We are living through a planetary emergency. Climate change, caused primarily by emissions of greenhouse gases, is moving toward a dangerous tipping point. Sea level rise and biodiversity loss could reach catastrophic levels as interaction between different systems accelerates the crisis. The 21st century has seen extreme weather on an unprecedented scale. New climate patterns have created zones of drought and flood, and massive wildfires and superstorms are annual occurrences. This will only become more intense as warming increases.

The 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change gave a dramatic deadline. It projected that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require a reduction of emissions to 50% of their 2010 levels by 2030, and a further reduction to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Failure to meet this target would "lock in" warming of more than 2°C, with attendant horrors. Worse, some climate scientists consider this view too optimistic.

Mass extinction, nitrogen pollution, and ocean acidification are other signs of the broad planetary emergency. The current epoch has been dubbed the Anthropocene, characterized by how humans have reshaped the world in the industrial era. The cost of this change is severe. The first climate migrations have already begun as millions are displaced by severe weather, drought, and other intolerable conditions. While most carbon emissions have come from imperialist countries, it is the underdeveloped world that suffers the most from climate change.

Protest movements around the world have pushed for dramatic action in response to the crisis. Mass climate marches in 2014 and 2016 drew hundreds of thousands of participants. School strikes inspired by Greta Thunberg, a Swedish teenager, have spread across the globe since 2018. Climate activists have linked up with Indigenous activists fighting against fossil-fuel pipelines, such as the protest by the Oceti Sakowin at Standing Rock against the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2016 and the Wet’suwet’en people fighting the Coastal Gas pipeline today. The price of inaction has created an urgency that reaches deep, particularly among the youth who see ecological disaster in their future.

As climate has taken center stage, politicians in the Democratic Party have put up the call for a Green New Deal. The most dramatic proponent has been Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a freshman Representative who identifies as a democratic socialist. Ocasio-Cortez joined the Sunrise Movement in protesting outside Nancy Pelosi’s office in 2018 and demanding that a Green New Deal committee be created in Congress. Since then, several candidates for president have also taken up this cause, particularly Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders.

While the specific details vary, the Green New Deal is a plan that would create a large-scale jobs program to build out renewable power generation throughout the United States, replacing most fossil-fuel use. It would also involve building electric-ready infrastructure, since most transportation and transit rely on fossil fuels, and some of the more detailed plans also involve housing and other sectors. The Green New Deal is put forward as an alternative both to market-oriented solutions to the climate crisis, such as carbon credit schemes and carbon taxes, and to unproven technological fixes like carbon capture and sequestration. The central premise is that it can solve the climate crisis within capitalism. This is clear in its framing as a "New Deal." It harkens back to Franklin D. Roosevelt’s policies during the Great Depression. This is celebrated as a period of liberal reform, but in reality it saved capitalism in its worst crisis.
Much has been made of the mass of migrants arriving at the U.S. southern border, and Trump’s inhumane response to it. In the process of developing a clear working-class response to the xenophobic rhetoric of the Trump regime, it is important to note the dire human rights violations that caused the migrations in the first place and how these violations are exacerbated by U.S. immigration policy. The historical context of U.S. immigration policy must also be taken into account.

One of the first (of many) erroneous claims Donald Trump made in his bid for the presidency back in 2016 was that illegal immigration was of such a high level and such a dangerous nature that immediate fortification of the southern border was the only viable option to protect Americans. This came with the lie that the refugees from Central America are secretly criminals.

However, apprehensions of undocumented migrants at the border were already in decline by the beginning of the 21st century. The sudden, sharp increase in legal and illegal migrants arriving at the U.S. southern border was the only viable response to protect Americans. This came with the lie that the refugees from Central America are secretly criminals.

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The many refugees held in squalor by border protection agents create an image that furthers Trump’s anti-working-class narrative that there is a dangerous hord waiting to spill over the border and ruin American lives. This new policy is nothing more than thinly veiled racist discrimination, an arm of the Trump regime accomplished was removing the façade of fairness.

On that note, the admissions process is designed to be as slow and difficult as possible, even if the asylum claims are, on paper, legitimate. Since Trump took office border patrol agents have adopted a process known as “metering,” whereby asylum seekers are simply put on a waiting list because “the processing facility is full.” This is a lie. This process also, not coincidentally, encourages more illegal border crossings, the very thing xenophobic fear mongers claim these policies prevent.

Migrants traveling to the U.S. have often suffered violence on the way, including instances of theft, physical violence, and sexual violence, only to then be turned back towards this madness due to suspicion that they had been the violent ones.

While waiting in Mexico, or in their home country, migrants are subject to the wrath of assassins. One example was the story of “Franklin” (a fake name, for protection), a man who tested positive for HIV in his home country and actually helped sendriminal to prison, as detailed in an article published by The Intercept. As per the Trump regime accomplished, he was treated a priori as a criminal himself! He very well may already have been murdered. The same fate awaits many others, as this poisonous smog of nationalist rhetoric doesn’t simply taint American discourse but surprisingly kills people. The so-called “Migrant Protection Protocols” are anything but.

The number of persons detained at the border was about 19,000 as of May 2020. In terms of means, there is no real barrier to the kinds of policies that would be enacted by any future administration.

Under capitalism, the ruling class, through mouthpieces like Trump, oftenSingle? Ask them! Will immigrants will “steal jobs.” But who’s buying the labor? The capitalist class, of course! The owners of corporations are out to make as mighty a profit as possible.

There is no shortage of work that needs done to improve the country and American lives, just a shortage of labor that the capitalists will pay for. A workers’ government would be able to plan the economy in a way that would avoid this problem, and guarantee good employment as a right. The fear that immigration, of any type, would destroy the United States is a lie calculated to keep the U.S. working class as profitable as possible.

But there is a better way. A workers’ government can both fairly distribute work, and safeguard the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of all persons, including asylum seekers and their children.
The Middle East has seen an erosion of social movements from within a pressure pot of interstate conflict, austerity, and decades of violent imperialist occupation. The region has been made worse by water shortages in the region that are largely an effect of climate change. Long-standing “stability” is being blown apart by shifting power struggles and new political alignments.

The United States is losing its former position as sole decision maker in the region’s affairs. As the world’s foremost imperialist power ratchets up humanitarian crises, relative newcomers in the global geopolitical landscape are positioning themselves with increasing influence and military positioning in the Middle East.

While virtually all the European countries and their imperialist apparatus are divided in how to respond to the events in the Middle East, Russia has participated in the mercenary war there more than any other imperialist power. Over the past year, more than a thousand civilians have been killed, primarily by Russian bombing, in Assad’s attempt to capture the northwestern province of Idlib—practically the sole remaining territory held by Syrian rebel factions. The conditions have been made worse by shifting power struggles and the long history of combined struggles, austerity, and decades of violent imperialist occupation. The people of Iraq are showing every day how to build the anti-imperialist movement. Hundreds have been killed, although the situation is much more favorable than when the U.S. occupation was at its peak. While mass demonstrations currently face police resistance, the United States military acted with virtual impunity to kill at will, arbitrarily locking down whole cities for indeterminate periods of time.

The Middle East is ripe for a revolutionary situation. At last April’s Turck elections, all its former political parties have been blown apart. In Libya last April, Turkey began to fill its former role, and the situation there has been complicated by civil war. Amid these conditions of imperialist domination and contention over spheres of influence, austerity from local capitalists, and constant fights between regional powers, Middle Eastern workers and farmers have begun to lead a social explosion. The embers burning from the Arab Spring are being fanned into millions on the streets.

Workers rebel in Iran and Iraq

Iranian workers, farmers, and students have waged many battles against the conditions caused by the U.S. war and economic collapse of their governments. Rouhani promised that opening the economy to imperialist investment would bring prosperity for working people. Welfare programs that were cut back and the unemployment crisis has returned, along with the economic agreement that China is deploying around 5000 security personnel on Iranian soil to protect its investments.

Unable to decisively dominate Iran economically, U.S. strategists have escalated military pressures against the country. The war moves reached a fever pitch with the open assassination by drone of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in Iraq on Jan. 2. Iran responded immediately with missile attacks on U.S. bases in Iraq, although it appears by all accounts that the strikes were not meant to kill soldiers as much as to show Iran’s willingness to engage the U.S. militarily.

Russia as power broker in Syria

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Fearing Sanders’ reformism has struck terror into the hearts of the Democratic National Committee, which depends on Wall Street cash to fund party activities. Clearly, the party establishment pushed for the “centrists” to close ranks against Sanders. The Sanders win in Nevada in late February sparked a frenzy of panicked reactions in the pro-capitalist media. MSNBC host Chris Matthews compared Sanders’ victory to the Nazi invasion of France during World War II only days after saying that following a “Red” victory in the Cold War “there would have been executions in Central Park, and I might have been one of the ones getting executed.” Matthews issued a tepid apology after a backlash against his statement on the invasion of France.

NBC commentator Chuck Todd compared Sanders supporters to Nazi brownshirts earlier in February, saying that Sanders’ “insurgency” is “like the 2016 sabotage of Sanders’ nomination by the Democratic Party in every way. He caucuses with the Senate Democrats’ Outreach Committee, and is a ‘maverick’ who just happens to be inside the Democratic Party shell game.”

Like Trump, Sanders appeals to a layer of the electorate that is disaffected and angry at their continued economic misfortunes. Income inequality has persisted, and growing. Massive student debt acts as a brake on the social mobility of young people. Stagnant wages and higher housing costs have pushed some working people into homelessness, and gentrification has meant the displacement of whole neighborhoods. Yet Democratic Party regulars seem mystified that Sanders appeals to a broad spectrum of Democratic voters. They have convinced themselves that only a “centrist” or moderate can challenge Trump and are intent on stopping a Sanders nomination by every means at their disposal. It’s clear that the Democratic Party would rather sustain a defeat, and four more years of Trump, than see the victory of a reformist candidate like Sanders. The New York Times reported (Feb. 27, 2020): “Dozens of interviews with Democratic establishment leaders this week show that they are not just worried about Mr. Sanders’s candidacy, but are also willing to risk intraparty damage to stop his nomination at the national convention in July if they can get the chance. Since Mr. Sanders’s victory in Nevada’s caucuses on Saturday, The Times has interviewed 93 party officials—all of them super-delegates, who could have a say on the nominee at the convention—and found overwhelming opposition to the Vermont senator the nomination if he arrived with the most delegates but fell short of a majority.” The prospect of a “brokered” convention that would rob Sanders of the nomination is very real—much like the 2016 sabotage of Sanders’ nomination by the DNC. If Sanders loses the primary contest, he will undoubtedly support the eventual nominee—just like he did in 2016.

What are Sanders’ real politics? Despite his use of the “democratic socialist” label to describe his politics, it’s clear that Sanders’ politics are closer to New Deal liberalism, slightly repackaged and updated, than to any real challenge to the rule of capital.

At a public forum last year, he clarified his views: “What do I mean when I talk about democratic socialism? It certainly is not the authoritarian communism that existed in the Soviet Union and in other communist countries. This is what it means. “It means that we cherish, among other things, our Bill of Rights. And Franklin Roosevelt made this point...in 1944, in a State of the Union Address that never got a whole lot of attention. This is what he said, basically—it was a very profound speech toward the end of World War II. He said: You know, we’ve got a great Constitution. Bill of Rights protects your freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, and all that stuff. Great. But you know what it doesn’t protect? It doesn’t protect and guarantee you economic rights.”

Sanders’ whole career has taken place as a pragmatic “outsider” who just happens to be inside the Democratic Party in every way. He caucuses with Democrats, votes with them, is the standing chair of the Senate Democrats’ Outreach Committee, and is entirely dependent on their political apparatus. His choice to run in the Democratic Party primaries was not an accident, nor was it to bring “socialism” into the mainstream. He is a career politician who acts in the service of capital. Whatever moral connection he has to the service of capital. Whatever moral connection he has to working people is negated by the fact that he is building a movement for their class enemy. Sanders’ record on foreign policy is one of loyal support for imperial interventions abroad. He has voted to financially support every U.S. military adventure over the past 20 years. Sanders supported the development of the F-35 fighter jet—a $1.5 trillion handout to defense contractors. At times, Sanders has opposed the war machine, speaking against death squads in Central America in the 1980s or voting against the first Gulf War, but these were exceptions. During the 1990s, Sanders supported sanctions against both Libya and Iraq and the bombing of Kosovo. An estimated one million Iraqis, half of them children, died under the brutal sanctions regime. Sanders voted in favor of the post-9/11 Authorization for Use of Military force and has been a consistent “yes” vote on funding for U.S. military adventurism in the Middle East.

Sanders has been a loyal supporter of Israel in Congress, voting for military aid and in favor of attacks on Lebanon and Gaza framed as self-defense. At times, Sanders has criticized Israeli human rights abuses against Palestinians, but his record of support for the apartheid state is clear. He has referred to the BDS movement as anti-Semitic. His response to the Trump “deal of the century for Palestine was to call for a return to the “two-state solution” and international law.

In an interview on the TV show “60 Minutes,” Sanders discussed scenarios where he would use military force as president, saying, “We’ve got to make it clear to our allies around the world that we will not sit by and allow invasions to take place.” He expressed support for NATO and said that he would respond to threats against the U.S. and its allies. Sanders promised to defend Taiwan against an attack from China.

A shell game Since the election of Trump, the Democrats have mounted a half-hearted “resistance” that hands Trump what he wants. For all of their rhetoric that Trump is a threat to the republic and democracy, Democrats in Congress voted in favor of the PATRIOT Act and gave Trump billions more in defense spending. Democratic protests about the assassination of Iran’s leader were about process and not the legitimacy of imperialist intervention in the Middle East or the legality of murdering a foreign leader. Communist and other professional Democrats accepted the imperialist framework but expressed outrage that Trump didn’t play by the established rules.

Meanwhile, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other social programs are in danger. Environmental laws have been gutted, and Trump’s climate-denial endangers future generations. The two-party shell game is a losing proposition for working people. While the Republicans, Democrats and other ruling-class politicians can debate over how they should respond to the demands of their working-class constituents, they are fundamentally opposed to overturning the rule of capital and are opposed to worker’s democracy. The political caste of both parties is corrupt and out of touch with the needs and concerns of working people. There is a deepening political crisis in the U.S., which is a symptom of the rot in U.S. society—an economic recovery that benefits the richest, persistent wealth inequality, homelessness, mass incarceration, and the growth of an energized far right. This political crisis will only deepen as the effects of the climate crisis grow more acute.

While electing Sanders president usher in a new era of reformism and government working for the masses, Corporate Democrat Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez pointed out that President Sanders would have to compromise on Medicare for All to get the measures through Congress. However, if the Democratic Party elected officials would support any ambitious reforms. In Virginia, where the Democrats control both houses of the General Assembly and the governorship, they refused to repeal the state’s unionization laws and updated, than to any real challenge to the rule of capital.
The ecological crisis is already the most important social and political question of the 21st century, and will become even more so in the coming months and years. The future of the planet, and thus of humanity, will be determined in the coming decades. Calculations by some scientists as to scenarios for the year 2100 aren’t very useful for two reasons: A) scientific: considering all the retroactive effects impossible to calculate, it is very risky to make projections over a century. B) political: at the end of the century, all of us, our children and grandchildren will be gone, so who cares?

As the IPCC explains, if the average temperature exceeds the pre-industrial period’s by 1.5°, there is a risk of setting off an irreversible climate change process. The ecological crisis involves several facets, with hazardous consequences, but the climate question is doubtless the most dramatic threat.

What would the consequences of this be? Just a few examples: the multiplication of megafires such as in Australia; the disappearance of rivers and the desertification of land areas, melting and dislocation of polar ice and raising the sea level, which could reach dozens of meters. Yet, at two meters vast regions of Bangladesh, India and Thailand, as well as the major cities of human civilization—Hong Kong, Calcutta, Venice, Amsterdam, Shanghai, London, New York, Rio—will have disappeared beneath the sea. How high can the temperature go? From what temperature will human life on this planet be threatened? No one has an answer to this question.

These are risks of a catastrophe unprecedented in human history. One would have to go back to the Pliocene, some millions of years ago, to find climate conditions similar to what could become reality in the future, due to climate change. Most geologists consider the ice ages to be a new geological era, the Anthropocene, when conditions on the planet have been modified by human action. What action? Climate change began with the 18th-century Industrial Revolution, but it is after 1945, with neoliberal globalization, that it took a qualitative leap. In other words, the root of the capitalist industrial civilization is responsible for the accumulation of CO₂ in the atmosphere, thus of global heating.

The ecological responsibility in the imminent catastrophe is widely recognized. Pope Francis, in his Encyclical Laudato Si, without uttering the word “capitalism,” spoke out against a structurally perverse system of commercial and property relations based exclusively on the “principle of profit maximization,” spoke out against a structural logic inevitably leads to the disruption of ecological balance and destructions of ecosystems.

The only effective alternatives, capable of avoiding catastrophe, are radical alternatives. “Radical” means attacking the root of the evil. If the capitalist system is at the root, we need anti-system alternatives, i.e. anticapitalist ones, as ecosocialism, an ecological socialism up to the challenges of the 21st century. Other radical alternatives such as ecofeminism, social ecology (Murray Bookchin), Andre Gorz’s political ecology, or degrowth have much in common with ecosocialism: relations of reciprocal influence have developed in recent years.

What is socialism? For many Marxists, it is transformation of the relationships of production—by the collective appropriation of the means of production—to allow the free development of productive forces. Ecosocialism lays claim to Marx, but explicitly breaks with this productivist model.

Of course, collective appropriation is indispensable, but the productive forces themselves must also be transformed: by changing their energy sources (renewables instead of fossil fuels); b) by reducing global energy consumption; c) by reducing production of goods (“degrowth”), and by eliminating useless activities (advertising) and harmful ones (pesticides, weapons of war); d) by putting a stop to harmful activities (advertising).

Ecosocialism also involves transformation of consumption models, transport forms, urbanism and “ways of life.” In short, it is much more than a change of property forms: it is a civilizational change, based on values of solidarity, equality, and respect for nature. Ecosocialist civilization breaks with productivism and consumerism, in favor of shorter working time, thus more free time devoted to social, political, recreational, artistic, erotic etc activities. Marx referred to this goal by the term “Realm of freedom.”

To achieve the transition towards ecosocialism, democratic planning is required, guided by two criteria: meeting actual needs, and respect for the ecological balance of the planet. The people themselves, once theoudagh of advertising and the consumption obsession created by the capitalist market are eliminated—are who will decide, democratically, what their real needs are. Ecosocialism is a wager on a democratic rationality of the popular class.

This requires a real social revolution. How can such a revolution be done? To say something about the ecosocialist partial reforms will not suffice. We could refer to a note by Walter Benjamin, on the margins of his theses On the concept of history (1940): “Marx said that revolutions are the locomotive of world history. But things might work out otherwise. It is possible that revolutions are the act by which humans travelling in the train activate the emergency brakes.” Translation in 21st century terms: we are all passengers on a suicide train named Modern Industrial Capitalist Civilization. This train is hurtling towards a catastrophic chasm: climate change. Revolutionary action aims to halt it—before it is too late.

XI. Ecosocialism is at once a project for the future and a strategy for the struggle here and now. There is no question of waiting for “the conditions to be ripe.” It is necessary to provoke convergence between social and ecological struggles and fight the most destructive initiatives by powers in the service of capitalism. This is what Naomi Klein called Blockade.

Within mobilizations of this type, an anticapitalist consciousness and interest in ecosocialism can emerge during struggles. Proposals such as the Green New Deal are part of this struggle, in their radical forms, which require effectively renouncing fossil energies—but not in those limited to recycling “green capitalism.”

Who is the subject in this struggle? The workerist/industrialist dogmatism of the previous century is no longer current. The forces now at the forefront of the confrontation are youth, women, Indigenous people, and peasants. Women are very present in the formidable youth uprising launched by Greta Thunberg’s call—one of the great sources of hope for the future.

As the ecofeminists explain to us, this massive women’s participation in the mobilizations comes from the fact that they are the first victims of the system’s damage to the environment. Unions are beginning here and there to also get involved. This is important, because, in the final analysis, we can’t overcome the system without the active participation of workers in cities and countryside, who make up the majority of the population. The first condition, in each movement, is associating ecological goals (closing coal mines or oil wells, or thermal power stations, etc.) with guaranteed employment for the workers involved.

XII. Do we have any chance of winning this battle, before it is too late? Unlike the so-called “collapsologists” who clamorously proclaim that catastrophe is inevitable and that any resistance is futile, we think the future is open.

There is no guarantee that this future will be ecosocialist: this is the object of a wager in the Pascalian sense, in which we commit all our forces, in a “labor of uncertainty.” But as Bertolt Brecht said, with grand and simple wisdom: “Those who fight may lose. Those who don’t fight have already lost.”

Michael Löwy is an author, historian, eco-socialist activist, and member of the Fourth International.

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... Sanders & Democratic Party

(continued from page 4)

Even though the Democrats controlled Congress and the White House in the early years of the Obama administration, they failed to pass legislation making it easier to unionize or for a higher minimum wage. The federal minimum wage continues to be $7.25 per hour. The Democrats are long on promises when they know nothing can be done and notably absent when the time comes to pass even the mildest of reforms.

Support to the "lesser-evil" is futile

Shades of the rest of the Sanders bandwagon have been echoing through the left as a supposed alternative to "establishment" candidates represented by Biden and Bloomberg. In-fighting within the Democratic Party establishment is being used to justify support for Sanders.

Activists are sacrificing the independence of social movements for a chance to "have their guy" at the table of capitalist politicians. Ostensible revolutions in Solidarity, Socialist Alternative, and the Trotskyist Socialist and Liberation have thrown support behind Sanders.

Socialist Resurgence, while noting the strong desire for reform that drives many people to support the Sanders campaign, argues that neither Sanders nor the Democratic Party can be the vehicle to achieve the fundamental social changes necessary for workers control and the oppressed. We call instead for independent working-class and socialist campaigns.

We can't look away or make excuses for Sanders' role in either supporting or opposing capitalist austerity. Attempts to realign the party or use the Democrats' ballot line are doomed to fail and will only continue to subordinate the interests of working people to a party of the capitalist class.

What is necessary is a mass struggle for the democratic ownership and control of the economy and society by the working class and its allies. No gains won by working people have ever been freely given.

(Left) Biden and Sanders embrace at New Hampshire debates.

Even the modest reforms must be won through independent mass struggles. Revolutionaries support reform struggles but insist on the need to go beyond reforms.

"The essence of Marxist strategy, of any revolutionary strategy in our time, is to combine the struggle for reforms with the struggle for revolution." This is the only way in which to build a revolutionary capability capable of providing reliable leadership to the masses and of enabling them in revolutionary situations to make the transition, in consciousness, from the struggle for reforms to the struggle for power and revolution" (George Breitman, "Is It Wrong For Revolutionaries To Fight For Reforms?").

What can be done now?

In 2018, Socialist Resurgence members in Connecticut, part of Socialist Action, ran antiracist and climate activists Linda Lindquist and Elise Hamrick. Ultimately, Lindquist was not put on the ballot due to the machinations of the Democrats, despite having gathered more than 11,000 signatures. Campaign support spoke to thousands of people about the campaign and its platform.

In 2019, independent socialist campaign of Elise Hamrick for city council in Athens, Ohio, relayed a popular message without watering down its revolutionary program. The campaign was cut off by the Socialist Homefront movement and party institutions, going down in one of the most lopsided defeats in U.S. history.

The McGovernites managed to make some reforms in party structure and processes, but those were soon reversed by the neoliberal Clintonites in the Democratic Party. Revolutionary socialists understand that there is no electoral road to socialism. We don't reject participa- tion in elections. There are illusions that elec- tions, especially under the banner of a capitalist party, can achieve the radical and thoroughgoing changes that are necessary. The climate crisis, income inequal- ity, racism, and oppression can't be permanently solved under capitalism.

The Democrats are a party of imperialist war and capitalist austerity. Attempts to realign the party or use the Democrats' ballot line are doomed to fail and will only continue to subordinate the interests of working people to a party of the capitalist class.

What is necessary is a mass struggle for the democratic ownership and control of the economy and society by the working class and its allies. No gains won by working people have ever been freely given.

... Climate

(continued from page 1)

It is easiest to see this when we look at Palestinian people. The example of the McGovern campaign in 1972 il- lustrates the futility of trying to "capture" the Demo- crats by progressives. The insurgent and moderately liberal McGovern campaign was cut off by the la- bour and movement and party institutions, going down in one of the most lopsided defeats in U.S. history.

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As long as the movement remains de- pendent upon these politicians, it can only make the changes needed to handle the climate crisis. The radical version of the Green New Deal, which has been a subject of discussion all over the country, is not even a vision; it is a call to start over and do it right. For some, the Green New Deal is a Green New Deal. For others, it is a Green New Deal with a different name. The Green New Deal is not radical; it is not even a vision. It is a call to start over and do it right. For some, the Green New Deal is a Green New Deal. For others, it is a Green New Deal with a different name. The Green New Deal is not radical; it is not even a vision. It is a call to start over and do it right.

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We cannot defeat climate change while leaving production and distribution to the market. Capital sees regulations as obstacles to overcome, not limits to its ability to accumulate. When production is made more efficient, it results in an aggregate increase in energy usage, not a decrease. This paradox was first noted by William Stanley Jevons in the 19th centu- ry, but it remains true of modern capital- ism. This is not even considering the stiff eco- nomic, political, and environmental costs that alone produce 3% of the world's carbon emissions.

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Abortion

(continued from page 8)

by Senator Karatra Jackson, a Democrat who is anti-abortion.

Democrats & GOP hostile to women's rights

Former President Bill Clinton ran for president with the slogan "Savannah," electing Democrats has not ensured abortion consent laws in Florida and TRAP laws in Louisiana. But, this should not be the onus of activist strategies to begin with. The lifetime tenure of federal judges and Supreme Court justices should have no place in a democratic society. It generates a sense of dependency on the good will and forbearance of powerful individuals and places false hope in electing a Democratic Party president so the positions can be filled with pro-choice judges. Activists outside of a platform of protecting constitutional law consent laws in Florida and TRAP laws in Louisiana, electing Democrats has not ensured abortion access. Bill Clinton ran for president with the slogan that abortion should be safe, legal, and rare. Hillary Clinton emphasized, "By rare, I mean rare." Obama also said he wanted to reduce the number of abortions. Over 1200 abortion restrictions have been passed since Roe v. Wade, each seeking to make abortion rare through restricting access. Decades of limits to abortion were not passed by Republicans alone. Despite the ongoing attacks on abortion access, 2011 also saw the passage of pro-choice protections. In 2019, 29 states and Washington, D.C., introduced 143 bills to improve abortion access. Illinois, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont passed laws that codified abortion as a fundamental right. Nebraska removed laws that criminalized abortion and it also decriminalized self managed abortion. Maine guaranteed that both private and public insurance would have to cover abortion. Massachusetts lawmakers are working to pass the ROE Act, which would guarantee abortion no matter one's income or immigration status and improve youth access to abortion. It is also important to remember that in response to abortion bans passed in May 2019, thousands of activists took to the streets in protest. Across the U.S., women and men called for the Day of Action on Tuesday, May 21, with other events spread out across that week. More than 50 organizations and activists gathered during the nationwide events against the abortion bans, which at that time, had passed in Ohio, Mississippi, and Alabama and were being considered in Louisiana and Missouri. While judges are often credited with halting these bans, mass action gives momentum to lawsuits, raises public awareness, shifts discourse, pressures politicians, judges, and is important practice for broader, holder, revolutionary actions.

Mass action around the world

Abortion victories elsewhere in the world attest to the power of mass action. Between 2000 and 2017, 27 countries broadened the legal grounds for abortion. In 2019, Georgia, Mexico, Northern Ireland, and New South Wales, Australia decriminalized abortion. Another success was in South Korea, where the Supreme Court declared the country's 45-year-old abortion ban unconstitutional. Under the long-standing ban, abortion seekers faced one year in prison and a $1780 fine. Although the laws were only decades old, they were not enforced until 2005, and this was a specific government response to demographic decline. The fertility in 2005 rate was the lowest in the world. This demonstrates the economic function of abortion restrictions in capitalism, which must be the births necessary for a new generation of voters.

The overturn of these laws was won through the efforts of the Joint Action for Reproductive Justice (Joint Action), which was established in 2017 and brought together feminist, medical, disability rights, youth, labor, LGBT+, and religious groups. The coalition published materials, told stories, and hosted educational events, which culminated in the first mass protest in Seoul on Oct. 15, 2016. When thousands of Polish activists united in Black Protests for abortion rights, Korean activists hosted their own "Black Protest Korea." Joint Action also worked with politicians and government agencies to take the matter to the Constitutional Court. In 2017, 235,000 people signed a petition to legalize abortion. They also organized a large rally attended by 5000 activists in July 2018. Joint Action also held a daily one-person protest outside of the court building. They also held a press conference outside the Argentine Embassy to support legal abortion in Argentina.

Another large protest was organized in March 2019 before the court decision. Unity among a variety of organizations and activists, international solidarity, and protests combined with legal work helped to make legal abortion a reality in South Korea. In 2018, hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets of Argentina to demand that the Senate pass an abortion bill. Abortion is illegal in Argentina and can result in a prison sentence. The Argentine government estimates that 350,000 illegal abortions occur in the country each year. The bill narrowly lost, but the activists continue to fight to make legal abortion a reality in South Korea.

Tens of thousands of abortion rights activists in Argentina protested on Feb. 19, 2020, to once again demand legal abortion for Green Action Day. Events, wherein activists were green scarves to represent the demand for abortion, were hosted in over 80 locations across Argentina. The most recent push for legal abortion in Argentina began in 2015, with the anti-femicide movement Ni Una Menos, which mobilized hundreds of thousands of activists (including illegal abortion). In 2017, 30 women in Argentina were reported to have died from illegal abortions, so the issue is brought to a matter of femicides.

In March 2019, an 11-year-old girl and rape victim named "Lucia" was forced to give birth via cesarian section after Argentine officials denied her the right to abortion. She was raped by her grandmother's boyfriend. A similar situation occurred earlier in 2019 in which a 12-year-old girl was also forced to give birth to a baby who died several days later. Doctors refused to perform an abortion, even though the strict abortion laws in Argentina allow for abortion in the case of rape or potential death of the mother. The green bandanas were also worn during the elections in May, "for the next generation and in October to spotlight their demand.

President Alberto Fernandez has vowed to legalize abortion on the basis of public health. Undoubtedly, it would not have been possible for a centrist politician to put abortion on the agenda without the efforts of abortion activists. Likewise, without the demands and efforts of U.S. activists, politicians like Bernie Sanders would not frame abortion as health care, nor would Elizabeth Warren have claimed she would wear a Planned Parenthood scarf to her inauguration. This support of reproductive rights and retreat from the discourse of abortion “rarity” would not be possible without the millions of women who marched in women's marches or thousands who came out last spring against abortion bans.

The February 1917 revolution, which began when striking women at the Aliva factory in St. Petersburg and International Women's Day protests over World War I and the high cost of food overturned 300 years of Romanov rule. But, the Provisional Government would not grant women the right to vote nor exit the war. In response, Alexandra Kollontai told women that their rights would not be handed to them. In the summer of 1917, women's suffrage was won after a march of 40,000 protesters. Another revolution was necessary to secure such things as abortion rights, the right to divorce, civil marriage, property rights, public kitchens, day care, public laundries, maternity leave, and an end to the war. Over 100 years later, many of these things have not yet been won in the United States.

But, as Alexandra Kollontai advised, our rights will not be handed to us. Neither by judges nor Democrats will these rights ever come. They will be won by the strength of the people united in strike and protest and secured only by revolution. That is the lesson of February, October 1917, National Women's Day, Black Protests, the Green movement, and the history of all our struggles and victories.
Restrictions are tightened on women’s right to abortion

By HEATHER BRADFORD

According to Planned Parenthood, in 2019 there were over 300 abortion restrictions filed across 47 states. Some of these were the strictest since the passage of Roe v. Wade. The most alarming were restrictions, such as the one passed in Alabama on May 15, 2019, which made abortion illegal at all stages and without exceptions for incest or rape. These restrictions were made even more terrifying by the threat of 99 years of imprisonment for abortion providers.

Restrictive laws, like those passed in Alabama and six-week abortion bans or “heartbeat bills” passed in Georgia, Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri (eight weeks), and Mississippi, have been blocked or delayed by federal judges. But, their aggressive nature sets the tone for the struggle ahead as reproductive rights activists enter a new year and new decade.

An early setback for reproductive rights this year was the passage of a minor consent law in Florida on Feb. 21. The Florida law requires minors under the age of 18 to obtain written and notarized consent from a parent in order to seek an abortion. It also requires government-issued identification and proof of guardianship or parentage and makes no exceptions for cases of rape, incest, or trafficked youth. The consent requirement can be bypassed by a judge, who can determine if the minor is mature enough to have an abortion. The previous law already required parental notification, but not consent.

Parental consent, notification, or both is required in 37 states. Consent and parental notification laws put youth at risk of illegal abortions, parental abuse, denial of their right to bodily autonomy, and creates barriers for youth whose parents may be absent or deceased. It disproportionately impacts immigrants and racial minorities, as consent and notification laws require documentation, such as birth certificates and identification cards. Despite the barriers that consent and notification laws impose upon youth, Florida Democrats were divided over the law. Democratic representatives James Bush, Kimberly Daniels, AlJacquet, and Anika Omphroy voted to support the bill. Another concerning development in the struggle for reproductive rights is June Medical Services v. Gee and Gee v. June Medical Services. There are two issues at the heart of these cases, which the Supreme Court will hear in March. The first is the issue of admitting privileges, which is part of larger TRAP laws. TRAP laws, or targeted restrictions on abortion providers, are laws passed under the guise of patient safety, but meant to curtail abortion access by imposing unnecessary regulations on abortion providers.

Admitting privileges mean that abortion doctors must be able to admit patients into a hospital near the abortion clinic. Because many hospitals are religious, profit driven, and do not wish to be tied to the controversy around abortion, it can be difficult for abortion doctors to obtain admitting privileges to local hospitals. For instance, doctors at the only abortion clinic in Mississippi were unable to obtain admitting privileges because seven local hospitals refused.

Requiring admitting privileges effectively shuts down abortion clinics. The Supreme Court already struck down the requirement of admitting privileges in Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt because abortion complications are so exceedingly rare (.025% of cases) that admitting privileges are not necessary for patient health and impose a significant obstacle to access. June Medical Services v. Gee revisits the question of whether admitting privileges are constitutional.

The second issue at the heart of these cases is third party standing. Currently, lawsuits against abortion restrictions can be filed by third parties. In 1976, Singleton v. Wulf granted abortion doctors legal standing in challenging abortion restrictions. This has expanded the circumstances under which restrictions can be challenged. For instance, when an Idaho woman named Jennie Linn McCormack filed a lawsuit against the state over its 20-week abortion ban and restriction against self administered abortion, it was determined that because she was not pregnant she did not have the legal standing to do so (even though she was arrested for illegally taking RU 486).

However, the lawsuit was able to move forward when brought forth by Dr. Richard Hearn, who as a doctor had standing, and the Ninth Circuit court decided that the criminal charges against abortion patients was unconstitutional. Without third-party legal standing, the lawsuit would not have moved forward.

Lawsuits by third parties have been one of the tools that reproductive rights advocates rely upon to challenge abortion restrictions. Like the recent parental consent law in Florida, Democrats are complicit in this recent challenge to abortion rights. The Unsafe Abortion Protection Act, the Louisiana law at the center of the Supreme Court hearings, was sponsored (continued on page 7)