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**The Green New Deal and Project Drawdown**

by John M Repp

One week after the 2018 mid-term elections, a grassroots climate action group called Sunrise Movement organized a sit-in in prospective Speaker-of-the House Nancy Pelosi's office. They were joined by Congresswoman-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.). The group wanted Pelosi to form a Select Committee for a Green New Deal in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, a committee that would have subpoena power and could write legislation that the Sunrise Movement expected would be passed in two years i.e. after the 2020 election.

A month earlier, on October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a "Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees Centigrade" which warned that the world must cut greenhouse gas emissions by almost half by 2030 if we are to avoid irreversible runaway global warming. Millions of people would die from heat waves, drought, stronger storms and wild fires. It would trigger massive migrations and more wars.

The Green New Deal idea was first introduced by Jill Stein of the Green Party in her 2016 presidential campaign. Ocasio-Cortez campaigned on the issue. She beat a 20-year Democratic incumbent who out spent her 10 times. Pelosi did not create the Select Committee so Ocasio-Cortez teamed up with Representative Edward Markey (D-Mass.) to issue on Feb 7, 2019 House Resolution 109 "Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal". The goals of the Resolution are to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in ten years, to create millions of high-wage jobs and economic security for all, to invest in U.S. infrastructure and industry, to secure clean air, water, climate and community resiliency, healthy food and access to nature, and to promote justice and equality.

The Green New Deal idea has sparked massive amounts of media commentary, especially from hysterical right-wing sources, who have said it would ban hamburgers, end air travel, outlaw cars and institute socialism. They want to scare their viewers and listeners. The words "New Deal" come from the name given to Franklin D. Roosevelt's many programs to mitigate the Great Depression of the 1930's.

In 2017, Paul Hawken edited and published a book entitled Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming (Penguin Books, New York, 2017).

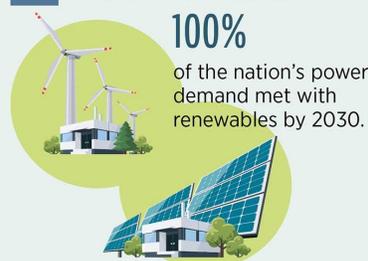
Project Drawdown starts from the idea that we cannot just stop burning fossil fuels, although that is absolutely necessary, but we must also drawdown some of the greenhouse gases we have already put up into the atmosphere. The project identified 100 ways to pull carbon out of the atmosphere and oceans. Of the top 20 ways, only five have to do with how we generate electricity. Eight have to do with food such as reducing food waste, eating a more plant-rich diet, and changing how we farm. We need to move away from tilling and using large amounts of agrochemicals. Three have to do with land use. Two of the ways have to do with educating women and girls in the less developed parts of the world. One has to do with changing the materials we use in air conditioning and refrigeration. Of the 100 ways, Hawken and his team of scientists are calling 20 "coming attractions" and are yet to be fully developed. There is a good 17 minute TED Talk by Chad Frischmann about the project which I highly recommend. It cuts through so much of the discourse about climate change which leaves a person felling hopeless.

A key concern is how we will pay for such a large project on the scale needed to be effective. Ocasio-Cortez says we should pay for it like we would pay for any other Federal program. Congress just needs to allocate the money. At the end of the TED talk about the project, the speaker tells us that Project Drawdown will be expensive but will make a return on investment of one and a half. And if we believe 98% of the world's climate scientists, we really have no choice.

**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...**



**2 ...can also work for the economy.**



**WHAT'S THE AUMF?.....and why should you care?**

by Louise Lansberry

Over 17 years ago, a bill not widely known by most American citizens today, was passed by Congress. This bill, the AUMF: Authorization for the Use of Military Force, was passed in the wake of 9/11 in 2001 and allowed for the use of military force against any country, organization, or person determined to be involved with the attacks of 9/11: Afghanistan, the Taliban, and al Qaeda. The only Congress person to vote against the bill was Rep. Barbara Lee (D) of California. She said, "We must be careful not to embark on an open ended war with neither an exit strategy nor a focused target. We cannot repeat past mistakes". As it has turned out, Lee's fears were well-founded.

Military action provided for by the 2001 AUMF began shortly after this bill was signed, and a companion 2002 AUMF was used for entry into war in Iraq in 2003. In addition, over these last 17 years, the Executive branch under Bush, Obama and Trump has expanded the scope of US wars by interpreting the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs to apply to groups and situations that Congress never intended. In fact the AUMF has been invoked 41 times since 2001 to involve the US military in some 18 countries today.

More importantly, however, Congress has not fulfilled its Constitutional duty to debate the use of the US military. Yet, the Constitution was set up to prevent just such a situation. As James Madison pointed out in the deliberations during the ratification of the Constitution: "The Constitution supposes what history demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch most prone to war and most interested in it, therefore the Constitution has with studied care vested that power in the Legislature." (Letter to Jefferson, 1798) But with Congress abrogating its power, the Executive branch has taken on whatever conflict that it chooses to get involved in, not only with little awareness of members of Congress (e.g. the deaths of four soldiers in Niger in 2017 was a surprise to many) but certainly with most of the public left completely in the dark. And the result is "perpetual war".

Some might say that most of these "conflicts" since 9/11 have been "small" affairs, other than Afghanistan and Iraq, so why should we care? There are many reasons. One major concern is that, as mentioned above, Congress has not fulfilled its role in declaring war and providing oversight. Yet our country is asking men and women who volunteer for military service to put their lives on the line without any sense of how or whether their service is necessary for the defense of the United States. And the price being paid by the civilian populations in these countries we enter is enormous. The estimated deaths of civilians in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq over the period 2001-18 is between 244 and 266 thousand (not including civilian deaths from malnutrition and damaged health systems) while the refugees and internally displaced people in the same areas up till 2017 is 8.41 million. In Syria there are another 12.59 million refugees.

Moreover, our military action may in fact be counter-productive. As the U.S. Army Counterinsurgency (COIN) Manual notes, "an airstrike can cause collateral damage that turns people against the host-nation government and provides insurgents with a major propaganda victory."

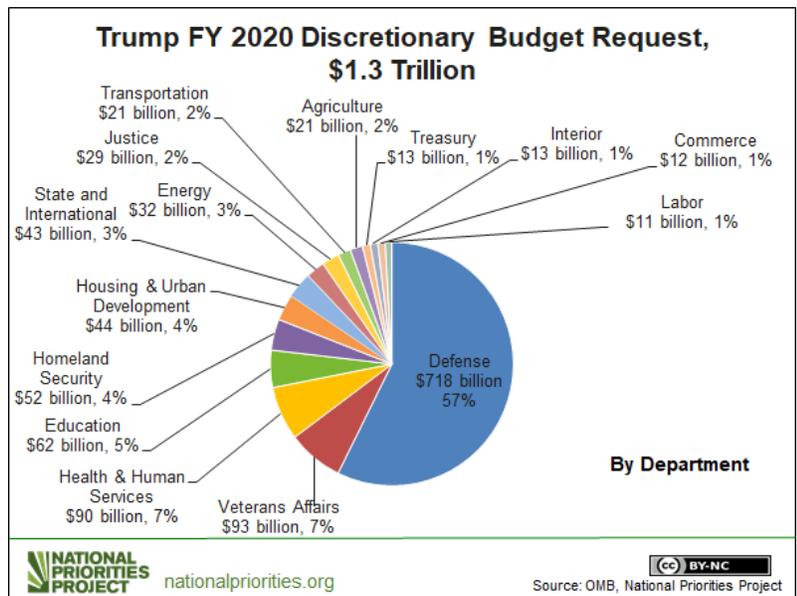
Finally, in addition to the human cost to our servicemen and women as well as to the civilians in these countries we've entered

is the financial cost. It is estimated by the Cost of War Project that the US has spent nearly 4.7 TRILLION dollars on the military activity we've pursued since 9/11, and that doesn't even cover the continuing medical costs for those who have served in the military or the additional interest on the debt we've incurred for the money to pay for these actions. Are these expenditures truly in our best national interest? Are we making friends or enemies by our expansive military posture? What about exploring non-militaristic approaches to these international problems such as pursuing diplomatic channels, using law enforcement tools and intelligence resources? We often hear that there's no military solution in many of these conflicts, but how often do we see actual diplomacy going on?

In the last two years, it appears that more Congressional members are willing to counter this on-going policy of endless war. In 2017 Senator Rand Paul (R) added an amendment to the National Defense Authority Act to Repeal AUMF 2001 and 2002. Last year, Senator Tim Kaine (D) and former Senator Bob Corker (R) proposed a revision to the AUMF. Last month (Feb 2019) Rep. Barbara Lee of California (the lone voice against the 2001 AUMF) introduced a bill (HR1274) to repeal the AUMF of 2001. Senator Kaine and Senator Todd Young (R) have introduced a bill (SR13) to repeal the 2002 AUMF in the Senate.

Equally timely is the announcement of two veterans groups, VoteVets and Concerned Veterans for America. They represent opposite sides of the fence on most social and political issues, but both have recently announced their opposition to "forever wars" and their support for the repeal of the AUMFs.

At the time the 2019 Lee bill was introduced, it did not provide for any revision or entirely new proposal for any new AUMF. However, if a new AUMF is proposed, groups such as the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL, a Quaker lobby group based in Washington, DC) believe the following should be required: a sunset clause with a specific end date (with the possibility of renewal), naming of clear military targets (specific groups and countries), geographic restrictions, and restrictions on the use of ground troops. As a member of a FCNL Advocacy Team, I support the position that "war is not the answer". In the meantime, why can't we take the first step down the path of ending perpetual war by repealing the AUMF 2001 and 2002?



**Don't believe the hype about Venezuela**

by Randy Rowland



Don't blame Venezuela for the US economic war being waged against it. I took this photo on Feb 9th, of this year (2019), less than 100 miles off the coast of Venezuela. Pictured is one of a dozen or so stranded oil tankers that were caught up in the sudden US embargo of Venezuelan oil. Notice there is no smoke coming from its stacks, and no wake. The ship is dead in the water, drifting aimlessly.

Last January 28th, the US—without warning—announced an embargo of Venezuelan oil. Suddenly, ships like this one, already loaded and bound for a buyer, couldn't off-load the oil they carried. Port fees are steep, so the best this tanker can do is drift at sea until a new buyer can be found for its load. I have no idea if the crew continues to be paid, or if they are being held captive, adrift in political doldrums of US making.

Like the sailors on this ship, the Maduro government and Venezuelan people are victims of an economic war not of their making. Oil provides 90% of Venezuela's income. In recent years, the US has been doing everything possible to starve the Bolivarian Revolution into submission, while blaming the victim for being hungry. This recent oil embargo is a major escalation of that attack, a choke hold around Venezuela's throat.

Don't be fooled. We are witnessing a US siege, much like the days of yore, when an invading army would surround a city and starve it out. This is NOT the fault of the Maduro government or the Bolivarian Revolution. It is rapacious capitalism at its most swinish. Just like when the US invaded Iraq because it wanted to be the seller—not the buyer—of Iraqi oil, this economic war against Venezuela is nothing but a grab for the largest proven oil reserves on earth.

Don't blame Venezuela any more than you blame the sailors on this drifting ship for the suffering being inflicted on them.

Please talk to your friends and neighbors about what's going on in Venezuela. Next time there's a protest, think about attending.

Far too many people assume that the government there must be doing something wrong, because corporate news keeps saying so.

US hands off Venezuela!

Why do I bother to say this?

Back in 2010 my late wife, Kay, and I went to Venezuela to see for ourselves how things were. We were not being entertained by the Venezuelan government. We weren't important enough to merit government attention, and didn't try to get it. We weren't there on a movement tour, or connected to anybody. We were tourists with a journalistic interest. We interviewed taxi drivers and right-wing anti-Chavista student activists. We had lengthy conversations with our landlord, well informed in Venezuelan affairs, if from a mildly anti-Chavez perspective. We talked to anybody who would talk to us. And we went to a pro-Chavez community television station to

formally interview the staff there about their own story, and how it fit in with the national one. Admittedly, that was some years ago, but what we found then gives me perspective on what's happening now.

The story of the "Bolivarian Revolution," detailed to us by random Venezuelans, begins with the "Caracazo," the February, 1989 uprising mainly in Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. It was a truly massive upheaval of the Venezuelan people, the largest in Venezuelan history until that time, an outpouring of the people against neoliberal pro-market reforms imposed by the World Bank and then-President Pérez.

Hugo Chavez was an officer in the Venezuelan military back then, when the government declared martial law and ordered the troops to crush the rebellion. Wikipedia says 3,000 citizens were killed in the effort. Chavez recalled in an interview with American peace activist Cindy Sheehan (and in other places as well) that the military followed their orders, violently crushing the movement to reestablish "order." While the movement struggled to regroup, activists in the military plotted to make sure a massacre like that would never happen again. Within a few years, there were two failed coups. Chavez was an organizer of one of them and he went to prison for sedition, but not before he gave a speech, in full uniform, detailing the motives of the revolt, which propelled him into the national spotlight. Meanwhile the next wave of the movement was building and President Pérez was impeached and removed from office. A "caretaker" grandfather-type president named Caldera made the mistake of letting Chavez out of prison to run for president in the next election. I think it's fair to say that Hugo Chavez was the Nelson Mandela of Venezuela. Chavez, the rebellious soldier who stood against the brutality that had happened in 1989, won handily in 1998, only 9 years after the massacres associated with the Caracazo uprising. He never lost an election after that. I'm pretty sure the people believed in his oath of "Never Again." His election was the first in a wave of Latin American leftist political victories.

That may not be the American government or corporate media's line, but that IS the story Kay and I gathered in Venezuela a few years back. Chavez was a GI resister who actually delivered on the promise so many soldiers have made, often silently to themselves; "Never Again." Any American veteran who ever made that same promise should take pride in a brother soldier who stood up when it counted, and made damn sure it really was "never again." He—and the movement—had to figure out how to run a country in the process. They did OK. Made some mistakes—who wouldn't—but so far they've kept true to their cause. And it is this origin story that makes me suspicious of any report that the Maduro government today is overly brutal against its own people.

President Maduro is continuing the Bolivarian Revolution that began because of a determination to NOT vamp on their own people. In Caracas, Kay and I talked to right wing students from upper class families, the anti-government, anti-Chavista forces, proud of the tear gas they had tasted while battling for their counter-revolutionary cause in the streets. Much of their complaint in those days was about how the administration handled their protests. But the more they talked, the clearer it became that it was only after they began breaking windows and throwing fire bombs that the police responded with her gas and rubber bullets, which, frankly, any government would do. As an American police detective later shrugged when I told him of our discussions, "All they can complain about is tear gas and a few rubber bullets? That ain't a dictator, we do that here." In addition, the anti-Chavez movement was proud of how many people had signed their petitions. I think that if anti-government forces feel safe enough to sign open petitions, they aren't living under an oppressive dictatorship.

Besides the tear gas complaints, the Venezuelan opposition's big beef, when we were there, was that the country was experiencing rolling electrical brown-outs. Seems that instead of installing oil-generated electrical plants, the Chavez government had invested in non-polluting hydroelectric power. A severe drought had lowered water levels behind the dams so badly that there was a shortage of electricity. It is not the Venezuelan government's fault that they, like many places, were experiencing climate change-induced oddball weather events. When we were there, the Venezuelan right wing was essentially blaming Chavez for the lack of rain.

Teargas and drought don't seem like very harsh charges against the revolution. Particularly when you consider the horror the previous government had been willing to inflict on those who disagreed with it, the horror that motivated Chavez in the first place, the horror he had sworn would never happen again.

History is full of the stories of heroes who chose duty to humanity over duty to uniform. Some pay dearly for their resistance and meet their fate as bravely as they can. Chelsea Manning comes to mind immediately. Sometimes an act of resistance changes the course of history in direct and definable ways. Rosa Parks comes to mind in this regard. Hugo Chavez, too, was one of those resisters and his legacy, I think, should be written from that perspective. When Chavez died, and Maduro took over as President, the sincerity of the revolution in Venezuela didn't change, nor did the lies perpetrated against it. One thing that DID change over the years is the invention of fracking, which has increased world oil supplies and sharply reduced oil prices. That has made it increasingly difficult for the government to fund the revolution's social programs, which had greatly improved the life of average Venezuelans. That fracking was developed shouldn't be held against the Bolivarian Revolution. It is not a failure of socialism that world oil prices dropped due to technical innovation.

Nowadays, after years of US embargo and stranglehold, with the Venezuelan economy in shambles due to the overt manipulation of US capital and its cronies, the government there is being blamed for the hunger of its people. And when the opposition misbehaves, it yells "brutality" at a government that has, from everything I can tell, acted honorably and with amazing restraint. I'm no expert on Venezuela, just one of your neighbors who happens to have gone there to see things with my own eyes. If you ever chanted "No blood for oil" before, you might want to pay attention, because I think the US is up to its old tricks again.

### Five Steps to a Nuclear Free World

Testimony of John M Repp from the coalition Washington Against Nuclear Weapons ([www.wanwcoalition.org/](http://www.wanwcoalition.org/)) to the Senate Joint Memorial #8006 on February 22, 2019 in Olympia, Washington:

"The movement to abolish nuclear weapons faces two governments that have two doomsday machines. These doomsday machines are immoral, threaten the world and should be dismantled. Our conventional military forces can protect us.

So today, I want to focus on the five steps the Joint Memorial mentions where the United States could lead a global effort to prevent a nuclear war. These are concrete actions that our politicians can take now.

**1) Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first.**

**2) Ending the President's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack.**

**3) Taking the United States nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert.**

**4) Canceling the plan to replace our entire arsenal with next generation nuclear weapons.**

**5) Actively pursuing a verifiable, multilateral agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.**

Both United States and the Soviet Union, now Russia, at one time possessed many more nuclear weapons than they do today. The progress in eliminating the large number of nuclear weapons came through negotiations and agreements between the two, the START Treaties. This can be done again.

There have also been multilateral or international efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. I will mention just two of the most important.

In 1970, the then 5 nuclear weapons possessing states agreed that the proliferation of nuclear weapons was a serious problem (it still is!) and they pledged to pursue negotiations in good faith to totally eliminate nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1970 remains the supreme law of our land. Unfortunately, it is being ignored.

In 2017, the United Nations passed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. If you have not heard about this treaty, it is because the United States worked against it and our corporate media has ignored it. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in one hundred countries promoting adherence to and implementation of the treaty. ICAN won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017."

#### Community Service for Boeing

Letter Submitted to The Seattle Times

Boeing is going to trial for the wrongful death of 346 people from the crashes of the 737 Max 8s. We think the judge should include as a part of the sentence, community service. Boeing has tremendous human and other resources that could be used for the benefit of all, such as building wind turbines, high speed trains and solar equipment.

Corey Elliott  
Member of West Seattle Neighbors for Peace and Justice



And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2: 4