

September 19, 2023

Dear President Biden,

I realize you are a busy person (ha ha) and cannot read every book recommended to you. Thus I have highlighted just a few pages of Chris Hedges' latest book, *The Greatest Evil Is War*, that I think you should skim. Intense, but if we are not willing to face reality, then why are we here?

Speaking of books, Franklin Foer's latest might have awakened the age-old (ha ha) question, "How old is too old?" He resolves it by pointing out how you're kicking ass and moving our extremely divided country in the right direction. Good for you!

Aging does have its benefits, and despite the cliché, one of them is obviously and definitely WISDOM! At this point you are old enough to use your elder status to your advantage. Sure you're older, but you're wising up!!

Please examine how out-of-control capitalism has wrought havoc on our economy, allowing (no, *promoting*) grotesque wealth inequality and unconscionable war profiteering, to name just two horror stories. The profit motive continues to create **unresolvable conflicts of interest between certain profit seekers and ordinary consumers/workers/citizens.** The reason the situation has gotten "out-of-control" is because regulation is simply not enough; certain sectors of our economy must be socialized, either totally or partially.

Young people in particular, whose futures hang in the balance, are not the least bit afraid of socialism. Older people have also begun to embrace the concept, despite decades of fear-mongering from a profit-driven media landscape.

Between the climate emergency ~ too many examples and economic implications to mention, ugh ~ and dangerous social psychoses ~ ex: white supremacy; gun mania leading to outrageously high levels of violence, suicide, mass murders; opioid addiction; rampant racism, sexism, homo/transphobia, Islamophobia; etc. etc. ~ spreading among far too many Americans, it is not far-fetched to say we are in a death spiral.

No single person can save us from ourselves, but if there is someone who can rally our collective social energy it is the President of the United States.

That's YOU (duh)!!! President Biden, your bully pulpit is ready to reverberate with your impassioned wisdom, as well as your advice-seeking. How will we go about shifting our focus and resources from Wall St. to Main St. in substantive ways?

In my opinion we need to admit that our reliance on war, weapons, policing and incarceration to prop up our economy has led to a culture of misery. That in itself is in direct contradiction to our Constitutional mandate to "insure domestic tranquility" and "promote the general welfare." Let's prioritize happiness!

Mark Twain once said that we can't trust our eyes if our imagination is out of focus. If all we can see is GDP and quarterly growth then we are probably not envisioning a world of shared prosperity on a planet restored to balance, with peace-loving people powering their lives with the sun and the wind and learning that their misguided obsession with capitalism brought us to the brink of social and economic catastrophe in the 2020's.

Fortunately a wise old man rose to the challenge by confronting his neoliberal peers in both business and politics and telling them the jig was up! He knew there were other, better ways to structure an economy, and other, better policies to ensure justice and fairness across our society. Things were so dire that an overhaul was the only option.

President Biden, as we head into the 2024 election cycle you have an important decision to make. Are you going to be a transformational leader who unites a multi-generational, multi-racial, multi-faith, feminist movement into a safe and sustainable, egalitarian future with infinite possibilities for creating true health and happiness across the United States? Or are you going to go the way of Clinton and Obama and their comfort with and complicity in the status quo?

I suppose it's obvious which way I am hoping you will go. We face unprecedented existential threats that call for nothing less than outright rejection of the corruption and greed that brought us here. We need public banking, public housing, public transportation, public media, public parks and recreation, Medicare for All, heck, what about public agriculture? Let's convert prisons and military bases to farms and community dining halls! (Not kidding.) Let's not forget the most obvious need: publicly financed campaigns!!!!!!!!!!

Speaking of imagination, please imagine with me for one moment. What if our Congress had been composed of 50% women from the outset? Now imagine the deep frustration of women everywhere as patriarchy rolls its tanks through our lives, still.

Young people join the military so they can learn skills, make friends, and serve their society. We can socialize other sectors of our economy in similar (but much less violent and destructive) ways.

In closing (sorry to be so long-winded, but it's a huge topic!) I believe you have matured and gained wisdom as you have aged, and you should talk openly about that. Maybe I'm projecting, but it feels like you agree that we will need deep structural change during your second term. As you can tell from all the labor organizing and environmental activism and movements to re-imagine policing, we the people are ready to stand with you in order to end the ravages wrought by the billionaire class.

I am about to repeat myself because it is my main thesis: **The profit motive perpetually creates unresolvable conflicts of interest between certain profit seekers and ordinary consumers/workers/citizens.**

We can fix that!

Sincerely yours,

Kate Paradis

Half the Congress Should Be Women