spurned and smote**

each other, any hope that Americans will start building bridges anytime soon seemed lost in the calamity of a car wreck.

Meanwhile, behind me, in the distance, on **Harbor Boulevard**, were loud chants from an organized protest rally, sponsored by the **local state Senator** and **Democratic club**. The **pitched fury** of the protesters rose as though orchestrated into a tycoon's made-for-TV, **reality-show smackdown** of chanting in the distance.

I can't speak for anyone who may have watched the speech on TV, but I can attest that no one standing outside the fantail – be they anti-Trump protesters, or tycoon supporters – was paying much attention to **the guy in the blue blazer and red cap**, as he spoke or threw campaign swag to the audience on the ship.

But standing at the base of this American icon – the very symbol of when our people sacrificed together in order to achieve great things – it seemed as though all of the Americans on hand were far too angry at one another to listen or work together anytime soon.

It will take a lot more than a real estate tycoon's red hat and rhetoric to fix that.