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## *Is the Green New Deal a Revolutionary Reform?*

The movement around the [Green New Deal](#) is the ultimate testing ground for the kind of political skills and strategy needed to win the most important political battles of all. What do you think of the Green New Deal? I think we might just have a workable “revolutionary reform.” The Green New Deal can help us focus our energy on a concrete set of proposals that provides a bridge to the fundamental social transformation necessary to preserve the planet and free the people. But first we need a winning strategy.

### **Being Green**

Since the Green Party is a small political minority, narrow partisanship is just not going to cut it — unless the Green Party wants to remain a small political minority. We should hold ourselves to the highest standards of political conduct and learn to think and act like organizers. That means, first of all, adherence to and promotion of Green Party values and platform. These ideals are visionary, popular and our best foot forward. And, within that context we must ask ourselves: Do our words and actions engage and attract people to the Green Party or repel them? Do our words and actions demonstrate that we truly believe in our ideals and platform?

We need millions more voters and members and our actions should always be evaluated in that light. The Green New Deal gives us a real chance to build our capacity by engaging millions of people. Fight for a Green New Deal with all our hearts and a better bigger Green Party will follow.

### **Contradictions Everywhere**

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The political world is nothing if not contradictory and we will have to navigate confusing terrain and an array of powerful forces if we want to win. The relationship between the Green Party efforts to promote a Green New Deal and that of the reform Democrats is one of tension: both unity and struggle, both cooperation and opposition.

The Green Party's main reason for a tactical alliance with progressive Democrats is in making the Green New Deal an achievable political priority and a household word. It's time to raise consciousness and fast. While the Green Party is largely censored from the corporate media, reform Democrats can attract far more attention and we should all support and promote the idea of the Green New Deal whenever the opportunity arises.

We can spread the word on the Green New Deal by making it an absolute litmus test. Those that oppose should be targeted — as the [Sunrise Movement](#) so brilliantly went after Pelosi. And those that agree should be thanked for agreeing and criticized for falling short of the full program —not simply because it falls short of Green Party standards but because only the full program will be able to slow climate destruction in any significant way.

A recent [press release from the Green Party](#) strikes a pitch-perfect balance between encouraging the progressive Democrats to do the best they can and alerting them to the shortcomings of their current plans.

“AOC's proposal recognizes that winning climate justice means also winning economic justice – a right to health care, housing, a living wage job, and education. Her proposal needs to be expanded, including an immediate halt to any new fossil fuel infrastructure, a focus on public ownership and democratic control of the energy systems, and paying for it by enacting a cut of 50% or more in the military budget,” said Mark Dunlea the recent Green Party candidate for State Comptroller in NY. Dunlea helped initiate the GND as Hawkins' campaign manager in 2010.

And 2020 approaches there is no better test for candidates — from the local level to the Presidency — than their position on the Green New Deal. A “Climate Preservation or Bust” strategy will provide leverage pushing politicians toward action and punishing those that refuse.

### **The “Inside” Work Needs the “Outside” in Order to Work**

The way that reform Democrats and the public intellectuals that support them have disappeared the Green Party's role in developing and promoting the Green New Deal is a strategic lapse that weakens the tactical alliance we need to get things done.

The [inside/outside strategy](#) remains a valuable guide to action regardless of political position: learn from, coordinate with, and leverage those you do not fully agree with — even those that on a different day or on a different issue or election may be opposing you. And let's not forget that its movements outside of the electoral arena that change the political climate and make better legislation possible in the first place.

Otherwise we are stuck with the same failed approach typical of union officials that want to silence, ignore or control their most militant members rather than seeing them as important assets to force the bosses' hand.

### **War is the Climate Killer**

Also central to the success or failure of the Green New Deal are the questions of war and empire. The [US military is the single largest consumer of fossil fuels](#). That alone is reason enough to wage peace. But, the military also helps the oil and gas industry to pirate and extract resources. As such, the military is perhaps the single largest public subsidy to the oil industry. And that is saying something given that [big oil is one of the most subsidized industries in history](#). Globally that's 5.3 trillion a year plus some significant percentage of the US and NATO military budget.

The [women's peace movement](#), [About Face: Veterans Against the War](#) and the Veterans for Peace can play a critical role knitting together the anti-war movement and the environmental movement. The [veterans that camped at Standing Rock](#) already started fighting in a do-or-die mission. There will be no effective response to climate change, no effective Green New Deal until the destructive interconnections between [climate catastrophe and war](#) are placed front and center. To stop climate destruction we must stop war.

### **Get Out of the House and Tend to the Field Work**

To do this the right way, our time and attention should not be exclusively focused on legislative efforts, and certainly not wasted obsessing on the role of politicians, but more productively spent joining forces with the new environmental movement.

There are many efforts like [Extinction Rebellion](#) that promise the kind of disruptive politics that is an indispensable part of the picture and the quiet revolution of [local communes](#) rebuilding our communities for the bottom-up.

But right now two trends seem to hold the greatest promise of reinvigorating the environmental struggle: young activists and the leadership of native communities.

By targeting the pro-war, pro-oil, corporate Democrats the Sunrise Movement created real leverage toward reform. Young people are and should be leading the battle against climate

destruction. In fact, the [Los Angeles Greens](#) recently waged the two most [successful campaigns for Congress in Green Party history](#) and now they are jumping in to the struggle around the Green New Deal. It should be a model for Greens everywhere.

The native-lead movement that organized Standing Rock is the other key. Not only do indigenous communities have the experience and understanding necessary to protect Earths' natural resources but the movement at Standing Rock had all the makings of a [transformative social movement](#)— exactly what we all need to learn. [Winona LaDuke's call](#) for a native-led movement adds to the already existing efforts by native people in the wake of Standing Rock.

Our attitude toward our young leaders and indigenous protectors should be one of love and respect, support and learning. What good is a revolution that does not unleash the creative energies of millions of people? We need new ideas and new ways of organizing. Are we listening? What are we learning?

### **A Revolutionary Reform?**

The Green New Deal might just be the “revolutionary reform” we have been looking for. What issue is so universal, so necessary, so morally right, so reasonable, so self-evident that [few can deny it](#)? How about saving our one and only home?

The climate crisis both includes and transcends all the vital issues of our time because it is the consequence — the sum total — of our relationships with each other and the planet. The climate crisis will not be solved by the very system that created it. Instead, effective action on climate destruction will force a head-to-head confrontation between corporate power and economic democracy, environmental racism and racial justice, patriarchy and eco-feminism, war and peace.

As the ultimate expression of everything that is wrong, the environmental crisis reveals the deepest contradictions of our times: all forms of dominion, greed and exploitation are related and reinforce each other. Yet, at the same time we can see a far more meaningful reality: that the entire planet is a single miraculous eco-system connecting everything in an [interdependent web of life](#).

The Green New Deal might just move us toward the interwoven “movement of movements” that embraces the [“interrelated structure of reality.”](#) There is simply no denying the multiple and interconnected crises of the corporate order and our response must reflect all those intersections. We must learn to use all the means — and all the minds — at our disposal. This is not a matter of political correctness — it's a matter of

building the power to win. It is about our collective future and that is something that cannot be compromised.

In the end climate destruction can only be prevented by fundamentally transforming our economy and that is something global corporate elites cannot agree to without undermining their own hegemony. In the end it will be profits first or planet first. In the end the people will win or we let the corporate power destroy us. If that is not a revolutionary situation I don't know what is.