

JUNETEENTH, THE DAY SLAVERY REALLY ENDED

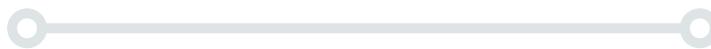
From Karen Pataky, Director, Public Policy & Political Action Committee

Most Americans have been taught that when President Abraham Lincoln signed the “Emancipation Proclamation” on January 1, 1863 the practice of enslaving Black peoples in America ended. However, word of emancipation did not reach remote areas, such as Texas, until 2½ years later.

On June 19, 1865 (Juneteenth), federal troops led by General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil in Galveston as the general read from *General Orders No.3*: “The people of Texas are informed that, ‘In accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.’” This meant that the remaining 250,000 enslaved Black people were finally set free.

But Juneteenth was only celebrated by some Black communities until June 21, 2021, when Juneteenth was signed into law as a national holiday (i.e., paid leave for federal workers). Thus, the official final implementation of the end of enslavement is finally a national holiday with stature equal to our July 4, Independence Day.

Some in the local and national media, and in state and national legislatures have grumbled, but initial efforts at justice are never welcomed by all. Nevertheless we move forward.



NO HEALTH CARE FOR ANYONE BUT THE SUPER RICH WITHOUT PASSAGE OF HR1

***From Karen Pataky, Chair, Public Policy & Political Action Committee, and
Chair, Health Policy Task Force***

As we Dems know, without the passage of the “For the People” Act, Voter Suppression efforts of the “Trump Party” will result in most of us being locked out of voting spaces, or our votes will be thrown away by partisan overseers beginning with the 2022 mid-term elections and all elections thereafter.

Joe Manchin, the “Obstructor in Chief” Senator of the Democratic Party refuses to let us end the FILIBISTER. His story is that HR1 must have bipartisan support. *Mother Jones* posted news last week that the Koch brothers have recently offered financial support to Manchin.

Rev. William J. Barber (info@breachrepairers.org) and Stacy Abrams were in West Virginia June 14 for several days of rallies and discussions with Senator Manchin. Many of us planned to watch the events and shared with all of our contacts.

Likely all friends and relatives in WV have already been recruited to contact Joe Manchin to discuss his refusal to support HR1. We can also flood his phone lines every hour of every day for the next week: Washington DC: 202 224 3954; Charleston: 304 342 5855; Eastern Panhandle: 304 264 4626; Fairmont: 304 368 0567.

And when Manchin returns to DC we can rally in front of the Senate to remind him of his responsibilities to represent The People, not Big Business and Republicans.

Let's get to work!



WHAT'S AT STAKE?

SOLVING AMERICA'S PROBLEMS OR WINNING THE NEXT ELECTION?

From Ellen McGovern, Chair, Gun Violence Prevention Task Force

E.J. Dionne, *Washington Post* columnist, wrote, “No amount of cajoling, compromising, begging, pleading or standing-on-your-head-and-holding-your-breath will change this.... [Y]ou can defend voting rights or you can defend the filibuster. You can't do both.”

Dionne used voting rights with the filibuster option, but we could insert whatever—background checks and the Charleston loophole; or assault weapons ban—instead of voting rights. For that matter, we could insert climate or infrastructure or police reform! Bottom-line: Senate Democrats don't have the votes to pass most, if not all, of the Biden administration's priorities. Yes, we all prefer bipartisan efforts and, ultimately, bipartisan legislation, but after weeks and weeks of good faith talks, not much has been achieved nor appears hopeful in the Senate these days.

Senators Manchin and Sinema, don't let Minority Leader McConnell—who vows to block everything the Biden administration and Senate Dems propose from coming to the Senate floor—win the day: *deja vu*, Obama 2008 and 2012. American citizens, polling at 93% or more, want background checks passed in the Senate—and now! Don't fail them!!

Lest we forget—the NRA per *Media Matters'* Cydney Hargis lays out in her article ([“The California assault weapons ban decision shows the dangerous, lasting impact of the NRA”](https://www.mediamatters.org/national-rifle-association/california-assault-weapons-ban-decision-shows-dangerous-lasting-impact)) the footprint of the NRA on the court system and beyond, even though immersed in legal and debt controversies. See [mediamatters.org/national-rifle-association/california-assault-weapons-ban-decision-shows-dangerous-lasting-impact](https://www.mediamatters.org/national-rifle-association/california-assault-weapons-ban-decision-shows-dangerous-lasting-impact) for the complete article.

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AS AN INTERVENTION IN AMERICAN VIOLENCE,
JANE NICHOLSON'S JUNE 8, 2021 GVP ZOOM PRESENTATION**
From Ellen McGovern, Chair, Gun Violence Prevention Task Force

The following resources will increase your understanding of restorative justice. Restorative justice is holistic—it is built over time through theory and practices that support justice as healing. We practice restorative justice face-to-face and take accountability for each other. In cases of harm, we are ready to deliberate mutually and determine an accountable outcome, including resources, so that everyone does better going forward. Restorative justice is practiced at all social levels, from community to post-conflict contexts, because trust in state and national justice institutions has collapsed.

Vanguard, Davis, 2017. "What is Restorative Policing."
<https://www.davisvanguard.org/2017/10/what-is-restorative-policing>

Yazzie, Robert, 1994. "Life Comes from It: Navajo Justice." New Mexico Law Review.
(digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2017&context=nmlr).

Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice. (<https://zehr-institute.org>).

View [Jane Nicholson's Restorative Justice presentation on YouTube](#), accessible from the WNDC Member Portal at democraticwoman.org/member-portal.



**WNDC RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE 50TH CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL
FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN**

From Shelly Livingston, Member, Gun Violence Prevention Task Force

The Public Policy Committee submitted two resolutions addressing support for gun violence prevention measures to be considered at the 50th NFDW Convention. These resolutions were adopted on June 11, 2021, by an overwhelming majority. For more information, see democraticwoman.org/nfdw-resolutions-50th-convention.

BIDEN'S RETURN TO US LEADERSHIP

From Elizabeth Clark, Chair, Democracy & Human Rights Task Force

The June 5 edition of the *New York Times* carried a report on the negotiations underway in the G7 group of advanced democracies to overhaul the global tax system and uniformly raise tax rates. The underlying impetus is not only in the self-interest of the US getting rid, for example, of tax havens like Ireland, but it is also in the general interest of the world's democracies that they be able to raise taxes from their corporations so their governments can undertake programs that will empower their citizens as well as strengthen the countries' institutions.

America returning to the task of leading the international community harkens back to the explosion that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. European institutions—the European Union (EU) and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—adopted Democracy requirements, specifically the Copenhagen Criteria the European Council adopted in 1993. Former Soviet Union members eager to join the EU immediately accepted these criteria. The EU has now grown to 27 countries.

Also, in the wake of the end of the Cold War, other regional organizations, such as the African Union (AU) organization of African states and the Organization of American States (OAS), adopted democracy requirements for membership. It was for that reason that the international community supported the US in the military action we took in Haiti to reinstate a democratically elected government. It was also the reason the international community supported the first Gulf War. The US was leading other states to turn back Saddam Hussein's effort to violate international law, invade Kuwait, and overthrow its government.

You could say that was the end of “the decade of democracy” because the Second Gulf War launched by President George W. Bush did not have any such international support or rationale. It was an exercise of US military power over Saddam Hussein. It did not end well.

The G7 and the other international organizations seem hopeful that Biden has taken the US back into a leadership role. We could even get back to thinking that a new “decade of democracy” is possible.

Note: The preceding Commentary may not represent the precise positions of every member of WNDC. We welcome feedback.

Next PPC meeting:

The July PPC meeting will be held in the WNDC Garden at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, July 7, 2021. We will make arrangements for call-in attendance for those who cannot attend in person.

