

# Socialist Vanguard

February 2019 Newsletter

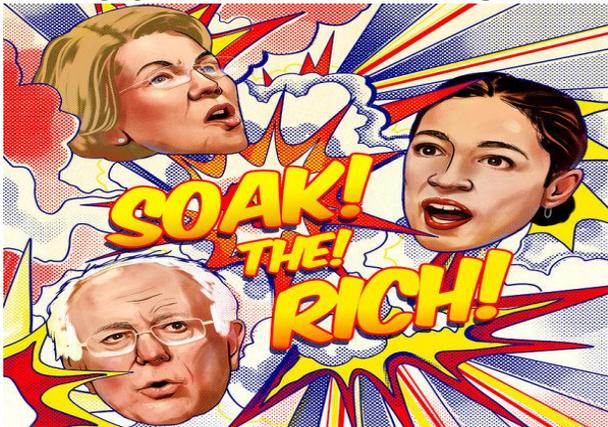
Issue # 101

Edited by Dave Schall

Presenting Democratic Socialist Viewpoints

## Green New Deal!

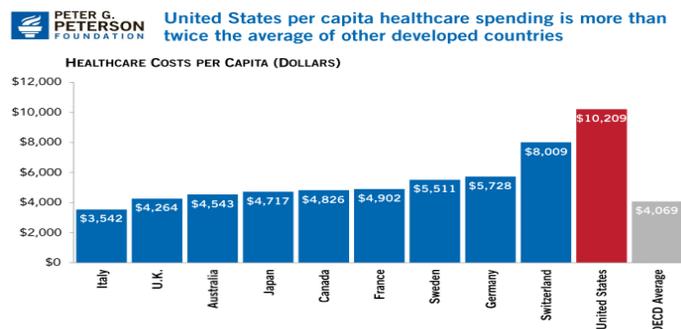
The effects of the Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential campaign continue. Many of the numerous new Democrats are wearing the identifier of Democratic Socialist. One of their first acts in 2019 is to propose a "GREEN NEW DEAL," which borrows on the reforms of the 1930s. The New Deal, which was used to describe the major reforms passed during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) to bring the nation out of the Great Depression. FDR's New Deal included legalizing many activities of labor unions, including their right to negotiate labor contracts on behalf of a company's workforce, establishing minimum wages, providing workman's compensation for workers injured on the job, unemployment compensation for workers laid off, social security for those who retire, a minimum wage and many other workplace standards, which included a 40-hour work-week. The Democratic Party claimed credit for these popular programs, but in reality they were the result of Socialist Presidential Candidate Norman Thomas running an impressive campaign, which included most of these ideas for bringing the nation out of the economic problems.



The **GREEN NEW DEAL** adopts its title from the imminent danger (being denied by many corporate stooges like President Trump) posed by global warming and other effects of pollution. The **GREEN NEW DEAL** does not focus only on climate change and environmental issues, but also calls for programs that address the growing inequality in the USA. The **GREEN NEW DEAL** calls for reforming the health care system with what Sanders had described as Medicare for All, redistributing income by increasing taxes on the wealthiest Americans. Promising free college tuition. Elizabeth Warren, a 20120 Democratic presidential candidate, adds the issue of imposing a wealth tax in the very wealthy.

The **GREEN NEW DEAL** has generated the usual responses and attacks from corporate interests and leadership in both parties. First who is going to pay for it. The *New York Times* has provided good coverage of what is being proposed, but is also raising he

typical questions and absurd statements. As to health care somehow the USA is the only industrialized nation that does not provide universal, affordable health care to its citizens. Many other nations provide free or very low-cost college education. While the USA has finally made strides in adopting alternative energy sources to replace the toxic pollution of greenhouse gases, it still lags behind many other nations.



SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD Health Statistics 2018, June 2018. Compiled by PGPF.  
NOTE: Data are for 2017 or latest available. Chart uses purchasing power parities to convert data into U.S. dollars.  
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While corporate America likes to point toward government inefficiency, especially regarding human resources, it somehow wants to protect the health insurance system that plays an important part in the huge difference in costs of the USA health system and that of other countries. In 2017 the USA paid over \$2,000 more person than Switzerland (the second highest), and almost \$6,000 more than the UK, which has a completely socialized system. Other arguments given by leaders in both parties is that American love their insurance companies and do not want to lose them. Insurance companies make money by denying claims and discouraging customers from requesting services.

"Medicare for All" would result in some losing jobs, but (to borrow capitalist logic), we would all be better off with greater efficiency. Colleges do not need their current leaders, who earn a million or more than faculty members. The biggest source of corruption and taxes expenditures is the military-industrial complex. First a peaceful world would not need the armaments that it now has, we would not need to protect borders or our skies. We have a situation similar to that facing the USA in the early 1900's when the Socialist movement was at it strongest and in cities like Milwaukee, were able to finance numerous physical improvements, and establish a social safety net. Socialists and other reformers ended the corruption within the political system. In 1910 the Milwaukee Socialists ended the corrupt spoils system, Professionals were hired and sound business practices were adopted. **Today, Socialists Must stop the scare tactics and demand investment in humans!** DS

*Words for thought*

**"There was never a good war, or a bad peace." Benjamin Franklin**

**Walker Still Delusional: Beware of a Comeback!**

When we last heard from former Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, he did not have a new job and was planning to earn a living speaking about his experience in government and hopes for a future. Last month we looked at a spat he had with 29-year old rookie Congressperson Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who tried to debate Walker concerning tax rates. In that give-and-take, Walker demonstrated his ignorance as he clearly did not understand the concept of progressive taxation. Walker managed this after serving several terms in the Wisconsin Legislature and a couple of terms as governor, which focused on tax breaks, especially for rich folks.

Recently, Walker was interviewed on PBS's *Firing Line*, a show originated by William Buckley in the 1960s and now hosted by Margaret Hoover (yes she is a descendant of the late GOP President Herbert Hoover who presided over the early years of the Great Depression and whose main effort at stimulating the economy consisted of appointing the Hoover Commission made up of some of the wealthiest Americans and one of its primary recommendations was that women needed to shop till they dropped. Unfortunately, most women could not afford to follow the words of wisdom, as they had to take on any job that would help feed their families.

Anyway, Walker kept referring to his achievements as reforms that helped workers. This was achieved by eliminating the seniority systems, which opened the door for favoritism and eliminated one of the attractions for what is often a lowly paying job for college educated people. Also, by placing restrictions on local government ability to raise tax levies and offer wage increases, it guaranteed that teacher wages would remain low for most (the rare except might be those achieving star power from an administrator and thus worthy of a significant wage increase. It also meant that for most schools (and their teachers) class sizes needed to increase

and school supplies became scarce. The State colleges' education departments lost many students who would want to become educators. Many experienced teachers retired, leading to not only larger class sizes, but inexperienced teachers.

Walker bragged about how his reforms saved money for local governments, which allowed them to provide better services. Again, Walker is oblivious to the increase in potholes and the deterioration of many country roads. Fire and police departments which were not affected by Walker's Act 10 Anti-public employee bill, found mass retirements and many public safety departments being operated by newly hired staff who lacked experience.

Walker was proud that he lowered people's taxes, both income and property. This gave people more control over how they spent money. Walker went on to say that most people prefer tax dollars to stay at the local level, as that is where they get the best return on their dollar. Somehow, Walker does not understand that when levy limits are imposed, citizens do not see more money going to local government. They see more potholes and crime.

Walker also bragged about deregulations and how regulations thwarted economic growth and employment.

When challenged by Hoover about actions that made voting more difficult, Walker said these laws leveled the playing field as local government could no longer provide extra incentives to get people out to vote. Walker concluded that he was a reformer who reformed his way out of office. He claimed to be an educational reformer, tax reformer, welfare reformer, budget reformer among other things.

It is safe to say that Wisconsin cannot afford another reformer like Walker. Maybe a period of unemployment will wake him up, but it is doubtful DS

**On March 2, Meet Wendell Harris: Socialist and MPS Director**



Wendell Harris, long-time socialist, is just completing his first term as a member of the Milwaukee Public School Board of Directors. Wendell has agreed to come to the next meeting on March 2 at Milwaukee's Eastside Library. Wendell will explain his experiences on the Board and his take on the positions in the race.

Wendell was one of the first opponents of school vouchers in Wisconsin (he was one of the sponsors of

a lawsuit aimed at stopping the formation of private school vouchers.

During Wendell's first term he was a key decision-maker in an issue involving an MPS funded charter school. It should be an interesting discussion focusing on the value of charter schools and how charter schools are different than the voucher schools that are robbing funds from public schools. DS

**Rick Kissell By Steve Rossignol**

"I am shocked to hear of the passing of my longtime comrade Rick Kissell. Rick was a long-time member of the Socialist Party of Wisconsin and a close associate of Frank Zeidler. He served as National Secretary of the Socialist Party USA from late 1978 until early 1984. After he left the Socialist Party (in 1988) he remained an activist in Milwaukee, running for local offices several times

and being the prime mover in Angela Nicole Walker's race for Milwaukee Sheriff.

Milwaukee has lost a dedicated socialist activist."

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be given to Peace Action-Wisconsin, 1001 East Keefe Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53212 or Voces de la Frontera, 1027 S. 5th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53204.

**SP-Wisconsin Local Meeting: Saturday, March 2 at 1:30 p.m. at the Eastside Library, 2320 N. Cramer St., Milwaukee**

**Socialist Party of Wisconsin**

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