

The Green New Deal

Outlines the Change Society Needs

Jim Goodman -FFD Board Member and a repurposed dairy farmer

The Green New Deal (GND) on its face, is a plan to decarbonize and transform the energy sector but in the big picture, it outlines a remedy to the inherent economic and social problems of capitalism. While the ultimate solution to those problems would be a different economic system, perhaps a social democracy, we must consider the GND as a part of a solution that we can no longer ignore. Can capitalism and socialism co-exist? Well, while the top 1% love both capitalism and social largess showered upon them at the expense of the rest of us. As AOC noted of the GND, "It's all about how our economy should work."

The President tweets, "I think it is very important for all Democrats to press forward with their Green New Deal. It would be great for the so-called 'Carbon Footprint' to permanently eliminate all Planes, Cars, Cows, Oil, Gas & the Military - even if no other country would do the same. Brilliant shows his total inability to understand or to care about the real national emergency as it unfolds daily under his watch.

While centrist Democrats would move even closer to Trump and the Republicans, new members of Congress eagerly took up the possibilities of the GND. One can only hope that neoliberalism, neocolonialism and the Third Way are in their death throes, as those political mindsets would immediately put the GND "off the table", just as they did the single payer health care, despite strong public support.

The GND contains a plan that industry and centrists reject as impossi-

New Green Deal Details Released

- Upgrade all existing buildings in the US
- 100% Clean Power
- Support family farming
- Universal access to healthy food
- zero-emission vehicle infrastructure
- Remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere
- Eliminate unfair competition
- Ensure affordable access to electricity
- Creates high-quality union jobs that pay prevailing wages

THE GREEN NEW DEAL LEGISLATION

Laid out by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed. Markey. Legislation sets goals for some drastic measures to cut carbon emissions across the economy. In the process, it aims to create jobs and boost the economy.

ble to achieve, read: Not enough profit for private industry. They object to a system which would benefit society in general, a system that would close the wealth gap and hopefully prevent climate disaster. Looking at the Big Picture, long term societal good, will never be valued as highly as a good quarterly corporate profit statement. As long as it is profitable, Omnicide is OK.

The GND is important because we are beyond the point where we can save the planet simply by making better personal choices or lifestyle changes such as driving less, flying less, recycling, converting to renewable energy. Those of us who can,

of course, should make those choices. The global elite, the captains of industry, the wolves of Wall Street could care less - as long as there are people and a planet to exploit in order to maintain the lifestyles to which they have become accustomed. The poor, in the global south, cause far less climate impact than we in the industrialized north, but they, like the poor everywhere, bear the brunt of globalization and environmental racism. For good reason, they must be more concerned about their day-to-day survival than about using paper or plastic.

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Capitalism has maintained the institutions of poverty, just as it enables sexism, racism, class privilege, lack of opportunity for the young and lack of dignity for the aged. Indigenous peoples, as has always been the case, are pushed off their lands to satisfy the needs of colonial governments and corporations for oil, minerals or eminent domain for "the greater good." Corporate needs have always far outweighed the sovereign rights of the indigenous and the earth.

The GND as introduced, is a resolution, not legislation although we can assume that eventually, legislation will result. It has specific goals and suggestions for achieving them, but it leaves room for the specifics to be defined by groups or movements interested in making serious societal change. Agriculture is part of GND, but again nothing is specifically stated as to how agriculture currently effects the environment, economy, and the food we eat or what changes in farming need to occur.

So as a farmer here are some of the specifics

Industrial agriculture is energy intensive, depending on fossil fuels for growing crops, the manufacture of fertilizer, pesticides, and plastics and, of course, transportation in a global economy is also very dependent on fossil fuels. Industrial agriculture has increased the mono-culture production of corn and soy, used in animal feed and processed food and increased concentration in livestock production.

A GND should incentivize integrated local and regional agricultural production and marketing, less production of mono-culture crops and fewer concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Encouraging a shift to more acres planted to grass

What Is the Green New Deal?

A **45 percent** cut in carbon emissions by 2030 could keep global warming to **2.7° F**. Here's how to save the planet and create jobs:

1 What works for the environment...

100% of the nation's power demand met with renewables by 2030.

2 ...can also work for the economy.

10 million new jobs in the first 10 years.

THE Nation.
Sources: Data for Progress; IPCC
2018 Infographic: Tracy Matsue Loeffelholz

and permanent cover would sequester more carbon in the soil, provide the possibility of more animals on pasture, fewer in confinement and overall lowering of livestock numbers, encouraging people to lower consumption of animal products.

Many would say our present industrial farming system is working just fine. Obviously there is plenty of food, at least food for those who can pay for it. Plenty of commodities for global trade, plenty of profit for the multi-national corporations, but a fair profit for farmers? Not so much.

Farmers and farm workers, like all other workers, deserve to have one of those jobs, as the GND notes, "ensuring economic security for all." Farmers being, for the most part, independent business owners are assumed to, by their skill, determine their own wage. But unlike other independent businesses, farmers do not set their price. Farmers buy at retail and sell at wholesale.

The GND can take significant acreage out of row crop produc-

tion, encourage more farmers to convert to organic/sustainable farming practices, promote a less intensive system of animal production, in part, by returning to the pre-1980 system of parity pricing, commodity production management, farmer owned grain reserves and environmental stewardship. If the GND embraces this, farm products will be worth more.

Fair prices for farmers and fair wages for farm workers will put them in a position to make better choices in the way they farm, the quality of food they grow and the way they care for the environment. Fair wages for everyone will allow everyone to do better, farmers included. And while it may not totally address the entirety of the economic and social change that must happen.

The Green New Deal can perhaps help us to, as James Baldwin said, "Make America what America must become."