



Nebraska Report

There is no Peace without Justice

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Nebraska Must Act on Climate Change

by Donald Wilhite

University of Nebraska climate scientist and professor Don Wilhite is the director emeritus of UNL's School of Natural Resources, as well as the founding director of the National Drought Mitigation Center. The "Local View" opinion piece below was originally published in the October 24, 2018 Lincoln Journal Star.

Despite warnings from numerous sources (including a 2014 report from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Nebraska has been complacent about planning for climate change.

Given its agriculturally based economy with its sensitivities to weather, Nebraska should heed the warning of the most recent report from the United Nations. These warnings ("Life-or-death" warning: Major study says world has just

11 years to avoid climate change catastrophe," *Lincoln Journal Star*, October 8, 2018) illustrate the dire consequences of not taking decisive and urgent action to reduce sharply carbon pollution.

The consequences of our inaction include continued and accelerated far-reaching effects on public health, agriculture and food security, water supply, economic growth, national security and livelihoods.

Climate scientists have predicted dramatic changes in our climate for decades, only to have those predictions largely ignored, even denied, by policy makers and the public. These predictions of the eminent threat of climate change are now the new reality.

In 2017, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports, the U.S. experienced 16 disasters with eco-

nomical losses exceeding \$1 billion (e.g., hurricanes, droughts, floods, fires, and severe weather events). Combined, these losses totaled nearly \$400 billion. Hurricanes Florence and Michael are the latest examples of how climate change now affects us. Although extreme weather-related events have occurred in the past, climate change is altering the severity and frequency of these events.

Alarmed by the denial and the lack of progress in addressing the eminent threat of climate change, the global community came together and reached an agreement to reduce significantly greenhouse gas emissions. The agreement, the Paris Climate Treaty of 2015, was signed by 195 countries. Its goal is to limit the warming that will dramatically increase the climate-related risks for both natural and human systems.

Unfortunately, President Trump has announced that the United States will withdraw from the Paris treaty. This places the responsibility for America's climate action squarely on the private sector, on state and local governments and on us as citizens.

At the state government level, adopting a climate action plan to coordinate the efforts of state government, institutions of higher education, natural resource districts, environmental interest groups and the business sector is essential. This

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Nebraska Report

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Nebraska Must Act



UNL Professor Emeritus Donald Wilhite

can mobilize the resources necessary to reduce the impacts of a changing climate on the state, while taking advantage of the opportunities associated with climate change to bolster sustainable economic growth.

Several major planning efforts are underway in Nebraska that should incorporate the implications of a changing climate on the state's future.

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce recently launched Blueprint Nebraska, a citizen-led economic development initiative intended to bring together business, agriculture, government and higher education to create a proactive plan to stimulate the state's economic growth. Similarly, UNL has initiated the Nebraska Commission of 150 "to envision what the university should look like a generation from now."

Unless climate change and its implications on the state's economy, social fabric and natural resources are an integral part of these two efforts, the outcome of both will fall far short of their goals.

Nebraska has the resources to address climate change. For example, NU and other institutions of higher learning possess enormous human resources and expertise to assist the private sector and governments in addressing climate change in a systematic, pragmatic manner. The natural resource districts represent another powerful institutional tool to manage our precious water resources in the context of a changing climate.

The recent UN report should be a wake-up call to the private sector and state and local governments, that climate change is a real and existential threat to Nebraska.

We must take action now to address the risks associated with climate change. Continuing to deny this reality places our economy, natural resources and citizenry at greater and greater risk.

Actions now that address these risks are preferable and more cost effective than reaction later. Simply waiting to react is foolhardy. It is time for our state's leadership to step up to meet the challenge of a changing climate. As citizens of this state, we must demand action.

You Have the Power to Stop Climate Change from Getting Much Worse

by Mark Welsch, Co-Leader of Citizens' Climate Lobby & NFP Omaha Coordinator

Just like in the Civil Rights era, when millions of people cared enough to contact their elected officials and march in the streets, we need people today who care—to call, write and visit with their elected officials until they pass laws to right the wrongs of the past. To borrow a phrase, we need all hands on deck now to stop climate change from getting much worse.

Taking action is simple, doesn't take much time and is very effective. To join thousands of other people who are already making phone calls to their Members of Congress, just go to cclusa.org/call and enter your address. It will display your members' names, phone numbers and messages for you to read to them. Of course you can tell them whatever is on your mind, you don't have to follow the exact script. We need tens of thousands of people making these regular calls, so please share this plan and this Nebraska Report with a friend.

Persistence Pays! If you repeat this phone calling action every month or even every week, being respectful every time, you will be letting them know this is an important issue to their constituents. They will hear our collective voices loud and clear. This is just like the Grand Canyon being created one small drop of water at a time. We can get Congress to pass our Carbon Fee and Dividend law by being a constant voice of reason every time we call, write and visit with them.

Talk with friends and family about Climate Change. Yale Climate Connections has been studying the issue of climate change and people's perspective of it for ten years. The results of their study make it clear that to build the support needed to curb this danger, climate change needs to be a topic of discussion at our dinner tables during the holidays, at lunch with co-workers and in our houses of worship.

This is easy to do. Go to another Citizens' Climate Lobby website: citizensclimatelobby.org/laser-talks/ There you will find several very short stories that you can use to learn more and talk with your friends and family about global warming and climate change. It explains how a Carbon Fee and Dividend law could help stop climate change from getting worse.

If we want to slow—and someday reverse—climate change, we must drastically reduce fossil fuel use now. By passing a law to add a fee on fossil fuels, and returning all of that money to households as a dividend, we can do it! This will also create many new jobs.

But to do it we need your help. We need your voice. We need you to call your members of Congress. We can use our voices to express political will. We must help our elected leaders work together. It's up to us to tell them what we want—as a group. Because when voices call out together, their impact multiplies.

When is the best time to get Congress to pass a law to stop climate change? 20 years ago. When is the second best time? TODAY! Please go to cclusa.org/call and make your first call today.

“We are the last generation that can change the course of climate change. And we are the first generation that has to live with its consequences.”

— Kristalina Georgieva. CEO, World Bank

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NUCLEAR NEWS

by Paul A. Olson
Chair, NFP Anti-War Committee

President Trump has announced that he is pulling the United States out of the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) Treaty with Russia—the Cold War-era pact that Nuclear Weapons Freeze advocates fought for in the 1980s. Trump’s decision to withdraw is based on the Russians’ creation of some new nuclear weapons that the White House says violate the INF treaty (see <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/03/are-putins-new-nukes-a-real-threat.html>).

According to most experts, however, these weapons do not change the balance of nuclear power significantly. Russia, for its part, charges that the missile defense system that the U.S. has deployed in Eastern Europe also violates the INF. And the \$1.2 trillion-dollar nuclear ‘modernization’ program that the U.S. has embarked upon almost surely violates the spirit of the INF treaty.

Before things get any further out of hand, both the United States and Russia need to immediately submit their differences to the United Nations for arbitration, and a systematic percentage reduction of all nations’ nuclear stockpiles, monitored by the United Nations, needs to begin. Meanwhile, Nebraskans should take a certain pride that one of our members of Congress is actively taking steps to control this growing threat. Reprinted below is the recent “Fort Report” newsletter from Representative Jeff Fortenberry:

Right in our neighborhood, in Bellevue, is the United States Strategic Command, also known as USSTRATCOM. Their mission is to deter strategic attack

and, if necessary, deploy strategic forces as the ultimate guarantor of our security and our allies. It’s a place of highly dedicated, highly specialized professionals, whose grave responsibility is to prepare for war, including nuclear war—in order to deter it. A long time ago, as a deterrent confidence-building measure, the Russians were invited to view the inner workings of the facility. Their commander had a hard time believing that he was actually seeing the real command center.

Several decades ago, the world cared deeply about nuclear security and arms control. Epic negotiations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union took center stage. The Reagan-Gorbachev summits were imbued with a grandeur and star power that signaled how deeply the world cared about their success.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the issue of broad-based nuclear security has largely disappeared from the world’s attention and the front pages of newspapers. Yet today the challenge of nuclear proliferation is more serious, nuanced, and complicated. From rising tensions with Russia, to India and Pakistan border disputes, to North Korea’s decisions and Iran’s potentiality, the threat of a limited nuclear war or—with the rise of global jihad—a radiological dirty bomb attack has increased since the Cold War. Due to these developments, we are projected to be only two minutes away from midnight, according to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists’ doomsday clock, the closest we have been to colossal extinction since the height of the Cold War.

In Congress, I created the bipartisan Congressional Nuclear Security Working

Group to address these concerns. As a launching point for further engagement, I recently led a discussion with nuclear experts from the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations, senior government officials, and retired military officers with experience in nuclear policy in complex organizations. In frank talk, we explored how to better address to-



**Congressman
Jeff Fortenberry**

day’s proliferation challenges through improved coordination of U.S. counter- and non-proliferation efforts.

Here’s the good news. We’ve been successful in preventing and countering the spread of materials and technologies used to produce nuclear weapons. These efforts include diplomatic and arms control initiatives out of the State Department, the counter-WMD (weapons of mass destruction) operations of the Defense Department, the non-proliferation endeavors at the Energy

A Plan for Climate Action

by Christian Parenti

Presented here is the conclusion of Dr. Christian Parenti's September 22nd Annual Peace Conference address, "The Current and Future Crisis of Global Climate Refugees"—the first part of which was published in the September/October 2018 Nebraska Report. Thanks to Marilyn McNabb for her conscientious transcription.

...The Arab Spring, beginning in 2011, starts in Tunisia. Protestors are demanding a better standard of living. Demonstrators are carrying loaves of bread. In that year, one of the last things the former President Ben Ali did before he left that year was increase bread subsidies. And similarly in Egypt people were protesting. One of the demands people had when they hit the streets was to lower the price of food. What was happening was that in 2009-2010, there had been very bad droughts in the Black Sea region. There were forest fires in Russia that were so bad the smoke was clogging Moscow. The Black Sea Drought affected Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Russia. These are major wheat exporters and these are their wheat zones.

On top of this Glencore, which is a huge, privately-held commodity trader and mining company, Swiss-based, openly advocated to the Russians that they should cancel their grain exports. Russia did that. What region do you suppose is one of the largest grain importers in the world? The Middle East. Egypt is the single largest grain importer in the world.

So part of what drove the Arab Spring was this food price shock. It was the second food price shock in less than a decade. There had been a major food price shock in 2007 with food riots. It's not to reduce the Arab Spring to climate change—but just to point how an environmental crisis in one place can be displaced over time via markets from one place and show up as a political crisis in another place. This is part of what's driving this refugee crisis in the Mediterranean. It's an example of a convergence of catastrophes.

What's been the response in Europe?

How's Europe adapting? Unfortunately, in very bad ways. The Right is gaining power. The Center parties are moving to the right. The European Union (EU) has beefed up its investment in border militarization. Their joint border patrol agency, Frontex, has doubled its budget and is on schedule to raise its budget to about \$350 million by 2020. There's increasing surveillance and policing in the Mediterranean. There's also freelance efforts. The Golden Dawn Party in Greece has its own little navy that goes around and harasses refugees. Each state is erecting camps, building fences, etc. Throughout Europe the spectacle of Muslim refugees wandering through Hungary and Serbia has empowered the xenophobic Right. Thus you have Viktor Orban, Prime Minister in Hungary, doing very well with an increasingly xenophobic right-wing politics. So that's an example of bad adaptation.

The great irony in the European situation is that Europe is turning into a geriatric ward. The birth rates have declined in Europe for a long time. And European society needs young people. You cannot afford to have a society of older people receiving social benefits if there aren't people to work in the economy. Europe needs immigrants! Certainly, this first wave of immigrants were people with entrepreneurial skills and sensibility, usually had some degrees, had a little money or property they used to make this trip and in many ways are exactly what Europe needs. It doesn't always seem like that because what the EU has done in creating the Common Market, there are labor shortages in certain places, like in parts of Eastern Europe, because their working class population has been pulled to the higher-wage western sections of Eastern Europe.

Overall, there is a need for these people, but politically that isn't what's happening. And I think that part of that has to do with the fact that the European Right looks at the American

situation and understands that we've done something that I view as very immoral but technically at the economic level is brilliant, which is to allow immigration, but to not allow immigrants to have rights... To allow immigrants to come in and pick your crops but don't allow immigrants to organize unions. If they ever start talking about unions, you just call Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on yourself. Which employers do, on occasion. There's a contradiction in this whole thing because, in California, the agricultural lobby is divided on immigration. They realize they need immigrants and they like that they're undocumented because they have no power. But they don't like being the one who gets raided by ICE. But there's also a realization that you can't have this disempowered work force if some people aren't occasionally getting raided by ICE.

That's the kind of sub rosa labor market, particularly in agriculture, that's been well-established in this country that is now emerging in Europe. And that's a kind of adaptation that is having the effect of driving down wages (that along with just ignorance and racism). But the idea that there's this huge population coming in that doesn't have any rights that will undercut European wages, there is an element of self-preservation in some of this xenophobic reaction. Of course the answer is: Don't strip these people of their rights. Allow them to fit into the old structures of unions and collective bargaining that helped deliver this high standard of living to the European working class.

So that's the current refugee crisis in Europe in a nutshell. Similar in Myanmar, turning on the Rohingya. Bangladesh is in no way capable of dealing with this. The response already has been Bangladeshis going to India. The response there for more than a decade has been heavy militarization of the border. People are killed regularly on that border.

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NUCLEAR NEWS, CONCLUSION

Department, and all the quiet work done in dozens of offices and agencies across the government. Luckily, a certain unity of effort among dedicated professionals has kept us safe.

Here's the tougher news. Numerous outside organizations, from independent commissions to the Government Accountability Office, have voiced concern about the level of coordination between these nonproliferation entities and the activities they oversee. The core question is this: How do we measure success in preventing what did not happen? Should we do more? Should we reimagine the threat infrastructure response?

We have recently undertaken a massive effort to modernize and assure the

reliability of our nuclear arsenal. The initiative came out of ongoing considerations by the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Council. I have proposed a parallel entity called the Nuclear Nonproliferation Council, whose purpose will be to examine what we are doing and give us the highest possible assurance that we are preventing the spread of nuclear weapons technology and materiel.

We must work aggressively to get the possibility of a nuclear event as close to zero as possible. We have made essential strides towards guaranteeing the reliability of our weapons to ensure deterrence, but we need a corresponding emphasis on preventing new nuclear threats from arising. These are not topics any of us want to think about because they are hard

and frightening. Yet the highest purpose of our government is to keep you safe. To react to a nuclear incident is too late.

Sincerely,

Congressman Jeff Fortenberry

We congratulate Rep. Fortenberry on this effort. This initiative could not be more timely. Yet to be addressed, if we are to substantively reduce the growing nuclear peril, is the need for congressional oversight over the executive branch's dangerous nuclear brinkmanship, the extension of congressional control over any use of nuclear weapons, and congressional leadership—in conjunction with the United Nations—to secure mutual arms reductions and international verification among all nuclear weapons states.

Climate Action Plan, continued

Our own border has long been militarized. My first book, *Lockdown America*, has several chapters on immigration and I went down to the border in the late '90s and it was already well-established. It begins in early 1994 with "Operation Gatekeeper" [in the second year] of the Clinton Administration. Clinton presides over a massive ramping up of militarization of the U.S. border. The Border Patrol, were it a separate army, would have one of the largest Air Forces in the world.

There are about 40,000 Border Patrol agents. The border is totally militarized. There is a wall. That to some extent has diverted migrants into deadlier areas where they go on foot. And it's also basically just raised the price and increased corruption to people to have to use 'coyotes' [profiteers who arrange passage] where they come through checkpoints.

But the main reason in the last decade there's been a net out-migration from this country to Latin America has less to do with the policing. The policy does work to a certain extent to terrorize people and abuse them, making them not want to stay. But much more important than that is that Latin American economies finally began to recover from more than 10 years of forced austerity—the 'neo-liberalism' that was a result of the debt crisis of the early 1980s. In a nutshell, Latin American countries borrowed a lot of money in the 1970s. Then there were the oil price shocks in 1973 and 1978. There's enormous amounts of money looking to be reinvested, sloshing around the global economy. It's lent out to any country who will borrow it at low-variable interest rates pegged to the "LIBOR rate"—the London Interbank Offered Rate.

Reagan comes into power and, in response to what the American Right saw as a world increasingly out of control, decides he's going to bring order on all fronts. And what was happening in the domestic economy during the 1970s was that workers were going on strike more than they had since the late 1940s. During the late 1970s, there was 'stagflation'—which meant low rates of growth but rising inflation. And this was driven in part by the fact that workers were not responding

to unemployment the way they traditionally did. They weren't afraid of unemployment. And they were bidding up their wages. This was cutting into corporate profits, which collapsed around 1973-74.

So in the beginning of the 1970s you have Richard Nixon in 1972 experimenting with the idea of a "Guaranteed Universal Income." Some journalist said to him, "That's very Keynesian and you're a Conservative Republican." And Nixon said, "We're all Keynesians now," referring to John Maynard Keynes, the British economist who came to prominence during the Great Depression. Keynes said the only way we can get out of this Depression is if the government comes in and does deficit spending to revive the economy and then it pulls back on that deficit spending once the economy is recovering. The economy will be booming and you can pay off those debts—a 'counter cyclical stimulus.' This is the orthodoxy throughout the West from the late '30s through the 1970s. All the great minds, Right, Left and Center (well, not far left, but the governing classes) thought this is what you do to keep capitalism from going off the rails into a Great Depression.

It was this crisis in the 1970s that caused what was then considered a fringe set of ideas associated with Milton Friedman in Chicago and Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, both Austrian economists, who since the 1930s had been arguing against Keynes. They said, "No, the way you avoid depressions, get full employment, an economy that's not going to tip into crisis, is to remove regulations, cut taxes, free the entrepreneurial forces, and just let this economy alone." That was seen as reckless and wrong because it was part of what led to the Great Depression and a series of profound economic crises throughout the late 19th century. But with the crisis of the 1970s, these ideas, which always had the backing of elites, came forward. The McCormick family, for example, funded an endowed chair at the University of Chicago for Milton Friedman. There was a right-wing think tank movement that Hayek helped develop in the 1950s and it nurtured this cadre or right-

wing fanatics who were obsessed with getting rid of government regulation.

But they're seen as a little bit nuts until the 1970s when there is this economic crisis which was ultimately the result of recovery from World War II. The problem that capitalism continually faces is the problem of overproduction. I'm sure farmers are well aware of that irony—a bumper crop means low prices. It's the same thing throughout the system. Capitalism is very good at producing wealth and not good at producing enough demand. Eventually, there's overproduction and economic collapse.

World War II not only killed millions of people, it knocked out tons of factories and all sorts of infrastructure. The process of rebuilding allowed the core economies of the West to boom for a generation. And by the late 1960s, global markets are just saturated. There are basically too many automobile factories and not enough people to buy the automobiles. Same with washing machines and blue jeans, etc., etc. And that's part of what was causing profit rates to decline and unemployment to go up. Yet people weren't responding to the unemployment. That was partly because the social innovations of the New Deal—like Social Security, Unemployment Compensation—and then the "War on Poverty" in the Johnson Administration extended social benefits to the poor.

Suddenly in the 1970s, an element of the ruling class—the political class in the U.S.—realized that the mild forms of redistribution that helped stabilize the economy coming out of the Depression have empowered workers too much. They're not scared enough. Now, during this downturn, it's corporate profits that are being hit and not the working class.

By the end of the decade, when Nixon says that stuff about "we're all Keynesians now," this Friedman/Hayek/Von Mises policy is beginning to gain traction and Jimmy Carter begins to deregulate trucking, airlines, rails to some degree, and telecommunications. The military budget is increased which is essentially like welfare for General Electric and

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What's HOT in Global Warming?

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

'The Most Dangerous Organization in Human History'

Noam Chomsky has said that the Republican Party's opposition to addressing climate change has made it "the most dangerous organization in human history." And why is this? Briefly stated, because today's political generation will decide whether humanity will survive on a sustainable planet.

"We're going to maximize the use of fossil fuels [which could] carry us past the tipping point. We're not going to provide funding for—as committed in Paris—to developing countries that are trying to do something about the climate problems. We're going to dismantle regulations that retard... the devastating impact of

Given the general consensus among world climate scientists and diplomats that global temperatures cannot rise more than 2 degrees C. without doing irreparable harm to people and the rest of the planet's flora and fauna, what becomes of trillions of dollars worth of recoverable fossil fuels that would



The guiding ideology of the GOP, says Chomsky, now dictates that "We're going to maximize the use of fossil fuels [which could] carry us past the tipping point."

"It turns out," said Chomsky in an interview on Amy Goodman's Democracy Now! "that the most powerful country in human history, the richest, most influential, the leader of the free world, has just decided not only not to support the efforts, but actively to undermine them. So there's the whole world on one side [in the Paris Accords]... On the other side, in splendid isolation, is the country led by the most dangerous organization in human history, which is saying, 'We're not part of this. In fact, we're going to try to undermine it.'"

Chomsky said that the guiding ideology of the GOP now dictates that

production of carbon dioxide and, in fact, other dangerous gases—methane, and others."

A Crucial Time in Earth's History

As the Republicans deny that a problem even exists, we live at a crucial time in Earth's history. As Republicans legislate climate change into oblivion, we will be forced to face several important issues that will shape the fate of the planet for several centuries.

We will, for example, be facing the "Question of Unburnable Carbon."

have to remain locked away to preserve a habitable Earth? When the threat of a warming climate is truly taken seriously by the fossil-fuel industry, it will have to deal with the question of locking away reserves that have been defined as corporate assets that could become worthless. This question is closely connected to another: how quickly must the world switch to alternative fuels such as solar and wind to avert climatic catastrophe?

The value of these assets already has been estimated by scientists, whose calculations appeared in the British journal *Nature* early in 2015. Michael Jakob

Climate Action Plan, continued

Lockheed Martin, etc. Reagan comes in and he goes to town with that.

The other thing Reagan does when he comes into power is increases in the interest rates, massively. This plunges the U.S. economy into what was then the worst recession since the Great Depression. So he jacks up interest rates to around 16 percent, which means in secondary markets—like credit cards—people were paying enormous amounts of money. That means employers, homeowners, nobody is borrowing. Everyone pulls back. The economy goes into this intense recession and, at the same time, the Air Traffic Controllers, PATCO, go on strike. Reagan fires 11,000 of them. He stacks the National Labor Relations Board with people who were totally hostile to labor and the gloves come off.

There was a new class war. Reagan cuts taxes to the rich, increases taxes to the poor, cuts social spending, decimates Housing and Urban Development and on and on. This has the result of curing the working class of that problem they had in the '70s of thinking they had a right to a decent life, to go on strike, to say 'no' to the boss and quit jobs they didn't like and go and find better ones. From that point on we get massive increases in inequality. All the growth accrues to the owners of capital—to the 1%—and is not split evenly with the wage-earning class.

What that jacking up the interest rates meant internationally was the debt crisis. Suddenly, around 1980-81, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina had all borrowed money heavily. Lots of developing economies borrow money. Nothing wrong with that as long as it's invested well, managed properly and you pay off your debts. South Koreans borrow a lot of money and properly manage it. Mexico, Brazil and Argentina could manage their debts when interest rates were low, but when they soared, they couldn't. In 1981, Mexico said, "We're going to default on our debts." One of the largest banks in the U.S., First Continental of Illinois, collapses. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Paul Volker, spoke before Congress and said, "You have to lower interest rates. This is going to crash

the global economy." The answer was, "We can't do that yet because we haven't seen the wages in the U.S. go down."

So you have these two parallel stories, domestic austerity and class war from above and the international effects. So then what happens is Mexico and later Argentina and Brazil, which were just the first of a series of states to go through this process, go to the international community and say, "What can we do?"

The response was that lifeline loans would be extended but you have to do the following: You have to privatize all the state companies that you own. You've got to open your capital markets to allow investors to come in and play around on your stock market. A lot of these countries had Capital Control Boards. If you were a rich investor and you wanted to invest in Argentina, it was an elaborate process. You had to commit to a long-term presence. You couldn't just drop in and invest in the stock market and pull out at the end of the day, leaving chaos and instability. Those kinds of rules were removed so money can come in and go out. All these protections that had been built in through decades of class struggle were removed.

The Mexican economy, for example, is unequal—a capitalist economy, but its constitution is considered the first socialist constitution. The Constitution of 1919 came out of the Mexican Revolution. It says that everything in Mexico—it enumerates it down to the rock salt—is the property of the state. Private property exists in Mexico but only at the pleasure of the state; it has no autonomous rights that are not privileges granted by the State: that's Article 27 of the Constitution. All these principles have to go. All the state companies were run as private companies but owned by the state. They helped nurture along Mexican development. And they were all privatized. As a result you get this increasing inequality, a declining standard of living. This is the pre-history of NAFTA. The whole process of restructuring leads up to NAFTA. NAFTA is just the contract at the end of the process.

There was, coming out of the Mexican Revolution, the "ejido" system, which was a system of farmland management in Mexico that produced more than half of Mexico's food. The ejidos were collectively owned property that could not be mortgaged—that is, gotten rid of. As a result of the restructuring over the rest of the decade, two million people lose their farms. So people are going to hit the road.

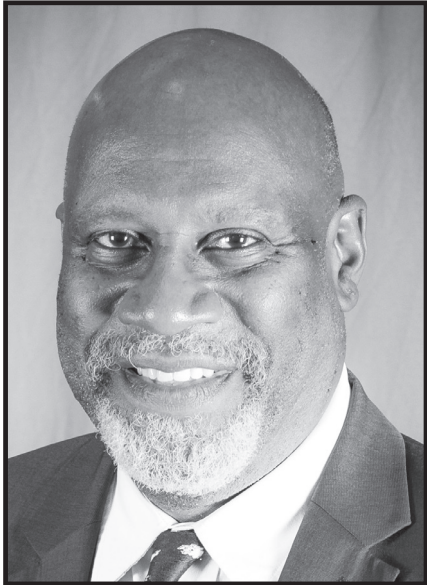


Christian Parenti

The "neoliberal" economics that had grown out of the debt crisis in Latin America wasn't 'liberal' in our colloquial sense here in the U.S. (for example, "I'm for gay marriage and I think you should regulate smokestacks"), but liberal in the traditional sense of calling for a return to classical economics: Laissez faire. Leave the economy alone. This neoliberal restructuring forced on Latin America led to a decade of very low growth. Even in the terms of those who were imposing this it was an abysmal performance.

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Bridging the Chasm



by A'Jamal-Rashad Byndon

The level of incivility that we've seen exhibited the last several months illustrates how deep-rooted are the problems and challenges our communities are facing. In my environment, both at a national "Disproportionate Minority Contact and Compliance Coordinator" (DMC) training meeting and locally here in Omaha, it's becoming increasingly apparent that, as a nation, we lack a common, unifying theme that can help us bridge the chasm that is growing wider and more menacing by the day. The election is over and the results show that close to half of the registered electorate operate in a separate reality that believes this country is being invaded by hordes of criminal types, potential left-leaning Democratic voters and angry mobs.

To understand how widespread this delusional (and racist) mentality is we need to look no further than our criminal justice system where the over-confinement of people of color—particularly African Americans—is commonplace. In some areas, the jails are packed full of dark-skinned youth and adults. There

are a multitude of factors in addition to racism accounting for this unacceptable state of affairs: poverty, poor quality education, joblessness and the lack of economic opportunity, inadequate health care and diet and nutritional deficiencies. But justice in America can never be color blind when our corrections system is disproportionately populated with people of color and non-whites are constantly portrayed as 'others' who pose a social and economic threat to whites' personal security and way of life.

This widening chasm between whites and everybody else (the 'everybody else' of Latinos, Asians, Native Americans and African Americans who will be the numerical majority in U.S. by 2045) will lead to greater and greater conflict unless we find ways bridge this

This widening chasm between whites and everybody else.. will lead to greater and greater conflict unless we find ways bridge this divide.

divide. To avert this future, we need more community members involved in discussions on creating meaningful change. Solutions to these problems though will not be found if composed (or imposed) by 'the chosen few.'

Numerous nearly all-white organizations repeatedly attempt to 'fix' problems in our communities by using 'top-down' models. It is impossible, though, to serve our diverse populations effectively without going into their neighborhoods and homes and directly involving them in the planning effort. And when the plans are completed, are those organizations keeping the community actively engaged in the implementation process?

For example, some child welfare agencies provide services to culturally di-

verse communities east of 42nd Street in Omaha. This type of 'line' exists in many other cities and communities. Yet many of these all-white boards of directors and nearly all of the staff members live in wealthy or middle-income communities west of 42nd. The minutes of these agencies' and organizations' reflect that they are Eurocentric operations that rarely have people of color on their boards or a person of color on their staff—particularly in a leadership position.

In spite of the untold dollars spent on 'solving' problems in our communities, these problems continue to grow. If we are serious about changing things for the better, we must start by finding effective ways to diversify the staff and board membership of these entities, and regularly conduct cultural and racial eq-

uity audits. But this is not an argument for any non-white face will do. Many boards of directors of nonprofit and charitable organizations, governmental bodies, and the governing committees of political parties have no competent people of color serving on them. This tokenistic practice of appointing individuals who lack the qualifications to succeed does not advance our cause. Rather, it reflects and reinforces racism and social injustice.

Without authentic engagement by everyone (white and non-white alike) to bridge the chasm that's now separating us, our efforts will ring hollow. We can continue to encourage low-income families and oppressed folks to vote and become engaged in political and public policy discussions. Yet, how many real community forums are held in specific neighborhoods or community centers that

serve people of color or low-income residents? All too often, after the elections are over, we resort back to the usual ways of conducting community business. Truly improving the lives of our residents who have been left behind means changing the ways that we engage them. And that means going to their parts of town and listening to their issues and bringing them into the boardrooms.

The educational system cannot be reformed without community participants' and students' input. We can't improve communities or institutions without public transparency and accountability. And just as white people must step outside of their comfort zones and go meet people of color where they are, both North and South Omahans have to do a better job of

stepping up and getting involved. There are many residents who talk about the 'redlining' and gentrification that keeps our communities divided. Like it's the weather, we complain about the segregation—both cultural and political—that divides us. Yet on a day-to-day basis, we aren't willing to get and stay involved. Well, we can't control the weather. But we can control the levels of apartheid in our respective communities by public policy and by creating opportunities for those who have historically been locked out of the system.

In short, we cannot expect the few to do the work for the many. We must pull our own weight. Our communities—particularly at this moment in history—needs truth-seekers to step forward and

change the paradigm. American 'democracy' produces victims of internalized racism and catfighting. Not everyone has the ability to effectively challenge this institutional racism and lead the way to reforming this dysfunctional behavior. But if you're reading this, you're one of those who does. We don't have to name or call anyone out, but let me ask: When was the last time you joined the few serious community members who are known for speaking truth to power within those institutions or organizations and raised your own voice? The chasm that is daily growing wider isn't going to be bridged without our vigilant participation... And we look away at our own peril.

Need I say more?

Climate Action Plan, continued

Over this period the radical armed left in Latin America had been defeated and the Left seems to be snuffed out. But by the late '90s, early 2000s, they're coming back. Social Democrats are winning elections. You've heard of the "Pink Tide," the New Left of Latin America? Evo Morales was elected president in Bolivia—the first indigenous president of Bolivia. He's also a socialist. What that really means in practice is he's like a Bolivian Franklin Roosevelt and he's managing a capitalist economy well and with fairness. He's increasing the standard of living of the majority of the people. Business is booming. Rich Bolivians are doing fine. They're actually doing better than under the austerity regime.

The debt crisis and the austerity period had sent commodity prices into the basement for 20 or more years. But throughout this period China's economy had been growing at more than 10 percent a year. By the early 2000s, it's booming, commodity prices have recovered and China is ready to buy anything it can get from anywhere. This economic upturn, coupled with the end of privatization, has been the basis of a return to social democracy in Latin America. This rather than border militarization is the reason why we've seen a net increase in migration back to Latin America.

You have the Brazilians, what they call

the "Bolsa Familia" which is like healthcare and food benefits incentivizing poor families to take their kids to the doctor and school and giving them cash payments for that. These sorts of New Deal redistributive programs have really helped to increase the standard of living for people throughout Latin America. More than policing, what pulled people back and kept people in Latin America was that the economy was doing better than it had for a long time.

We'll see what happens with this trade war and what happens when China's growth declines. There might be an increase in migration out of Latin America then. This though is how we have to understand the present—in an historical context...

So wrapping this up: what to do? If we're serious about dealing with climate change, we're going to have to have robust mitigation and progressive adaptation—not violent adaptation. The good news is we have everything we need for mitigation. We have the money, the technology, and we actually even have the laws.

In terms of the money, there's the military budget. This vast, wasted welfare system should be redirected. You don't even have to change the logic. You want to get real about

national security? Prepare for climate change!

There's also the massive subsidies to fossil fuels. Step One would be no more subsidies to fossil fuels. You can't use public land. You want to go find oil, go find it on private land. And then there's the production tax credits, which are probably about \$1 billion a year—it's hard to get exact numbers on that, but let's take the most conservative estimate. In the last year of the Obama Administration, the Administration said the U.S. government subsidized the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$4.6 billion a year. On the other hand, the "Environmental Law Institute" and others estimate that fossil fuel subsidies constitute almost 4 percent of global GDP, that the subsidies for oil and gas exploration and development for 2002-2008 was \$1 billion a year.

Another source of money is that the federal and state governments are major consumers of energy and vehicles. So all the money could be steered toward clean technology. The Post Office has 140,000 vehicles that drive an average of 18 miles a day and park in the same place every night. There's no reason that entire fleet shouldn't be electrified. Other parts of the federal gov-

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WHAT'S HOT, CONCLUSION

and Jerome Hilaire, who work with the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact, wrote that “Cumulative carbon dioxide emissions must be less than 870 to 1,240 gigatons between 2011 and 2050 if we are to have a reasonable chance of limiting global warming to 2 degrees C. above average global temperature of pre-industrial times” (2015:150). “Reasonable,” in this case, is defined as 50 percent, calculated with a model.

Another calculation of the unburnable carbon question was provided in 2015 by Michael Greenstone, Milton Friedman Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, as well as director of that university’s Energy Policy Institute (and chief economist of President Obama’s Council of Economic Advisers in 2009 and 2010). He wrote in the *New York Times* that recoverable reserves and resources of coal, oil, and natural gas, once combusted, would raise average global temperatures 16.2 degrees F. “If we use all of the fossil fuels in the ground, the planet will warm in a way that is difficult to imagine. Unless the economics of energy markets change, we are poised to use them,” Greenstone commented. And there may be more: “Indeed, it is well known that there are ample supplies of coal deeper beneath the Earth’s surface that do not yet qualify as resources, and there is increasing evidence that energy from methane hydrates may become relevant commercially.”

Given that fossil-fuel reserves had an estimated value of U.S. \$27 trillion at 2014 prices, any effort to sequester substantial amounts of them would produce a financial earthquake in the fossil-fuel industry and, according to Jakob and Hilaire, force the companies to “ask themselves whether they should continue to invest in exploration for, and processing of, oil, gas, and coal, or risk losing billions of dollars of stranded assets” (Jakob and Hilaire, 2015, 151).

The Geophysical Facts of Thermal Inertia.

The GOP also is ignoring the geophysical facts of thermal inertia. The most important term in the climate change debate (a phrase rarely heard outside scientific circles), “thermal inertia” describes the natural laws that govern how the atmosphere converts fossil-fuel emissions into heat. The process takes about 50 years in the atmosphere and 150 years in the oceans. This means that today’s climate is a result of world greenhouse-gas emissions about 1968, when levels were much lower. To put it colloquially, this cake is already being baked.

Warming that is ‘in the pipeline’ due to thermal inertia guarantees a warming of 1 to 2 degrees C., which will eventually (within about 200 years) raise world sea levels about 20 feet, even if world combustion of fossil fuels ceases im-

mediately. Worldwide, several hundred million people live within 20 feet of high tide.

James Hansen and several other scientists have published temperature readings from the deep ocean that trace a clear warming trend indicative of the planet’s thermal inertia and energy imbalance—the difference between the amount of heat absorbed by Earth and the amount radiated out into space. This thermal imbalance (0.85 watts plus or minus 0.15 watts per square meter) is evidence of a steadily warming world, raising the odds of a catastrophic sudden change marked by rising seas and melting icecaps (Hansen, et al., 2005, 1431).

Bruce E. Johansen, Frederick W. Kayser Professor at the University of Nebraska—Omaha, is author of Climate Change: An Encyclopedia of Science, Society, and Solutions (2017).

Your Foundation Speaks

by Loyal Park, Nebraska Peace Foundation President

If you are the owner of a traditional IRA and are age 70½ or older, you are required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA. Now, near the end of the year, it is a good time to decide how to take that Required Minimum Distribution (RMD).

You have the option of taking the RMD as a withdrawal from your account which will be taxed the same as other income, or taking a Qualified Charitable Distribution (CHD) which will not be taxed. The CHD must be given to a tax-exempt organization such as Nebraska Peace Foundation. This will be a good time to make that designation that your CHD will be sent to Nebraska Peace Foundation.

You may split up your RMD with part being a direct withdrawal and part being the CHD. If you do not need all of the withdrawal, please consider specifying that part of it be sent to Nebraska Peace Foundation, PO Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501.



Climate Action Plan, continued

ernment have large vehicle fleets. The federal government has 45,000 buildings—generally large, inefficient office buildings. They should all be retrofitted. Also the federal government is going to buy electricity for these buildings. Why not channel that toward renewable energy? Say that the government has to buy renewables and if that's impossible, commit to a schedule working with utilities to get enough renewables on line to do this.

This is actually a large part about how technology comes to scale. The government has been very important in directly subsidizing R&D for computers. Less well known is its role as the first consumer. For the first 10 years of IBM's existence, well over half of its sales went to the federal government. And still to this day, high tech is heavily dependent on selling its products to the government. That's how we get stuff like the iPhone.

Mariana Mazzucato in her book *The Entrepreneurial State* goes through 12 different government-funded, government produced technologies that are in the iPhone. Only once all the kinks had been worked out were they then licensed to the private sector.

The government did this with aviation. It subsidized what became the airlines to carry the mail. It would have been cheaper to carry the mail on rail and other ways, but these mail contracts allowed them to work out the kinks in their business models and get up running and become the companies we know. The role of government procurement is essential in technological transformation. It's also an enormous amount of money. The public sector is between 35 and 38 percent of the economy.

We should be making demands on how the government spends its money on buildings and purchasing energy and electric vehicles. We have the technology. It's not like we haven't already invented electric cars and utility-scale solar and wind. We even have the laws—the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act.

It would be better to have a carbon tax as our friends at Citizens' Climate Lobby are pushing for. But in the meantime, we have the means to impose a de facto carbon tax and it would be to follow the letter of the Clean Air

Act exactly, which says if science shows that smokestack and tailpipe emissions cause harm to human beings, then the EPA has to regulate those emissions. If we were serious about that, we could impose a de facto carbon tax. It would say to business, you're free to burn coal but you're going to pay a hefty fine on every ton of CO₂ you emit. That would mean that the price of energy produced by coal would go way up. That in turn would mean coal would be less competitive compared to renewable energy. I have no illusions that Trump is going to pursue this.

The great tragedy of the Obama Administration is that it ignored this. And one of the great mistakes of the Climate Movement was that it—and this is changing—but it has for a long time been hostile to government. It has this American 'common sense' notion that government is inefficient and the private sector can do everything and voluntary efforts are better than regulatory efforts. So nobody was pressuring the Obama Administration to really use the Clean Air Act the way it should. The Clean Air Act was also modified by a lawsuit called "Massachusetts v. EPA." In the late '90s, the Clinton Administration signed the Kyoto Protocol, but then it wasn't passed through the Senate as a Treaty. At that point the State of Massachusetts and some other states and green groups sued the EPA saying, "You have to regulate these greenhouse gas emissions." The basis of the case was Massachusetts said, "We have this coastline, sea levels are rising, they are going to rise more, that's going to harm people. The cause is these emissions. You are the agency responsible for regulating emissions." It took ten years for this case to be resolved. It went to the Supreme Court and in 2007 the Supreme Court said, "Yes, the EPA must regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Not 'can' but 'must.'"

The Obama Administration comes in and essentially does nothing about this. It finally does a few tiny things at the end. They proposed rules for new coal-fired power plants. They were strict rules, but that was politically easy because of the fracking revolution. At

that point the price of natural gas had collapsed because the supply of natural gas had expanded, vastly. There were utilities that were switching coal-fired power plants over to natural gas just for economic reasons. No one was going to come up against these rules in trying to build a new coal-fired power plant. What they really needed to do and never got around to was regulating the existing coal-fired power plants.

They also passed laws about automobile emissions which Trump is talking about rolling back. Those were also politically easy because they're redundant with the fuel economy standards. Fuel economy is essentially the same thing as emissions. The government is constantly telling automakers, "Your vehicles need to go more miles per gallon." That's the same thing as saying you need to have less emissions per vehicle. Also, California dominates the automobile market as a state and it has these really strict state regulations. So automobile producers plan and design for the California market. That was an opportunity missed.

We have the money, we have the technology, we have those laws. You can have better laws, but we have those laws. We don't have the political leadership. We have a ruling class that have been dipping into their own supply. They have been lying to the public so vigorously and so vociferously for so long that they seem to believe their own lies. It seems to me the Koch brothers believe all this stuff. What else can be going on? They have deluded themselves. Otherwise, why wouldn't they take action to try to save the planet which is the platform on which their business makes those two brothers the 5th and 6th richest people in the world. You'd think they have a stake in wanting to preserve life on earth.

Long story short, that is what we need to be doing. We also need to be planning on adaptation. We need to get real about the fact that cities are going to be flooded. This requires planning and public investment. The good news on that front gets back to that point

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Climate Action Plan, conclusion

I made about over-accumulation. The strange thing about capitalism is that its crises are born not from scarcity but from maldistribution and problematic forms of abundance.

Having too many soybeans... So the farmer who grew the soybeans doesn't have enough money to pay for the production of future soybeans. So this happens throughout the system and it's what drives financial bubbles and crashes. And again we're in a situation where there's essentially too much money for the ultra rich and also the entire collections in pension and savings accounts. There are not enough profitable outlets for it. And that's why money flows into venues that produce things like the 'housing bubble.' The rules are changed so it became easier

to lend anyone money and you can resell the mortgages. And you get "NINJA" loans: No Income, No Job, No Assets. Give 'em a loan anyway—our bank is not going to hold this. We're going to slice and dice this mortgage and then we'll sell it on the international market.

What's the root cause? Why are they lending money to this guy who can't pay it back rather than investing in something that will pay real dividends like a massive new wind farm? These new massive windfarms aren't being built. There aren't enough profitable outlets for all this money. And what's needed to channel these over-accumulated financial assets into building the real infrastructure we need is a policy shift

that says—we are euthanizing the fossil fuel industry. So this entire infrastructure is going to be retired and something has to be built to replace it. If the federal government gave those signals, saying the federal government is going to use 100 percent renewable energy in whatever reasonable amount of time, plus all these large states, you would see money that's currently going into tech stocks going into wind farms, training people to install solar panels, to retrofit buildings, etc.

So on the question of the cost of all this stuff: that's actually exactly what the system needs. The way to avoid events like the crash of 2008 is to have policies that absorb this investment rather than having it go into these dangerous bubbles.

HARD TRUTH, conclusion

in Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire and Wisconsin... Democrats ended a Republican legislative supermajority in North Carolina."

Democrats elected seven governors, notably in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan and Kansas, as well as Maine, Nevada and New Mexico. "A broad-based win... For those who were troubled by the results of 2016 in the Midwest, we have proved that the Democrats can run and win," Washington Governor Jay Inslee said. Governors' races swung Republican in Florida, Iowa and Ohio. As I write, Georgia is blocked from certifying results till the end of the week and a recount seems likely.

All told, Democrats flipped a handful of chambers nationally, but Republicans still control about three-fifths of the 99 state legislative chambers.

WIN: Some of us still love the idea of small 'd' democracy. A fine new bipartisan consciousness is pushing back against gerrymandering, election insecurity and voter suppression. Voter turnout was generally high for a midterm, for both major parties. If we REALLY want to make our country great, rescuing the vote is the logical place to start.

Colorado, Michigan and Missouri passed ballot measures which overhaul the redistricting process to reduce partisan gerrymandering. Colorado and Michigan voted for independent redistricting commissions as opposed to control by governors and legislators. Missouri voters retained an existing bipartisan commission for state legislative districts, and established a new position of nonpartisan state demographer to draft maps to ensure partisan fairness and more competitive elections.

WIN: Medicaid expansion passed in Nebraska, as well as Utah and Nevada. To be entirely honest, Medicaid expansion won in Nebraska's three most urban counties—Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy—and parts of the Panhandle. That we remain a divided people in our state is painfully obvious. Likewise clear is the fact that our mean-spirited, newly re-elected 1%-er governor will make sure any Medicaid expansion is like pulling teeth. Meanwhile, some rural state senators are already boasting that they plan to drag their feet, though their own rural and farm community constituents are in terrible need and stand to benefit most.

LOSS: Term limits passed for the office of mayor of the City of Lincoln. This deeply flawed charter amendment is retroactive and was designed by Republican operatives to oust popular Mayor Chris Beutler. The GOP bet that most people like the idea of term limits—somehow, to many, it seems 'more fair.' The problem with that kind of thinking is that a mayor is not a prom queen but an administrator, and too much job experience does not disqualify a candidate.

I've heard a bizarre rumor that some Democrats want to strike back with a campaign to put mayoral term limits on the Omaha ballot. This is a very bad idea indeed, as the folks learned too late who aimed to take down FDR with U.S. presidential term limits and struck Eisenhower instead. The best response to this defeat is to galvanize progressives to defeat Cyndi Lamm (or Jon Camp if he finds he cares to run) and elect another progressive to carry on Mayor Beutler's fine legacy.

TBD: Trump vs. Mueller. A recent History Channel documentary is VERY instructive regarding the similarities between Nixon and Trump and their efforts to derail justice. Trump likely hopes that a Supreme Court will allow him to deny Congress' demands for

tax documents, etc. Luckily, Congress CAN ABSOLUTELY force the President to show his hand—a privilege secured during the Harding administration, long in settled law.

GAME PLAN: Progressives need to pick our battles carefully. Three issues played very well for progressive candidates across the country, at every level of government: affordable health care, investment for jobs and infrastructure, and fair elections. Some people will call for new House members to move towards the center, but that is the same-old, same-old that got us where we are today.

Arriving near the political center is fine if you get there through tough negotiation and secure key policies that support working people—the middle classes—back home. Securing those centrist policies from the far right, up front, is the key.

As I have written elsewhere, the extraordinary election of a black man to two terms as president while Republican power waxed ever greater was an expression of desperation by the working people of America—a repudiation of business as usual. That same perceived need for change elected Trump, as Hillary seemingly represented more of the same.

According to a post by a respected Nebraska lobbyist, years ago he and a friend predicted that the country music fans of this

country (through the agency of right-wing talk radio and FOX) could forge a political movement and elect a cowboy by 2016.

Though Trump is a sociopath and a Manhattan real estate developer, he is also a skilled con man who branded himself as a tough guy who shoots from the hip: not EXACTLY a cowboy, but close enough for those 'red country' voters gullible and willing enough to believe he was on THEIR side—not just confirming their cultural prejudices, but 'on their side' on economic policy. Ironically of course, if any candidate EVER was an establishment politician, it is Trump, who played the New York and national political insider Wall Street game for decades, then declared himself a populist.

When Obama made Eric Holder Attorney General in 2009, Holder was asked what the administration was going to do about corporate concentration and malfeasance—the great generators of income inequality. Holder replied in effect, "Just watch." Then nothing happened, and the financial class that created the Great Recession went unpunished for the most part, and business as usual went on. Obama faced a crushing level of political gridlock and the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression. He made a judgment call to put all his juice in passing

the Affordable Care Act, likely thinking that was the one thing he could do that would MOST improve the lives of his base—working people and the poor. He was wrong. Obama's mistake was that he should have tried to do both: introduce single payer and bring the corporate raiders to heel. Instead, he joined the Clintons in their cozy compromise with capitalism.

One longtime political observer likes to say, if you give voters the choice between a Republican and a Democrat pretending to be a Republican, voters will pick the real thing every time. So, any progressive game plan has to take to heart the hard truth: that the Democratic Party of the past 30 years has largely been deaf to the needs of the working class, and the only way to get voters back is to restore historic progressive values on pocketbook issues—on the realities of income inequality and quality of life.

To that end, Democrats in Congress will be wise to wait to call for impeachment till they see the whites of Chuck Grassley's eyes. Congress should wait for Robert Mueller's report. For all we know, Mueller may have ALREADY taken his findings to his grand jury. If Trump fires Mueller, a Democratic majority Congress could hire Mueller on the rebound and commission a report of its own. Premature calls for impeachment will only waste time now and serve to energize Trump's base. Better by far to focus on the people's pressing business: like passing promised legislation on infrastructure and jobs.

As for 2020, the key for progressives is to starting organizing yesterday. I imagine Chris Beutler is mulling his options, and I for one would like to see him consider a run against Ben ('talks like Jesse Jackson, votes like Jesse Helms') Sasse. Nebraskans who want to see a version of Medicaid expansion that actually works need to be talking to state senators and writing letters to the editor NOW, because THAT battle has really just begun.

I think the fact that turnouts trended higher than normal is probably a good thing, in the long run. The hard truth is that civic life is going to be like this for the foreseeable future. We are going to have to fight like hell for every little thing for the rest of OUR lives at least. If we show up to the card game, we win some. If we stay home or go fishing, we win none and Trump, the Kochs and the Waltons take the pot.

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HARD TRUTH

by Sally Herrin

Well Done, YOU

Well done, YOU. If you are reading this, chances are that you voted in the elections November 6th. Maybe you even volunteered or gave money to a candidate or cause. Just as it takes a whole village to raise a child, it takes a whole collective of individuals, families and communities to elect a good public servant or pass a progressive ballot measure.

WIN: This year, under extreme provocation, millions of people of common sense and good faith came together in this country, and despite gerrymandered districts EVERYWHERE, hacked election software and voter

suppression, the Democratic Party won back a majority in the House of Representatives.

In Nebraska, Kara Eastman and Jessica McClure made tremendous showings against two incumbent Republicans—single-term Congressman Don Bacon in District 2 and deeply entrenched Jeff Fortenberry in District 1. Eastman and Bacon finished neck and neck, prompting a recount, where Eastman will likely be found to have lost by just a few thousand votes—a tragic missed chance by the 45 percent of Douglas County Democrats who did not vote on November 6th.

McClure, dark horse and young mom, ran a beautiful grassroots campaign on no money, and district-wide took a very respectable 40 percent of the vote against Fortenberry, 14 years a Congressman.

TIE: Democrats won new “trifectas of power” (a governor and two legislative chambers), according to the New York Times (11.7.18) in Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Nevada, New Mexico and New York. “Democrats also broke up existing Republican trifectas

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