

Polarization and paralysis - The U.S. after the midterm elections

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Ashley Smith and Charlie Post draw a balance sheet of the midterm elections and their lessons for the socialist Left in the United States.

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Across the United States there was an audible sigh of relief as the threatened “Red Wave” in the midterm elections petered out into a “Red Trickle.” The Republicans secured only a narrow majority in the House, while the Democrats won an equally thin majority of at least one (and possibly a second) seat in the Senate. Republicans retained control of the [lion’s share](#) of state legislatures, even as the Democrats added four that were previously held by the GOP).

Most of the Democrats that won were [centrists](#), not “[progressives](#),” and certainly not “democratic socialists.” However, the outcome of referenda on abortion rights, increased minimum wages, union rights, and marijuana legalization demonstrate that there is significant support for policies that benefit working-class and oppressed people.

After all the votes were counted, the election essentially ended in a draw, splitting the government right down the middle and denying both parties any mandate. The Republicans, despite their less than stellar performance, remain determined to roll back every progressive reform of the last century, including Social Security pensions and Medicare.

The Democrats offer no alternative, all but abandoning even milquetoast proposals that would address the country’s multiplying social crises. With the elected government paralyzed by division between the two parties, the legislative path for passing even the most minor reform is closed.

As a result, the unelected parts of the U.S. state—the Supreme Court, Federal Reserve, and executive bureaucracy—will assume a greater role in formulating and implementing policy. Faced with this situation, the socialist Left, workers, and the oppressed must turn to extra-parliamentary struggle to advance our demands.

The Democrats: A sitting duck

How did the GOP lose an election that only a few months ago they seemed destined to win by significant margins? Not only does the party in power traditionally lose Congressional seats in the midterms, but the economic conjuncture offered the Republicans an ideal opportunity to garner clear majorities in both the Senate and the House.

World capitalism, since 2008, has been mired in what Michael Roberts calls a [long-term depression](#), oscillating between sharp recessions and weak recoveries, and is now stuck in “stagflation.” The low rate of profitability has discouraged investment in the new plant and equipment needed to increase supply. But low interest rates and government stimulus has driven up demand, leading to inflation and a series of speculative bubbles in everything from stocks to housing.

The combination has now produced a stagnant economy and inflation not seen since the 1970s, with annual consumer prices skyrocketing by nearly 8 percent. Wages, despite some gains, continue to lag behind inflation, producing a [sharp drop in workers’ standards of living](#) in the past two years. With people struggling to afford everything from groceries to gas and housing, it is not surprising that more than [three quarters of voters](#) rated the economy “not so good” or “poor,” and nearly half said their household’s financial situation has deteriorated since the election of President Biden.



U.S. monthly inflation rate from January 2020 to October 2022. Data per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Biden administration has failed to enact policies to redress this crisis in working-class people’s lives. His “Build Back Better” plan, praised by some on the Left as “[The New New Deal](#),” was in fact a form of “[Imperialist Keynesianism](#).” It did contain proposals for minimal expansion of publicly funded health care and education (“free community college”), but these were incorporated into the bill’s main goal of refurbishing U.S. society, especially its industry and military, to compete against its rising strategic rival, China.

The Democrats’ right wing, personified by Senators Joe Manchin and Kristen Sinema, scuttled most of Biden’s mild welfare and climate provisions (with the partial and contradictory exception of [student loan relief](#)). In the end, the administration was only able to secure a traditional “hard” infrastructure plan that will provide relatively few jobs but will improve the economic and political position of the U.S. vis-à-vis China. To this he added the Inflation Reduction Act, which, [despite the hype](#), falls far short of the systemic change needed to address the climate emergency.

As a result, the Democrats at the start of this year expected a drubbing in the midterms. With Biden’s approval ratings hovering in the [low 40s](#), the Democratic mainstream and so-called [progressives](#) took their lead from New York City Mayor Eric Adams, preparing a campaign focused on “law and order.” And the only “job program” Biden seemed to champion at the time was

[increased funding for the police.](#)

Republicans squander historic opportunity

The stars were aligned for the GOP to score a record midterm victory, sweeping the House and Senate and substantially increasing their dominance in state governments. But Trump's Republicans blew it for two reasons: the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which opened the possibility of a wave of state abortion bans, and Trump's [threat to democracy](#) represented by the "Big Lie" that he defeated Biden in the 2020 elections.

Abortion rights was perhaps the biggest factor that sunk the Republicans. Nearly two-thirds of those [polled](#) opposed the Trump-packed court's decision in *Dobbs*. Even "Red States" were ready to vote for abortion rights against the GOP, as Kansas proved earlier this year when sixty percent of voters struck down a ballot measure that would have enabled the legislature to impose a ban. And in the midterms, more than [one-fourth of voters](#) indicated that abortion was the key issue deciding their vote. Those voted Democratic by a margin of 3 to 1.

The second biggest factor was popular support for democracy. Trump's "Big Lie" cost the Republicans votes in swing districts in 2022, with his hand-chosen "election deniers" [losing around 5 percent](#) of the vote compared with two years earlier. Every single candidate he backed in races for [secretary of state](#) in the hope of rigging future elections went down to defeat.

The Democrats pivoted to take advantage of widespread disgust with Trump and his "MAGA" Republicans. They didn't run on their underwhelming record or offer any new proposals. Most positioned themselves as moderates, and the "progressives" dropped almost any mention of the Green New Deal, Medicare for All, and defunding the police. Instead, they focused on the promise to defend abortion, democracy, Social Security, and Medicare against attacks by the MAGA candidates.

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In reality, the Democrats' track record on abortion, democratic elections, and fighting the Right has been less than stellar. Despite having complete control over the government several times since *Roe*, they [never codified it as a national law](#), repeatedly ratified the ban on federal funding for abortion, and stood by while both the legal right and access to abortion have been further and further restricted.

Instead of expanding democracy, the party has defended the undemocratic electoral college, fought to keep left-wing third parties off the ballot, and competed with Republicans in [gerrymandering](#) representation to ensure "safe" districts. In fact, party officials in New York State lamented their [ineffective gerrymandering](#) as the main explanation for their defeats in the midterms.

And instead of fighting the Right, they have [used MAGA Republicans](#) for their electoral gain. In a cynical and dangerous maneuver, the Democrats spent nearly [\\$40 million](#) on ads supporting Trump-

endorsed candidates in the hope of easy victories in the general election. While this tactic contributed to stemming the “Red Wave” in 2022, it helped the far right to gain a wider hearing, something especially dangerous when the fascist groups like the [Proud Boys have been growing](#).

Big money, polarization, and a dead heat

The 2022 midterms pitted an increasingly far right Republican party—filled with conspiracy theorists, open racists and anti-Semites, and homo/transphobes—against a “sane” party of the capitalist “center.” Different sections of the capitalist class poured money into the parties in a contest over a polarized and energized electorate made up of voters who are older, richer, and whiter on average than the rest of the population.

[Nearly \\$17 billion](#), a record amount, was spent this election cycle, most coming from wealthy individuals and corporations. [Individual billionaires and their personal political action committees](#) provided 20 percent of funding for the Republicans’ funding and nearly 15 percent of the Democrat’s.

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The two parties split contributions from [nine different sectors of the capitalist class](#). Democrats received 49 percent of the funding—less than the 54 percent they received in 2020, but slightly more than the 47 percent netted in the last midterm elections. Republicans received more than 60 percent of donations from the energy/natural resources, construction, agribusiness, and transportation sectors, while the Democrats continued to garner more than 60 percent from the communications/electronics and health care industries. The Democrats won a bare majority of donations from finance, insurance, and real estate (51 percent), while increasing their share of financing from the defense industry (43.4 percent in 2022, compared with 39.3 percent in 2018) and the manufacturing/heavy “miscellaneous business” category (49.3 percent in 2022, compared with 47.1 percent in 2018).

The Democrats raked in a greater portion of funds from small donors, especially in the swing states that decided the balance of power in the Senate. [They raised](#) two and half times more than the Republicans in Pennsylvania, nearly twice as much in New Hampshire, and a significant amount more in Arizona, Nevada, and Georgia.

Both parties mobilized their polarized bases, ensuring a split election decided by narrow victories for one or the other. [Voter turnout](#) this year appears to be 46.4 percent, down from the high of 50.3 percent in 2018 but significantly higher than the 37–42 percent in [most midterm elections](#) this century.

While the Republicans won [51.2 percent of the popular votes](#) cast for the House, the [exit polls](#) indicate an electorate in flux. In terms of age, gender, race, and type of places voters live (urban/suburban/rural), the composition of the electorate remained essentially the same as in 2020

and 2018. The Democrats continued to lose ground among Latinos, Asians, and urban and suburban voters compared with both 2020 and 2018.

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The proportion of lower income voters (with less than \$100,000 in household income) continues to decline, from 67 percent in 2018 to 63 percent in 2022. The Democratic share of these voters dropped from 56 percent to 48 percent, with Republicans winning a majority of voters in households earning more than \$50,000. While the percentage of voters with bachelor's and higher degrees rose to 44 percent this year, compared 41 percent and 42 percent in 2018 and 2022, the Democrats lost ground even among more highly educated voters.

Victory or defeat in this tight election was determined by the two key issues of abortion and democracy. As [Nate Cohn](#) has argued, the Democrats did best in districts where defense of abortion and democracy were central issues, often winning by razor thin margins in “swing” districts around the country. Where those two issues were not prominent, the GOP scored victories, as in New York and most dramatically in Florida.

The Democrats' ability to prevent a substantial Republican majority in the House and hold onto their edge in the Senate was the result of a [large turnout of young voters](#) and [women](#), with a minority of Republicans and many [independents](#) voting against Trump and his hard right supporters. In a number of states, Republicans “[split the ticket](#),” voting for “moderate” Republicans like Brian Kemp for Georgia governor but against MAGA Republicans like Herschel Walker for Senate.

Rays of hope from ballot measures

The results of [key ballot measures](#) proved that significant majorities support progressive social and economic policies. In keeping with the popular repudiation of Dobbs, people voted for abortion rights in a clean sweep of measures in California, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, and Vermont, with pro-choice positions receiving anywhere from 52 percent to a high in the [Green Mountain State of 77 percent](#).

A similar pattern was demonstrated on a host of other issues. A referendum in Oregon on a constitutional amendment guaranteeing universal access to health care passed with a narrow majority of 50.6 percent. An Arizona measure requiring photo ID to vote was defeated by a margin of 60 percent to 40 percent, while measures to increase voting access were approved in Connecticut, Michigan, and Nevada by between 53 percent to 60 percent of the vote.

But this pro-democracy vote was not without exceptions. In some cases voters fell for reactionary, nationalist arguments. Thus, for example, in Ohio a measure denying suffrage to non-citizens passed with 77 percent of the vote.

By contrast, several states voted abolish slavery (a mere 157 years after the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment) and limit the use of prison labor. Marijuana legalization was approved in

Arkansas, Maryland, Missouri, and both South and North Dakota, with between 53 percent to 66 percent in favor.

More than 55 percent of voters in Nevada supported an increase in the minimum wage to \$12 an hour, and 58.5 percent voted to raise Nebraska's minimum wage to \$15 by 2026. Illinois passed a constitutional amendment enshrining collective bargaining rights by more than 58 percent.

Clearly, these measures are limited—at best defending the status quo on abortion rights and increasing the minimum wages at a rate below that of inflation. Whether or not the Illinois amendment on bargaining has any effect will depend not on the new law—it never has, despite [recent claims to the contrary](#)—but on the self-organization of workers and their ability to force employers to recognize unions and make concessions.

A divided and paralyzed government

The 2022 elections have produced “split government” throughout the country. At the federal level, division will produce legislative paralysis. The Republican-controlled House [stuffed full of Trumpite reactionaries](#) will block even the most minor reforms while they attempt to stage [impeachment hearings against Joe Biden](#).

The Democrats will not be able to deliver on their promise to codify Roe or do much of anything else. Congress and the White House will be able to act on the issues where they share a reactionary consensus, in particular bolstering the position of U.S. imperialism in its sharpening rivalry with China.

With government paralyzed in particular at the federal level, the unelected and unaccountable branches of the capitalist state apparatus will increasingly act in place of the legislature.

In states that the Democrats rule, at best the status quo will be preserved, but in the event of a recession, politicians will be under pressure to impose austerity measures to balance budgets. Republican state governments will launch new reactionary assaults on bodily autonomy (especially reproductive and transgender rights), voter access, “criminal justice,” education, union rights, and social spending.

With government paralyzed in particular at the federal level, the unelected and unaccountable branches of the capitalist state apparatus will increasingly act in place of the legislature. This will mean a much greater role for the executive branch, dominated by the centrist Democrats, the federal Judiciary, controlled by reactionary judges appointed by the Republican Party, and the Federal Reserve, managed by bureaucrats tasked with ensuring the growth and profitability of capital no matter the cost to workers.

Not the time for wishful thinking

Unfortunately, much of the U.S. Left ignores these realities and paints a rosy picture of victories by progressives and socialist inside the Democratic Party. [Branko Marcetic](#), a Jacobin staff writer, declared that “the Left has achieved some major victories.” In a [statement](#) released the day after the midterms, Suz Warshell, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) National Electoral Committee, boasted that there was in fact a “red wave ... just not the one the pundits expected.” Proclaiming: “Socialists win up and down the ballot, and across the country. From state senators to U.S. representatives to presidents of the city Board of Aldermen, DSA showed that socialist issues can win at any level and anywhere.”

The reality is more complex. As Kim Moody argues in a forthcoming article in *Against the Current*, only ten of the twenty-three Democrats endorsed by Senator Bernie Sanders, the Justice Democrats, and Our Revolution were elected, while four “progressive” incumbents were defeated in redrawn districts, leading to a gain of only three “leftists” in the House. Two of these, Greg Casar of Texas, and Summer Lee of Pennsylvania, have joined the “Squad,” bringing its membership to a grand total of [twelve](#) out of 435 members of the House.

While the Squad pledged to fight for a Green New Deal and Medicare for All and against the U.S. military and economic aid to Israel when they were first elected in 2018, their practice has been quite different. [Jamal Bowman](#), a 2020 addition to the “Squad” and DSA member, has visited Israel and repeatedly voted for military aid for the Zionist state in violation of DSA’s support for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

It is true that the rest of the Squad still, on occasion, talk about the Green New Deal or Medicare for All. But they effectively dropped these issues (and any hint of reducing funding for the cops) in favor of Biden’s “Build Back Better” plan. When Biden’s original plan was defeated, the “Squad” did not renew agitation for more radical reforms but became foot-soldiers for the centrist Democratic majority’s watered down Inflation Reduction Act.

[T]he Squad’s promise of being a voice for democratic socialism in the U.S. Congress has been sacrificed...in the interest of “unity” within the second most enthusiastic capitalist party in the world.

Put simply, the Squad’s promise of being a voice for democratic socialism in the U.S. Congress has been sacrificed, as have previous left-wing attempts to use the Democrats to advance substantial reforms, in the interest of “unity” within the second most enthusiastic capitalist party in the world.

[Others](#) on the radical Left have attempted to point to the election of so-called progressive Democrats, in particular Pennsylvania’s John Fetterman. For example, Ben Burgis, writing in Jacobin, criticized Fetterman’s uncritical embrace of Israel but praised his populist style and “pro-labor” politics.

A quick glance at Fetterman’s [official campaign website](#) reveals a very different reality. His “pro-labor” politics consist of small tax reductions on middle- and lower-income households and a wholehearted embrace of Biden’s nationalist plan to “re-shore” some manufacturing in the United

States—a far cry from the Green New Deal’s promise of environmentally friendly union jobs.

On health care, Fetterman refuses to embrace Medicare for All and the abolition of private insurance, rather supporting “any legislation that gets us closer to the goal of universal health care coverage”—a stance that includes expanding Obamacare’s public subsidies to the private health care industry.

On “criminal justice reform,” Fetterman echoes Biden’s call for increased funding for the police. He does not embrace a universal amnesty for undocumented immigrants but calls for a “strong, secure and humane” immigration system that would “modernize our visa system and asylum programs so that they can’t be exploited by bad actors” and would provide a pathway to citizenship only for “frontline workers, small business owners” and Dreamers.

The Democrats—the solid party of the center right

The Democrats emerged from the midterms celebrating their victory in the Senate and narrow defeat in the House, proclaiming themselves the solid party of the center right capitalist establishment. Neither the retirement of Nancy Pelosi as House Democratic leader after 20 years, nor disputes over losses in traditionally “Blue” states like New York will undermine the control of the Democratic Party’s by openly pro-corporate centrists and ersatz progressives.

All of the [leading contenders](#) to replace the current House Democratic leaders—Hakeem Jeffries of New York, Katherine Clark of Massachusetts, and Pete Aguilar of California—are well within the Democratic mainstream. Jeffries, Pelosi’s most likely successor for the leadership of the party’s House caucus and potentially the first African-American Speaker of the House if the Democrats regain a majority, is a [vocal opponent](#) of the Democratic Party left, including [opposing the Green New Deal](#), Medicare for All, and any move to defund the police.

[Hakeem Jeffries:] “[T]here will never be a moment where I bend the knee to hard-left democratic socialism.”

While Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has not yet endorsed Jeffries, saying that she and her caucus needed time for “[healing](#),” it is likely that she and the rest of the Squad will, as they have consistently done, embrace the mainstream leadership in the interest of “party unity.” They do so despite the fact that the Democratic establishment [dismisses them with contempt](#).

Jeffries, for example, forged a political action committee, Team Blue, specifically designed to fend off primary challenges to centrist Democrats from the Left. He told [The Atlantic](#), “[T]here will never be a moment where I bend the knee to hard-left democratic socialism.”

Nor will the recriminations flying in New York State, a Democratic bastion that saw the party lose four seats, lead to any shift to the Left. Immediately after the election, more than 1,100 state [Democratic leaders](#), from the Ocasio-Cortez to the pro-real estate city comptroller Brad Lander, have called for Governor Kathy Hochul to replace Jay Jacobs as party chair.

Jacobs, a long-time party hack known for witch hunting the Left in the party, nonetheless continues to have the backing of most of the state Democratic leadership, including the governor and most of the Congressional delegation. New York's Democrats are more likely to follow the lead of [Mayor Adams](#), who wants the Democrats to move right in general on criminal justice reform (reinstating cash bail) and policing, as well adopting more "business friendly" policies. The national Democrats are already embracing this strategy, as centrists are [blaming the Left](#) and its extremism for the party's losses in the midterms.

Faction fight on the Republican right

In contrast to Democrats, the Republicans are sharply divided between a right-wing but solidly capitalist establishment and an increasingly far right MAGA wing based in the traditional middle classes and small businesspeople. [Large Republican donors](#), who previously tolerated Trump's erratic policies and personal behavior as long as he delivered tax cuts and other pro-corporate policies, are fed up with him after three consecutive defeats in national elections in 2018, 2020, and 2022. Now they want nothing to do with Trump's second presidential campaign.

Caught between the loss of "moderate" Republican and independent voters in key swing districts and the undying support of Trump among the core of the Republican voter base, the [party establishment is coalescing](#) around Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. As his runaway [victory in Florida gubernatorial contest](#) proves, he has the ability to retain the loyalty of middle-class bigots with a hard right program of racism, transphobia, homophobia, and immigrant bashing, while eschewing the narcissism and mock populism of Trump and his "Big Lie."

The Yale- and Harvard-educated DeSantis is seen by the traditionally Republican capitalists as a sane and safe alternative to Trump, who can still make "red meat" appeals to the party's base and deliver the neoliberal economic policies they support. The Republicans are clearly heading into a major battle in [their presidential primary](#) between the party's establishment, led by DeSantis, and Trump and his allies, who have significant, organized support among ["grass roots" Republican activists](#) and voters.

The looming Republican faction fight will certainly improve the Democrats' electoral prospects in 2024. But no one should believe the Right is done and dusted. The social conditions for the continued growth of the far right have not disappeared. Despite the recent downtick in inflation, stagflation will persist, which will continue to erode support for Biden, who, despite his abysmal approval rating, seems determined to run for president in 2024 at the age of 82.

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With the government paralyzed by divisions, the Democrats will be able to do little or nothing to support their claim to have solutions to people's declining living standards. Moreover, the unelected branches of the state will impose policies that provide even more fertile ground for the further growth of the Right. The Federal Reserve, in their unceasing war against inflation, is likely to sharply raise interest rates to as high as [7 percent](#) or even more, triggering a recession, budgetary

crises, a wave of business bankruptcies, and increased unemployment.

The right-wing Supreme Court will issue opinions that will shred regulations on corporations, as well as protections of the rights of workers and the oppressed. Already, it stands poised to overturn affirmative action in higher education and has the 1965 [Voting Rights Act](#) in its sights. Republicans can take advantage of all of this to promote their reactionary solutions to real problems.

Whither the socialist Left?

With the road to legislative reform—always a rather narrow pathway in the absence of mass, disruptive social struggles—effectively closed by “divided government” and the two capitalist parties moving to the right, what are the prospects for the socialist Left in the United States? Will the socialist Left be able to pivot toward rebuilding independent social struggles? Will we be able to prioritize movements for reproductive justice and bodily autonomy, abolitionist campaigns against police violence and racism, the free movement of working people, and struggles for union recognition, higher wages, shorter hours, and some modicum of protection from the relentless intensification of labor?

Only struggles in the streets and workplaces can fend off attacks from our bosses, break the legislative logjam, and win progressive change. Such struggles have always been and remain the path for establishing the socialist Left as an alternative to the two capitalist parties—the far right Republicans and the centrist Democrats.

If the recent history of the U.S. socialist Left is an indication, the Left will need a fundamental strategic and tactical reorientation. Since at least Sanders’ campaign in 2016, and certainly since the 2020 election cycle, the Left has almost exclusively focused on electoral activity in the Democratic Party.

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Some claimed that electing socialists on the Democrat’s “ballot line” was part of building a “party surrogate” that could eventually conduct a “dirty break” and launch a new mass socialist party. Unfortunately, even the broad outlines of such a “party surrogate” are nowhere to be found. With Sanders soundly defeated twice, the Squad contained and trapped in the House, and politicians at the state and local level similarly boxed in, the strategy has yielded little. At best DSA “electeds” have been reduced to a “loyal opposition” within the party. At the worst, they have become apologists for the Democratic Party establishment.

This electoralism has had devastating consequences. The Left has been pulled off the streets and to the right by this foray into the enemy territory of a capitalist party. The major voices of the U.S. Left, whether in Jacobin or The Nation, have been reduced to writing advice columns encouraging the Democrats to embrace a program of social democratic reform, which the leadership of the party don’t read and, when they do, denounce as extremist and self-defeating.

Ultimately, the Left's de facto support of the Democrats leaves the Republicans, in particular its right-populist wing, as the only visible opposition. However reactionary their fake solutions, the Right not the Left stand to benefit from what [Mike Davis](#) long ago called the "barren marriage" of the Left, labor, and the movements of the oppressed with the Democratic Party.

"[F]orty years of marriage between labor and the Democrats have produced a politically dispirited and alienated working class." – Mike Davis, 1980.

Now is the time for a critical assessment of the Left's failed electoral strategy and the shift to a fundamentally different one—an orientation on the independent organization of class and social struggle. The truth is that without Occupy, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) uprisings, the women's marches, the struggles for immigrant rights, and the Red State Teachers Revolt, Sanders' and the Squad's program would have had little or no traction.

Far too much of the Left has diverted time, money, and energy that might have been better spent building such struggles and their infrastructure of dissent into Democratic electoral campaigns. As a result, after all the electoral campaigns, the socialist Left is weaker and our program—a Green New Deal, Medicare for All, defunding the police, and the like—politically marginal, while the social movements, except for labor, are demobilized.

The evolution of the BLM uprising of 2020 is only the most recent confirmation of this dynamic. The spring and summer of 2020 saw the largest social movement in U.S. history, denouncing the police murders of people of color and making the abolitionist demand for defunding the police and refunding social services the common sense of millions of people.

The Democratic establishment, with little or no organized opposition from the Left inside and outside the Democratic Party, demobilized these struggles and channeled popular anger into Biden's election campaign. Today, the Democrats—so-called progressives included—now campaign on increasing police funding and join the Right in demonizing abolitionists.

The conditions that gave rise to the last decade of social and class struggles have only intensified, particularly in workplaces. Today we see organizing drives at Starbucks and Amazon, strikes of higher education workers in California and New York, rank-and-file resistance in the rail workers unions against the contract their officials cut with the Biden administration, and major contract fights looming at UPS and other employers in the coming year.

The socialist Left needs to reorient on these struggles, helping organize independent unions and rank-and-file formations that can win against the employers and their allies in the Biden administration. We will need to abandon the Sisyphean project of transforming or influencing the Democratic Party, which will derail these struggles—or repress them. If the Left does not shift its priorities to mass struggle, we will be unable to continue as an independent force capable of challenging both the bankrupt capitalist center and the growing far right.

Ashley Smith and Charlie Post

P.S.

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<https://www.tempestmag.org/2022/11/polarization-and-paralysis/>