

The Policy of OUR World

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a book by

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the state of polarization and policy

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Dedicated to the future generation of politics

CHAPTER ONE

Polarization

Let me start by asking you what our government is. Take a minute, hone in on your understanding of administration. Find a couple of words that you would use to describe the various governments of our world.

Then think, what is the underlying meaning behind those attributes, and what constitutes your view?

Now take a look at Webster's definition. Webster defines government as "*the body of persons that constitutes the governing authority of a political unit or organization*".

So what does this mean? It means that the government ideally should function as an organized assembly, and should efficiently target issues within a system. Evidently, the government performs on a far more complex basis than this statement, however the intricacies of our government can be accurately, and efficiently defined by this sentence. The development of policy is one of these complex intricacies of government that tends to be overlooked. We as citizens of the United States cannot truly comprehend the awesomeness of our legislative branch. We merely understand it from an outsider's perspective. The United States, for instance, takes pride in its thorough, though often convoluted, law-creation system. First, a

representative sponsors a bill, followed by the bill's assignment to a committee, followed by voting, and passage to the Senate if all is successful. From the Senate the bill continues forward, and the system only becomes increasingly complex through various complications like vetoes.

In the United States, and other similar nations, this type of complicated system is merely a method of dilution. It is not a democratic system, and it does not take into account the opinions of the citizens. It simply asks that our often overfunded politicians compromise with each other. It does not require them to compromise with U.S. citizens. The legislative branch's nuance was created on the basis of preventing extremism, our law-creation system focuses on various filters that quite literally moderates legislation.

Sure this moderation of policy may have been efficient during George Washington's presidency of unity, but when taking into account modern America's increasing polarization, it is important to remember that this system is not producing results as efficiently as before. With the exception of slavery, policy has been easily agreed upon in the past. However, currently, legislation is becoming increasingly more difficult to pass. More politicians are saying no. In America, the presidential veto rate has risen from an approximate average of 10 vetoes per president from 1789 - 1881, to an approximate average of 47 vetoes per president within the time period 1953 - 2021. This increase not only serves as prime evidence displaying the modern tendency of politicians to reject policy, but it also more simply means that nothing gets done. The polarization of the U.S. government led to a complete

gridlock of Barack Obama's presidency. The republican congress failed to comply or consider negotiating with Obama's policy, and as a result, the government failed to enact policy necessary at the time. Another instance of America's extreme polarization was during Donald Trump's presidency. Democrats gained control of the house of representatives during the 2018 midterm elections, and an impeachment trial was held in December the following year. The results of Trump's first impeachment trial were remarkably along party lines, with Senator Mitt Romney being the sole exception. The first impeachment of Trump was not on a moral basis but was rather a solidified partisan vote that reinforced polarization. Politicians were not thoroughly examining the principle of Trump's "abuse of power, and obstruction of congress", but rather determining how their own vote in the trial would be analyzed by their constituents. This is not the America that our founding fathers intended.

Defining polarization is also important. Polarization simply put, is the process by which individuals or groups develop more extreme opinions or attitudes on a particular issue, resulting in a sharp divide between different sides. This may occur in various contexts, including politics, social issues, and even interpersonal relationships.

Polarization typically occurs when people are exposed to information that reinforces their existing beliefs and values, while dismissing or ignoring information that contradicts those beliefs. This can lead to a situation where

individuals become more entrenched in their views, and more hostile towards those who hold opposing beliefs.

Polarization can have negative consequences for society, such as making it more difficult to find common ground and work together towards shared goals. It can also lead to increased conflict and tension between different groups, as people become more rigid in their positions and less willing to compromise.

Polarization in the United States has been increasing over the past few decades, driven by a number of factors such as the increasing influence of partisan media, social media, gerrymandering, and the rise of identity politics.

One major contributor to polarization is the increasing divide between the two major political parties, the Democrats and Republicans. In recent years, both parties have become more ideologically homogeneous, with fewer moderates and more extreme voices. This has led to a situation where there is less overlap between the two parties on key policy issues, and where compromise is increasingly difficult to achieve.

Another factor contributing to polarization is the influence of partisan media outlets, which tend to promote a particular viewpoint and demonize opposing perspectives. This creates an echo chamber effect, where individuals are more likely to seek out information that confirms their existing beliefs and less likely to engage with alternative perspectives.

Social media has also played a role in increasing polarization by creating filter bubbles that reinforce existing biases and limit exposure to diverse viewpoints. Additionally, the anonymity and lack of accountability on social media can lead to more extreme and divisive rhetoric.

Gerrymandering, the practice of manipulating electoral district boundaries to favor a particular political party, has also contributed to polarization by creating "safe" seats for incumbents and reducing competition between parties.

Also, the rise of identity politics has led to an increased focus on issues related to race, gender, sexuality, and other identity markers. While these issues are important, they can also be polarizing, as individuals with different identities may have different views on how best to address them.

The combination of these factors has led to a situation where Americans are increasingly divided along political, ideological, and identity lines, making compromise and cooperation more difficult.

These are several examples of the increasing polarization in the United States, however it is not enough to state these examples, but rather it is important to discuss what we should make of them. Polarization in the United States leads to nothing getting done, and it is as simple as that. Now if nothing gets done in congress, how do we as a global superpower function? How do we account for issues like the increasing devastation on our environment by American and foreign companies?

The answer is that we can't and that is the issue with our government. With increasing polarization, we can't logically expect helpful policy to consistently be reproduced, and that is why in 2021 alone, 67 million tons of pollution were emitted into the atmosphere in the United States. That is why 4 in 10 individuals live in dangerously polluted areas. That is why careless human and business activity accounts for about 84% of all wildfires in America. That is why food waste has tripled in America in the last five decades. Our government is not taking action to induce proper changes, like regulating businesses and multinational companies that exploit the environment. It is not enough for progressive states to enact miniscule changes like regulating grocery store plastic bag usage. The federal government needs to take action, and needs to begin holding businesses accountable, not citizens.

Combating climate change requires collective action and cooperation from individuals, businesses, and governments. While increasing polarization can make it more difficult to achieve this kind of cooperation, there are still steps that can be taken to combat climate change despite these challenges.

One important step is to focus on shared values: While there may be significant differences in political beliefs, there are some shared values that can be emphasized to bring people together. For example, protecting the environment, preserving natural resources, and ensuring a healthy planet for future generations are all values that many people can agree on regardless of their political affiliation.

Along with that, promoting practical solutions is integral to combating polarization's effect on environmental policy; Focusing on practical solutions that can benefit both the environment and the economy can help to build support across political divides. For example, investing in renewable energy can create jobs, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and help to combat climate change.

Engaging in constructive dialogue may also help: It's important to engage in constructive dialogue with those who may have different opinions. Listening to different perspectives, seeking common ground, and avoiding personal attacks can help to build understanding and cooperation even in the face of polarization.

While increasing polarization can make it more difficult to combat climate change, there are still strategies that can be used to build cooperation and achieve progress. By focusing on shared values, promoting practical solutions, and engaging in constructive dialogue, it's possible to build a better society.

CHAPTER TWO

Understanding Divisions

Understanding divisions in our government system and their impact on our daily lives is of utmost importance. In any democratic society, such as the United States, divisions exist naturally due to diverse perspectives, values, and interests among its citizens. These divisions are reflected in the political landscape, where multiple parties and ideologies coexist, each representing a distinct set of beliefs and policy preferences. While political divisions are an integral part of democracy, they can also give rise to citizen disputes that contribute to the increasingly divided state of America.

When citizens hold different political views, it is not uncommon for disagreements and conflicts to arise. These disputes can manifest in various ways, from heated debates on social media platforms to protests and demonstrations in the streets. Political polarization has become particularly pronounced in recent years, with many people identifying strongly with one political camp and viewing those who hold opposing views as adversaries rather than fellow citizens with differing opinions.

The consequences of these citizen disputes are far-reaching, affecting not only the political landscape but also our daily lives. Divisions within the government system can hinder effective decision-making and policy implementation. When politicians prioritize partisan interests over

collaboration and compromise, it becomes challenging to address pressing issues and find common ground on important matters. This gridlock can result in legislative paralysis, leaving critical problems unresolved and eroding public trust in the government.

Moreover, political divisions have seeped into various aspects of daily life, influencing personal relationships, workplace dynamics, and even social interactions. People often surround themselves with like-minded individuals, leading to echo chambers where alternative perspectives are disregarded or dismissed. This echo chamber effect further deepens divisions by perpetuating stereotypes, misconceptions, and a lack of understanding between different political factions. Such polarization can erode social cohesion, foster hostility, and hinder constructive dialogue necessary for societal progress.

The divided state of America has been exacerbated by factors such as media fragmentation, the proliferation of misinformation, and the influence of social media algorithms that prioritize content that aligns with an individual's existing beliefs. This creates an environment where people are exposed to a narrow range of perspectives, reinforcing their existing biases and fueling ideological divisions.

Addressing these divisions requires a concerted effort from both citizens and leaders. It is essential for individuals to actively seek out diverse viewpoints, engage in respectful conversations with those who hold different political opinions, and challenge their own preconceived notions. Open-mindedness,

empathy, and a willingness to listen and understand are crucial for bridging the gaps and finding common ground.

At the same time, political leaders have a responsibility to prioritize the greater good over partisan interests. Promoting dialogue, encouraging bipartisan cooperation, and fostering an inclusive political climate are necessary steps towards healing the divisions. Investing in civic education and media literacy can also play a pivotal role in empowering citizens to critically evaluate information and navigate the complex political landscape.

Understanding the divisions in our government system and their impact on daily life is vital for a thriving democracy. Citizen disputes between politics, fueled by political polarization, contribute to the increasingly divided state of America. Recognizing the consequences of these divisions and actively working towards dialogue, empathy, and understanding is crucial for fostering a more cohesive society where diverse perspectives can coexist and meaningful progress can be achieved.

A comprehensive understanding of divisions within our government system and their impact on daily life is essential for an informed citizenry and a healthy democracy. Central to this understanding is the recognition of the intersection between policy and political polarization. Policies play a pivotal role in shaping our society, economy, and the overall well-being of citizens. However, when political polarization intensifies, it can hinder the development and implementation of effective policies, exacerbating societal divisions.

Policy decisions are at the core of governance, addressing critical issues such as healthcare, education, the economy, social welfare, and environmental protection. In a diverse society like the United States, differing perspectives on how to address these issues are inevitable. While a range of viewpoints can lead to a robust and inclusive policy-making process, extreme polarization can obstruct progress and impede the formation of coherent and sustainable policies.

Political polarization often results in an "us versus them" mentality, where parties and factions become entrenched in their own ideological positions. This can lead to a lack of cooperation, compromise, and bipartisan dialogue necessary for effective policy formulation. Instead of seeking common ground and considering multiple perspectives, policymakers may prioritize appeasing their political base or obstructing the opposing party's agenda, even at the expense of the public interest.

Moreover, the influence of polarization extends beyond the realm of policy development. It permeates public discourse, media narratives, and individual decision-making. Citizens are bombarded with information and opinions that align with their preexisting beliefs, reinforcing their biases and narrowing their perspectives. This echo-chamber effect can hinder the ability to critically evaluate policy proposals and engage in constructive dialogue. As a result, citizens may find it challenging to transcend partisan divisions and seek common-sense solutions to complex societal challenges.

Understanding the intersection between policy and polarization is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it enables citizens to assess policies beyond their immediate partisan appeal and consider their long-term implications. By critically analyzing policy proposals, individuals can evaluate their potential benefits and drawbacks, scrutinize the underlying assumptions and evidence, and make informed judgments that go beyond political allegiances.

Secondly, recognizing the impact of polarization on policy-making encourages citizens to engage in constructive dialogue, bridge divisions, and advocate for policies that are evidence-based, fair, and responsive to societal needs. It underscores the importance of seeking common ground, finding areas of agreement, and working towards sustainable solutions that address the diverse concerns and aspirations of the population.

Furthermore, an understanding of the relationship between policy and polarization highlights the need for leaders to prioritize the public interest over partisan gains. Policymakers should demonstrate a willingness to reach across the aisle, listen to opposing views, and engage in respectful and substantive debates. By promoting an inclusive and collaborative approach to policy-making, leaders can help mitigate the negative effects of polarization and foster a more productive political environment.

Ultimately, comprehending the dynamic interplay between policy and political polarization is crucial for a well-functioning democracy.

It empowers citizens to actively participate in the democratic process, critically evaluate policies, and engage in informed debates. It also

emphasizes the responsibility of policymakers to rise above partisan divisions, prioritize the public interest, and work towards policies that benefit the entire nation. By embracing a more nuanced understanding of this intersection, we can strive for a more inclusive, effective, and responsive governance system.

CHAPTER THREE

The Carbon Footprint Myth

The issue of carbon footprints brings to light the significant impact and connection to polarization. The concept of a carbon footprint, which refers to the total greenhouse gas emissions caused by various entities, is often encouraged as a means for individuals to assess their environmental impact and adjust their lifestyles accordingly. However, it is ironic that the blame for high carbon footprints and environmental damage is often placed solely on ordinary citizens, while corporations largely escape scrutiny.

Research conducted by geographer Richard Heede in 2013 revealed that approximately two-thirds of anthropogenic carbon emissions originated from just 90 companies and government-run industries worldwide, with oil supermajors accounting for a significant portion of this group. This statistic highlights the disproportionate carbon footprint of corporations compared to multiple individuals combined. Despite the world's population reaching around eight billion people, the blame for environmental issues is disproportionately placed on individuals, while the role of businesses in contributing to environmental damage is often hidden.

The corruption and influence of oil supermajors on the global carbon footprint further solidify their responsibility. The Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment supports the notion that oil supermajors contribute

significantly to the cumulative global carbon footprint of the oil refining and petroleum products sales sectors. This concentration of market power within a few major corporations emphasizes the need to hold them accountable for their environmental impact.

While individuals should be mindful of their own carbon footprints, it is crucial to recognize that the primary responsibility for reducing greenhouse gas emissions lies with the largest emitters: corporations and governments. Some corporations have strategically used the concept of the carbon footprint to shift responsibility onto individuals, creating a false sense of individual accountability for climate change. Through marketing campaigns that promote small-scale actions such as using reusable bags or turning off lights, corporations deflect attention away from systemic changes they need to make in their production processes and business models.

It is worth noting that the concept of the carbon footprint itself is not inherently problematic. Carbon footprint calculators, which track factors such as food purchases and travel, can be useful tools for individuals to assess the consequences of their decisions and adjust their behavior accordingly. These calculators allow individuals to see the impact of their actions on the environment and contribute to the broader understanding of climate change.

However, the association of blame with carbon footprint calculators cannot be ignored. The term "carbon footprint" was popularized by British Petroleum (BP), a multinational oil and gas company, through an advertising campaign. By framing climate change as an issue caused by individual

actions, BP sought to divert attention from its own role as a major contributor to environmental damage. This manipulation further exemplifies the unethical practices of corporations and their attempts to manipulate public perception.

Moreover, the government's role in addressing climate change is also problematic. The US government, for instance, spends a substantial amount of money on direct fossil fuel subsidies, contradicting environmentally friendly and progressive initiatives. These subsidies contribute to the rapid depletion of the global carbon budget, perpetuating high carbon emissions. Additionally, governmental hindrances, such as court rulings limiting the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, further enable power plants to maintain high levels of carbon emissions.

While individuals and organizations should take steps to reduce their carbon footprints, it is essential to acknowledge that the primary responsibility for addressing climate change lies with corporations and governments. The disproportionate impact of corporations, particularly oil supermajors, on the carbon footprint emphasizes the need for systemic changes within these entities. Efforts to shift blame onto individuals through marketing campaigns and the manipulation of the concept of the carbon footprint only serve to divert attention from the true culprits.

Therefore, it is crucial to hold corporations and governments accountable for their environmental impact and drive comprehensive changes to address climate change effectively.

CHAPTER FOUR

Greenwashing and Polarization

Corporations like Nestle, Volkswagen, ExxonMobil and even Starbucks hide negative environmental policy through greenwashing. Greenwashing is the deceptive exaggeration of environmental credentials. Businesses are marketed to appear that they are better for the environment than they are in reality. Most companies partake in this action more than you may think. That's just how convincing and deceptive they can be. Greenwashing can occur in many different ways, and that is exactly how fooling it can potentially be. Regardless of what expectation you may have for greenwashing, businesses are deceptive in more ways than you may be able to tell.

Terrachoice, a private marketing and environmental consultancy based in Canada, conducted research and marked the seven major sins of greenwashing. These sins are essentially seven major greenwashing issues and methods. These sins provide a deeper analysis of the subject and with their analysis, individuals can learn greater insight on how companies utilize greenwashing. Acknowledgment and complete understanding of these sins are imperative to progression of anti-greenwashing sentiments. The sins are as follows:

- 1) *The sin of hidden tradeoff* - A company focuses on one particular environmental issue, and therefore inevitably neglects for more harmful issues.

For example, paper is not technically environmentally preferable. Although it may come from sustainably harvestable forest areas, other environmental concerns when creating paper may be of equal or greater concern.

I.e.: Greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and energy consumption.

The company, rather, focuses on objects like paper straws, to give off the appearance that they are environmentally sustainable when in reality, paper straw creation may be just as harmful as plastic straw creation in certain scenarios.

This sin, in a way, may be the most dangerous to consumers. Upon seeing that a company “practices” environmentally sustainable procedures, we tend to be satisfied, and as a result support the product without knowing the underlying consequences of the practice described in the product label.

- 2) *The sin of no proof* - Environmental claims for sustainability and protection are made with no credible evidence.

Ideally, a third party certification would be sufficient to deem all claims credible. However, companies often attempt to deceive consumers with impressions of green and sustainable products. For instance, facial or toilet

tissue products claim varying percentages of post-consumer recycled content. There however, is no evidence backing this claim up.

Important certifications may include the Safety Certificate, Defects Liability Certificate, Delay Delivery Certificate, NRSRO Certificate and the Final Certificate.

Important organizations may include Safer Choice, UL Ecologo, UL Greenguard, Green Seal, Energy Star and EPEAT.

Getting certified with these independent certifications and agencies is incredibly important, as they can help consumers recognize valid claims. As consumers, we must learn to recognize that claims must be certified to be reliable. Knowing important certifications is crucial, and can allow us to differentiate deception from truth.

3) *The sin of vagueness* - Claims are made by companies that are generally vague and are thus deceiving to consumers.

Vague claims are the most deceiving. To our own fault, we as consumers often don't understand the nuance of many labels made by companies. For instance, the term "All-natural" being used in product labels is incredibly deceiving. Chemicals like arsenic, uranium, and mercury are all naturally occurring and are still poisonous. Given the inevitable nature of this sin, we

as consumers must educate ourselves on vague labels and their forms. Researching a product's sustainability based on a third party may help.

4) *The sin of worshiping false labels* - Companies create sustainability "certifications" that are either inaccurate or nonexistent.

Another dangerous sin, the sin of worshiping false labels provides the illusion that a product is certified by a third party. This is dangerously deceiving to consumers as consumers can be easily convinced of a certification that may simply not be real. When we see that "certification" our brain lights up and we believe the product is trustworthy when in reality it is not actually certified. This may deceive even the brightest of activists, and for that reason, this sin is incredibly dangerous.

5) *The sin of irrelevance* - Claims that may be truthful but are actually irrelevant.

The practice of irrelevance is more commonly used with chemicals. The label itself is irrelevant to the product and consumer, but with enough quantitative data, can be convincing to the point of complete persuasion.

Ie: Claiming a product is "free" of an already illegal chemical (CFC). The product cannot legally contain the chemical (CFC), however the company utilizes irrelevancy for the mask of environmental sustainability.

6) *The sin of the lesser of the two evils* - Environmental claims of products that are “inherently damaging to the environment.”

These claims are often true within the product category, but the risk can distract the consumer from the more significant environmental impact that the product may cause. Examples may include organic cigarettes or fuel-efficient sports vehicles.

7) *The sin of fibbing* - Environmental claims that are straight up false.

Clear enough on its own, fibbing is bad and surprisingly less common than you may think. Companies indulge in other sins more frequently. This is because most of the other sins DO have some truth to them, however those facts are often spun off to seem more environmentally sustainable than they actually are. An example of fibbing is products falsely claiming to be Energy Star certified. Fibbing can also induce legal issues, and as a result, most companies attempt to stay away from common bluffs.

There are many more intricacies to greenwashing, however these seven sins lay a basic foundation for consumer understanding.

Of all seven sins, it was found that in 2007, hidden tradeoff occurred the most frequently. This was followed by no proof, vagueness, irrelevance, fibbing, lesser of two evils and lastly worshiping false labels being the least occurring sin (worshiping false labels was completely absent in 2007).

2009 saw a similar pattern with the only exception being the popularization of false label worship. The sin of worshipping false labels overtook the sin of irrelevance in terms of sin frequency in 2009. Additionally in 2009, the percentage of occurrence for the sin of the lesser of the two evils dropped to 0%.

Finally 2010 showed a complete switch in occurrences. The sin of no proof took the lead as the most frequently used sin, followed by vagueness, hidden tradeoff, worshipping false labels, irrelevance, fibbing and lesser of two evils.

This isn't to say that all companies are environmentally sustainable. Companies with PROPER certifications from agencies can be environmentally sustainable and as consumers, it is our job to recognize when certifications are NOT valid by knowing valid agencies.

Overall, the research conducted by Terrachoice found that an overwhelming 98% of products fell foul of the seven sins of greenwashing. Clearly companies use a plethora of methods to disguise products as environmentally friendly and sustainable when they really are not.

Along with the seven sins, greenwashing can be conducted in several other ways as well. For instance, the government.

Government's can be incredibly influential in both greenwashing AND anti-greenwashing movements. By making blatant promises, or claiming that a country has met a goal of their climate agenda (when they haven't), are all examples of political greenwashing. At COP26 (2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference), many different types of government pledges emerged regarding climate change. Below are some of the pledges listed by governments in the UN.

- 1) 103 countries signed up to the Global Methane Pledge to collectively reduce methane emissions 30% below 2020 levels by 2030

Methane (CH₄) is a colorless, odorless and flammable gas. It is often emitted by oil and gas systems, livestock enteric fermentation and landfills. Methane is composed of carbon and hydrogen and is exceptionally bad for the environment because of its status as a “potent” greenhouse gas. Methane's potency means it affects climate change by contributing to increased warming,

- 2) Countries aimed to Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

Securing global net zero essentially means reducing the emission of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere by 100%. This was described to be done by accelerating the phase-out of coal, curtailing deforestation, speeding up the transfer to electronic vehicles, and encouraging investment in renewables. “Countries were asked to foster ambitious 2030 emissions reductions targets that would align with reaching net zero by the middle of the century,” (UK COP).

3) Mobilize finance

Mobilizing finance mainly means gathering monetary resources to combat climate issues. This pledge was agreed upon by mainly developed countries. Developed countries vowed to mobilize at least \$100 billion in climate finance per year. Along with that, it was vowed that international organizations and international financial institutions (World Bank etc.) must contribute to the cause and work towards unleashing trillions in the private and public sector finance required to secure global emissions of net zero.

Benefits to mobilizing finance is that a far more organized climate change system can be put together, and it can allow for proper communication. Increasing finances can also allocate more resources to issues that desperately require more funding.

4) India's Net-Zero Pledge

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced this pledge, regarding India's high GHG emissions. Modi aims to achieve net zero emissions by 2070. Net zero emissions is a broad, and general goal, however because of that, it has all the more benefit if it is to be achieved. However, how realistic that achievement is, lies in India's emission policy.

5) Work together to deliver

This pledge required finalization of the Paris Rulebook, and acceleration of action to tackle the climate crisis through collaboration of all parts of life (government, business and civil society).

This is a clear and rightful stab to polarization. The ongoing climate crisis is too fragile to be handled with dispute as it currently is. It must be understood that polarization within and between governments will NOT end the climate crisis.

Overall a total of 413 million dollars in funding was provided by 12 donor governments at COP26.

If these pledges are followed through with, they will decently reduce climate change. Although the Glasgow Climate Pact is a step in the right direction, there still are many other issues at hand. Countries are satisfied with this outcome, but climate activists are not. Simply decarbonizing is not enough to reduce climate warming significantly. Several factors were not addressed at COP26 such as complex fossil fuel reductions. Limiting coal is not enough, and more action needs to be taken in the fossil fuel category.

For now, these results are more than satisfactory, however the important thing to ensure is that these tasks are completed. These pledges cannot just be promises; they must be followed through with. Otherwise, what makes these promises any different from Greenwashing? The answer is nothing, and the scary part is that there is very little on the line for these governments, if they simply choose to not follow through with their promises.

COP26 also failed to address the increasing magnitude of greenwashing. COP27 was no better at addressing this issue. António Guterres's claim at the launch of the report at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, that it is critical that, "We have zero tolerance for net-zero greenwashing," is ironic on the basis of Egypt's systemic greenwashing. Hundreds of Egyptian NGO workers, activists and environmentalists were not permitted to attend COP27. Even those who were permitted to attend, were hindered indirectly by "opaque attendance requirements and unclear visa processes," that prevented domestic and international activists from attending (Global Voices).

Additionally, according to Human Rights Watch, government officials in Egypt have exploited “arbitrary funding, research, and registration obstacles that have debilitated local environmental groups, forcing some activists into exile.” In response to this, activists and citizens in Egypt called for an anti-government protest to coincide with COP27. Police arrested nearly 70 individuals in connection with this plan.

Egypt’s attempts to prevent activists from attending COP27, speaks all the more to the country's efforts to hide their lack of environmental progress. Their systemic greenwash is incredibly apparent in their dismissal of activists willing to expose the country.

So what should we take away from everything discussed?

Firstly, one must understand the different components to greenwashing. Although the seven sins provide an excellent framework, because of greenwashing’s attractiveness, it is hard to define greenwashing as specifically as those seven sins: it happens in all shapes and sizes. You may not notice greenwashing, and that is why a good step is to simply check products you buy, and ensure the certifications and claims are valid to an extent. Everytime you double check a product, you inherently weaken the corrupt companies that sell them, and thus you do your job as a citizen: to hold accountability.

Another thing important to note is the goals set forth by climate change conferences - specifically those led by the United Nations (UN) and other global organizations. Acknowledging, understanding and expecting the goals set forth by international organizations to be completed is an integral part of our society.

By setting goals of net zero methane emissions and financial mobilization, the UN must be held to a high standard to complete these goals. Otherwise, there is no difference between the UN and a toddler talking about ending climate change. It must get done.

Climate conventions must be deemed integral to meeting the goals of climate change, and conventions must be held frequently with progress and goal updates.

Ironically enough, several activists skipped COP27. Although under good intentions (so as to not fuel greenwashing), it is important that we attend and stay informed about climate conventions. Progress is otherwise impossible, and we must learn that in a crisis like this, we need to rely on the government to exit its polarized and greenwashed policy. Silence is our worst enemy, and refusing to attend international climate conventions just fuels extreme silence.

Lastly, greenwashing countries must be held accountable for their actions. It is not sufficient nor moral for a “democratic” country to silence activists and

protests, and the lack of free speech in countries throughout the world must be addressed by the United Nations in some manner.

CHAPTER FIVE

The intersection: Bipartisanship

The intersection between polarization and environmental policy in America is a complex issue that affects the country's ability to address environmental challenges. Polarization refers to the increasing divide between different groups of people with differing views and beliefs. In the context of environmental policy, polarization has led to a lack of consensus on how to tackle pressing environmental issues. Thus, the intersection begins at bipartisanship.

One major consequence of polarization in environmental policy is the inability of policymakers to agree on a course of action. This can lead to legislative gridlocks and overall just a failure to pass meaningful legislation.

Environmental legislative gridlock refers to the failure of the government to pass policies that address environmental problems. Gridlock occurs when opposing political parties, interest groups, and other stakeholders cannot reach a compromise on key issues, resulting in a stalemate that prevents any meaningful action from being taken.

One of the main reasons for environmental legislative gridlock is political polarization. In many cases, environmental issues have become highly politicized, with Democrats and Republicans taking opposing positions on key issues such as climate change, renewable energy, and conservation. This

polarization makes it difficult for legislators to reach a consensus and pass effective environmental laws.

For example, the United States has not passed comprehensive climate change legislation despite growing scientific evidence and public support for action on this issue. The inability to agree on a course of action is largely due to political polarization, with one side favoring aggressive action to address climate change and the other side denying the problem altogether.

Another factor contributing to gridlock is the influence of special interest groups. Companies and organizations with a vested interest in specific environmental policies often lobby lawmakers to protect their interests, often at the expense of the environment. This can lead to protracted negotiations and delays in passing environmental legislation

The complexity of environmental issues can also contribute to gridlock. Many environmental problems, such as climate change and biodiversity loss, involve multiple factors and require a comprehensive and coordinated approach to address. This can make it difficult for legislators to agree on the best course of action, leading to delays or inaction.

Along with that, budget constraints can also contribute to environmental legislative gridlock. Funding for environmental programs and initiatives is often limited, and competing demands for resources can make it difficult to prioritize environmental issues.

Environmental legislative gridlock can have serious consequences for the environment and society as a whole. Without effective laws and policies to address environmental problems, the health and well-being of people and ecosystems can be put at risk. It is crucial that legislators and other stakeholders work together to overcome gridlock and take meaningful action to address environmental challenges.

Polarization and gridlocks in environmental issues are evidently not great. Polarization has been its worst since 1879, which was just after the civil war. The gap between republicans and democrats has only increased over time. It doesn't help that fundamental disagreements are fueled by an individual's consumption of news media that corresponds to their own beliefs. Hatred of the opposing party, increases our belief in our political views.

We all feel the tension. It is quite literally everywhere and in the atmosphere around us.

In fact almost all Americans acknowledge the political divide in our country. More specifically, 3 in 10 Americans named polarization a top issue the country faces, and rightfully so. Nobody can respect each other's opinions and work together in a civil democratic manner.

Democrats, for example, may prioritize environmental protection over economic growth, while Republicans may prioritize economic growth over environmental protection. These differing priorities can make it difficult to

find common ground, and can create difficulty for people to work in a civil manner.

So to that extent the major question to be asked is, how can collaboration between the abundance of political hatred and progression in policy occur?

Put quite simply, it cannot. Establishing policy progressing America forward is impossible without the compromise and civility between both parties. In light of demanding issues like climate change, it is critical that we form a common ground between the parties.

More recently, (around September 2022) President Biden scored a win in the climate change department with the Inflation Reduction Act. Despite the unarguable benefit of the act (which compromised on fossil fuel interests), not a single Republican voted for it. The act lowered the cost of prescription drugs, invested in domestic energy, promoted clean energy and overall curbed inflation by reducing its deficit. The act itself helped fulfill 2/3's of America's Paris Agreement goals.

In spite of the positive qualities of the act, republicans refused to vote for this act on the simple basis that it was a climate bill.

Contrary to what they may express, republican politicians are aware of climate change, and frankly are more informed of its reality than their constituents. They just simply cannot afford to take a decisive stance for the

sake of their typically uninformed voters. With this follows a domino effect: Nobody wants to be the only republican to support climate change, and as a result, the politicians follow the bandwagon. It is simply not a good look to their voters, being the only republican, standing for “democratic ideals.”

If a few Republican politicians outwardly supported climate bills like the Inflation Reduction Act, it is almost certain that other Republican politicians would loosen their stance of disapproval. That is just how powerful this domino pattern is in American politics, and quite frankly it is embarrassing.

Politicians are elected to stand up for policy in accordance to their beliefs, not to follow a bandwagon.

Interestingly enough, partisanship in the issue of climate change has not been a rare occurrence in the 21st century.

Since the George Bush administration, there has been difficulty in initiating bipartisan climate policy. Despite years of effort to get Republicans to sign onto climate policy, the GOP remains reluctant. Since the cap-and-trade bill of 2003, there has not been substantial change or luck for climate activists in breaking the partisan barrier.

To give some credit to Republican’s though, as is very important in defeating polarization, they have supported smaller incremental climate bills. These climate bills have been less substantial, but still vital to the process of

compromise. The bipartisan effort has been mainly unsuccessful, there have been a fair share of, albeit minor, climate policies.

Some of these bipartisan agreements are:

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal

The bipartisan infrastructure bill, officially known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, was a significant piece of legislation passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by President Biden on November 15, 2021. This bill aimed to provide substantial investments in America's infrastructure, including transportation, water, and broadband networks. It more specifically includes:

- 1.1 billion provided for the Federal Transit Administration's Low or No Emission Vehicle Program
- 1.4 billion provided for the Transportation Alternatives Program, which supports pedestrian and bike infrastructure.
- Investment of 7.5 billion dollars into electric vehicles

- 1.2 billion for a new formula Carbon reduction program - to reduce transportation related emissions
- 1.5 billion for rebuilding America's infrastructure with sustainability and equity
- 450 million provided for the Port Infrastructure Development Program, which provides grants to improve port facilities, including projects that would reduce and eliminate toxic waste.

Energy Policy Act of 2005

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is a bipartisan climate policy aimed at promoting renewable energy sources, reducing carbon emissions, and increasing energy efficiency. The act provided tax incentives for the production and use of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power. It also included provisions for increasing fuel efficiency standards for vehicles and promoting the use of biofuels.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 was signed into law by President George W. Bush, who had previously expressed skepticism about the severity of climate change. However, the act received bipartisan support in Congress, with both Republicans and Democrats recognizing the need to reduce carbon emissions

and promote sustainable energy alternatives. This bill set the stage for climate agreements of the future.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 was a proposed bipartisan climate policy aimed at reducing carbon emissions by 83% by 2050. The act included provisions for a cap-and-trade system, which would limit carbon emissions from power plants and industrial facilities. The act also included provisions for promoting renewable energy sources, increasing energy efficiency, and investing in carbon capture and storage technologies.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 was passed by the House of Representatives, with bipartisan support.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 is a proposed bipartisan climate policy aimed at reducing carbon emissions by placing a price on carbon. The act includes provisions for a carbon fee, which would be levied on fossil fuel producers at the point of extraction or importation. The

revenue generated by the carbon fee would be distributed as a dividend to American households.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 has received bipartisan support in Congress, with both Republicans and Democrats recognizing the need to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable energy alternatives.

This is not the extent to these bipartisan bills, but it provides the basic groundwork for what has been done thus far. These are all mainly recent policies that both republicans and democrats supported. They are microsteps on the goal to bigger issues, and while the billions of dollars in the policies above may seem like a lot of money, climate change does not take up a good amount of the budget: it is not the issue.

Bipartisan cooperation on environmental policy is essential to addressing the urgent environmental challenges facing the United States and the world. Achieving bipartisan support for environmental policy requires a willingness to find common ground, prioritize the common good, and work together to find solutions that benefit all people.

Bipartisanship allows for the development and implementation of more effective and durable environmental policies. When environmental policies are supported by members of both political parties, they are more likely to withstand changes in political leadership and to be sustained over the long term. This provides greater certainty for businesses and investors,

encouraging them to invest in more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

Additionally, bipartisanship in environmental policy can benefit businesses in America as well. When lawmakers from both parties work together to craft environmental policies, it can create a more stable regulatory environment that businesses can plan around. This stability can reduce uncertainty for businesses, which can help to attract investment and foster economic growth.

Bipartisanship can also lead to more balanced and effective environmental policies. When both parties are involved in crafting policy, it can help to ensure that the needs and concerns of a wide range of stakeholders are taken into account. This can lead to policies that strike a balance between environmental protection and economic growth, which can be beneficial for businesses.

Decreasing polarization can also help to build public trust in environmental policies. When both parties support environmental policies, it can signal to the public that the policies are well-considered and have broad support. This can help to build public buy-in for environmental policies, which can be beneficial for businesses that want to operate in a supportive regulatory environment.

Bipartisanship can also create opportunities for collaboration between businesses and government. When businesses and lawmakers work together

to address environmental challenges, it can foster innovation and create new business opportunities. This can help to spur economic growth while also promoting environmental sustainability.

Overall, cooperation between parties in environmental policy can bring several benefits. These include:

1. Increased likelihood of successful policy implementation:
Bipartisanship can help to bridge the gap between competing interests and priorities, leading to more balanced and effective policies that are more likely to be successfully implemented.
2. Greater public support: Bipartisan environmental policies tend to have greater public support, as they are viewed as more legitimate and representative of a broad range of interests and perspectives.
3. Long-term stability: Bipartisan agreements tend to be more stable and durable, as they are less likely to be overturned or challenged by political opponents once they are implemented.
4. Improved international relations: Bipartisan cooperation on environmental issues can enhance international cooperation and

diplomacy, as countries work together to address common environmental challenges.

5. Economic benefits: Bipartisan environmental policies can provide economic benefits by promoting sustainable development, creating jobs in the renewable energy sector, and encouraging the growth of environmentally friendly industries.

Bipartisanship in environmental policy can help to address complex and pressing environmental challenges, while also promoting long-term economic and social benefits for society as a whole. It is imperative that as a society we dismiss the increasing polarization of our government, and indulge in compromise.

CHAPTER SIX

Conferences

As discussed in earlier chapters, climate conferences are extremely important in progressing action against climate change as they provide a platform for international cooperation and collaboration towards addressing the global challenge of climate change. These conferences bring together policymakers, scientists, activists, and representatives from different sectors to discuss and negotiate climate policies, strategies, and actions. This collaboration is a direct combat to polarization and is thus integral to the progression of climate policy globally.

One of the most significant outcomes of these collaborative nonpartisan conferences is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which was established in 1992 to address climate change and its impacts. The UNFCCC provides a framework for countries to cooperate on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change, and providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

Climate conferences such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC, which meets annually, provide a platform for countries to assess progress, share experiences and best practices, and negotiate new agreements and targets to address climate change.

Examples of successful outcomes from climate conferences include the Paris Agreement, which was adopted in 2015 at COP21, where countries pledged to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The Paris Agreement has since been ratified by 190 countries and is seen as a landmark achievement in global efforts to address climate change.

Other outcomes include:

1. International agreements and frameworks: Climate conferences have resulted in the adoption of international agreements and frameworks aimed at addressing climate change. The most well-known of these is the Paris Agreement, which was adopted at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris. The Paris Agreement sets out a goal to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with a target to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
2. National commitments: Climate conferences have encouraged countries to make commitments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and transition to low-carbon economies. These commitments are often reflected in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which are submitted by countries to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

3. Climate finance: Climate conferences have resulted in the mobilization of climate finance, which is funding to support climate action in developing countries. This can include funding for mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (adapting to the impacts of climate change).
4. Technology transfer: Climate conferences have promoted the transfer of clean technologies and expertise to developing countries to help them reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
5. Increased awareness: Climate conferences have helped raise awareness about the urgent need to address climate change and the impacts it has had on the planet and people's lives.

These climate conferences and their outcomes can intersect with polarization in a number of ways, as climate change is a highly polarized issue.

For instance, climate change is often a highly politicized issue, and political polarization can make it difficult for countries to reach agreements on climate action at conferences. Political divisions may lead to disagreements on the scope and urgency of the problem, and on the actions required to address it.

Along with that climate change is also a highly polarized issue among the public, with varying levels of belief in the scientific consensus on climate

change and the need for action. This can make it difficult for governments to take ambitious action on climate change, as they may be hesitant to take action that could be unpopular with their constituents.

Climate change can also be a polarized issue along ideological lines, with some political groups and individuals viewing climate action as a threat to economic growth and individual freedom. This can lead to resistance to climate action and a lack of willingness to engage in negotiations and compromise at climate conferences.

Lastly, conferences can also highlight existing divisions between developed and developing countries, with developed countries often having a greater responsibility to reduce emissions and provide climate finance. This can lead to disagreements over the burden of responsibility for climate action and the distribution of benefits and costs.

Climate polarization makes it difficult for countries to reach agreements and take ambitious action on climate change. Addressing polarization and building consensus is crucial for making progress on climate action and achieving the goals set out in international agreements such as the Paris Agreement.

The Paris agreement in particular has been an extraordinary blow to polarization in policy development.

Adopted in December 2015 at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement has had several benefits.

The Paris Agreement has provided a global framework to combat climate change. The Paris Agreement provides a foundation for all countries to work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. It also has a long-term goal to limit global warming: The Agreement sets a long-term goal to limit the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

Along with that, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) have been incredibly beneficial to the Paris Agreement: Under the Agreement, each country is required to submit a nationally determined contribution (NDC), outlining their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Most importantly, there has also been increased transparency and accountability: The Paris Agreement includes measures to increase transparency and accountability in reporting and reviewing countries' progress towards their climate targets.

The Agreement recognizes the importance of financial support from developed countries to developing countries in their efforts to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and has helped to increase public awareness of the urgent need to address climate change and has galvanized action by governments, businesses, and civil society to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and shift to a low-carbon economy.

Some other important climate conferences that have combated the principles of division are:

1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP)
2. Kyoto Protocol Conference of Parties (COP)
3. Bali Action Plan Conference of Parties (COP)
4. Copenhagen Accord Conference of Parties (COP)
5. Cancun Agreements Conference of Parties (COP)
6. Durban Platform for Enhanced Action Conference of Parties (COP)
7. Doha Amendment Conference of Parties (COP)
8. Warsaw Framework for REDD+ Conference of Parties (COP)
9. Paris Agreement Conference of Parties (COP)
10. Katowice Rulebook Conference of Parties (COP)

These conferences have been crucial in advancing global efforts to mitigate climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One particularly interesting climate conference was the Bali Action Plan Conference of Parties. Bali is infamous for its poor water and food quality to foreigners. Tourists often become sick after their stay at Bali because of this reason. Thus, seeing Bali's conference from December 3-14 2007 was incredibly interesting.

The conference was the first major meeting after the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and focused on shaping the next phase of the international climate change negotiations. The Bali Action Plan conference aimed to

establish a roadmap for negotiations on a post-2012 international climate agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol, which was set to expire in 2012. The conference brought together representatives from over 180 countries, including government officials, business leaders, and civil society organizations. One of the key outcomes of the Bali Action Plan conference was the adoption of a roadmap for negotiations on a post-2012 climate agreement. The roadmap set a deadline of 2009 for negotiations to conclude, with the aim of reaching a comprehensive agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in 2009. The Bali Action Plan also called for developed countries to take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and for developing countries to take actions to mitigate their emissions while also adapting to the impacts of climate change. The Bali Action Plan conference was an important milestone in the international efforts to address climate change, setting the stage for the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, which established a new framework for global cooperation on climate action.

While it did not specifically address polarization, the plan was designed to promote global cooperation and reduce divisions among countries in the effort to combat climate change.

The Bali Action Plan established a framework for negotiating a post-2012 global climate agreement that aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable development. The plan emphasized the need for developed countries to take the lead in reducing emissions, while also acknowledging the importance of the participation of developing countries.

One of the key elements of the Bali Action Plan was the establishment of a "shared vision" for long-term cooperative action on climate change. This vision was meant to guide the negotiation process and encourage all parties to work together towards a common goal.

Additionally, the Bali Action Plan called for the creation of a range of institutions and mechanisms to support international cooperation on climate change, including a new Adaptation Fund to help vulnerable countries adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Climate conferences are integral to promoting shared values and varying visions. In order to advance the planet to a higher degree of cooperation, conferences are needed. Skipping conferences is truly of no help to anybody, especially if one is of important influence. The policy we develop as a world is our responsibility and duty.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Social Media and January 6th, 2021

Social media platforms have made it easier for people to connect with others who share their views, but also to attack those with opposing views. This has created an environment in which people are more likely to view those with different political beliefs as enemies.

Social media algorithms are designed to show users content that is most relevant to them, based on their interests and activity on the platform. As a result, users are more likely to see content that confirms their existing beliefs and opinions, and less likely to be exposed to different perspectives.

Additionally, social media allows people to connect with others who share their beliefs and opinions, creating echo chambers where people are surrounded by like-minded individuals. This can reinforce extreme or fringe views, making it harder to find common ground with those who hold different opinions.

Amplification of extreme voices is also a big factor that plays into polarization. Social media platforms prioritize content that is engaging and gets a lot of attention. This means that extreme or polarizing content is often amplified and spread widely, making it more difficult to have nuanced conversations and find common ground.

Most common of all issues, however, is misinformation and disinformation: Social media can be a breeding ground for misinformation and

disinformation, which can exacerbate polarization by spreading false or misleading information that reinforces existing biases. Social media contributes to polarization by creating an environment where people are less likely to encounter opposing viewpoints, and more likely to be exposed to extreme or polarizing content.

Social media has also been used to spread conspiracy theories and misinformation, such as the idea that the 2020 presidential election was stolen. These false narratives can be extremely polarizing, as they often appeal to people's existing biases and lead to further entrenchment of extreme views. Media has also contributed to a rise in online harassment and bullying, particularly against those who express opinions that are perceived as being outside the mainstream. This can make it difficult for people to engage in civil discourse and express their opinions without fear of retaliation.

By creating an environment where people are more likely to be exposed to extreme or polarizing content, and less likely to encounter opposing viewpoints, social media has been a host to polarization. This can make it difficult for people to engage in civil discourse and find common ground on important issues.

Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have become hotbeds of political debate, where users often share and promote content that supports their political views. This has contributed to political polarization, where people on opposite sides of the political spectrum are less likely to find common ground and compromise on important issues.

Facebook specifically is a huge culprit of having a political imprint. Facebook's algorithm creates partisan echo chambers, where users are exposed primarily to content that aligns with their preexisting beliefs and values. This can reinforce existing biases and contribute to polarization. Trump's supporters and detractors were often exposed to vastly different information and perspectives on the platform, further entrenching their views and contributing to polarization.

Facebook has also been accused of amplifying divisive content, particularly during the 2016 US presidential election. The platform's algorithm prioritizes content that generates engagement, which has led to the spread of conspiracy theories, misinformation, and other divisive content. Trump's use of Facebook during his presidency, particularly during the 2020 election cycle, amplified this effect, as he frequently posted controversial and divisive content that generated significant engagement. Facebook's decision to ban Trump from its platform in the wake of the January 6, 2021 Capitol riot was a polarizing moment in itself. While some applauded the decision as necessary to prevent further violence and protect democracy, others viewed it as an example of censorship and an attack on free speech. The decision highlighted the contentious debate around the role of social media in regulating political speech and the power of tech companies to shape public discourse.

The events of January 6, 2021 were driven by a complex intersection of factors, including political polarization and the use of social media to mobilize and coordinate participants.

Social media played a key role in both fueling and facilitating the events of January 6th. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Parler provided a space for Trump supporters to organize and coordinate their actions, share information and disinformation, and mobilize supporters.

The proliferation of conspiracy theories and false claims about the election on social media created a climate of distrust and anger among many Trump supporters, who felt that their grievances were not being addressed by the political establishment or mainstream media.

The events of January 6th were therefore the product of a complex interaction between political polarization, the use of social media to mobilize and coordinate participants, and the broader political and cultural context in which these factors were operating.

The riot was a stark reminder of the power of social media to shape political discourse and mobilize individuals and groups, as well as the dangers that arise when this power is wielded in the service of extremist ideologies and violent action.

The events of January 6th, 2021, have also had significant impacts on policy development and polarization in the United States.

In terms of policy development, the events of January 6th have led to increased scrutiny of the security measures in place at the U.S. Capitol and other government buildings. This has resulted in efforts to improve security and increase funding for law enforcement agencies responsible for protecting government officials and buildings. Additionally, the events have led to

renewed focus on addressing domestic terrorism and extremism, which has prompted discussions and proposals for new policies aimed at combating these threats.

The events of January 6th have also contributed to further polarization in the United States. The attack on the Capitol has deepened the political divide between supporters of former President Trump and those who oppose him. Some see the events as an attempt to undermine democracy and the rule of law, while others view it as a justified protest against what they see as a rigged election. The subsequent impeachment trial of former President Trump and the ongoing investigation into the events of January 6th have further fueled this divide.

Overall, the events of January 6th, 2021, have had a significant impact on policy development and polarization in the United States, and their effects are likely to continue to be felt for some time.

While the events of January 6th, 2021, did not have a direct impact on environmental policy in the United States, the change in administration following the 2020 presidential election did result in a shift in environmental policy, with the Biden administration taking a more proactive approach to addressing climate change.

One way in which the events of January 6th may have indirectly influenced environmental policy is through the subsequent focus on infrastructure and economic stimulus. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Biden administration proposed a \$2 trillion infrastructure and economic recovery

plan that includes significant investments in clean energy, transportation, and other environmental initiatives. This plan has been met with resistance from some Republicans in Congress, who argue that it is too expensive and would have negative impacts on the economy. The events of January 6th may have further polarized this debate, with some seeing the infrastructure plan as necessary to rebuild and strengthen the country, while others view it as unnecessary and potentially harmful.

Additionally, the events of January 6th may have also increased public awareness and concern about the importance of science, including climate science. The attack on the Capitol and the subsequent efforts to undermine the results of the election highlighted the dangers of disinformation and the importance of evidence-based decision-making. This has led to renewed emphasis on the need to rely on science and data to guide environmental policy and other areas of governance.

January 6th was also a clear manifestation of an anti-democratic attitude in American politics.

The events of that day were fueled by months of false claims by Trump and his allies that the election was stolen and rigged against him, despite the lack of any credible evidence to support these claims. The rioters believed these claims and were convinced that they were fighting to defend democracy, when in fact they were attacking the very institutions that uphold democratic principles and processes.

The attack on the Capitol was an attempt to intimidate lawmakers into overturning the election results, which had been certified by all 50 states and upheld by numerous courts, including the Supreme Court. This was a direct attack on the democratic process and the rule of law, and it sent a message that some Americans are willing to resort to violence to achieve their political goals.

Moreover, the fact that so many Republican politicians continued to support Trump's false claims even after the attack on the Capitol highlights the extent to which anti-democratic attitudes have taken root in American politics. By refusing to accept the legitimacy of the election and continuing to peddle baseless conspiracy theories, these politicians are undermining the very foundations of democracy.

Overall, the events of January 6th represented a dangerous challenge to American democracy and enhanced political polarization. The events underscored the urgent need for all Americans to reject anti-democratic attitudes and work to strengthen our democratic institutions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Art of Compromise

The art of compromise is essential for policy development because it enables policymakers to reach consensus and create policies that are acceptable to a diverse range of stakeholders. Policy development often involves multiple competing interests and perspectives, and it can be challenging to find a solution that satisfies everyone. However, by compromising and finding common ground, policymakers can create policies that are more likely to be effective, sustainable, and widely supported.

Compromise can also help policymakers to overcome gridlock and move past partisan differences. In a polarized political environment, compromise can be difficult, but it is necessary for effective policy development. Without compromise, policymaking can become stagnant, and important issues may go unaddressed.

Furthermore, compromise can help policymakers to build relationships and foster trust across political divides. By working together and finding common ground, policymakers can demonstrate their commitment to collaboration and problem-solving. This can, in turn, create a more positive political environment and facilitate future cooperation on other issues.

When policymakers are willing to listen to opposing views and engage in constructive dialogue, they can build trust with their counterparts. By demonstrating openness to other perspectives, they can show that they value

collaboration and are committed to finding common ground. Additionally, compromise involves finding common ground and identifying shared goals, even if there are differences in how to achieve them. By focusing on shared objectives, policymakers can build a sense of shared purpose and collaboration, which can lead to greater trust and respect. This greater trust and respect can foster an environment focused on progression rather than polarization.

Compromise is integral. For instance, The Great Compromise of 1787 was a compromise between the large and small states at the Constitutional Convention in the United States. It established a bicameral legislature with the House of Representatives based on population and the Senate based on equal representation for each state. It overall reduced political polarization in the USA

Other examples include:

- The Compromise of 1850: This was a package of legislation that aimed to resolve disputes over slavery in the United States. It included provisions such as the admission of California as a free state and the Fugitive Slave Act.
- The Camp David Accords of 1978: This was a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt that was brokered by U.S. President Jimmy Carter. It involved compromise on issues such as the status of the Sinai Peninsula and the establishment of diplomatic relations.

- The Good Friday Agreement of 1998: This was a peace agreement in Northern Ireland that was brokered with the help of the U.S. government. It involved compromise on issues such as power-sharing between unionists and nationalists, the decommissioning of weapons, and prisoner releases.
- The Treaty of Versailles: This was a peace treaty signed after World War I between the Allied powers and Germany. It imposed heavy reparations on Germany, but also made some compromises, such as allowing Germany to keep some of its territories and maintaining its sovereignty.
- The Oslo Accords: This was a series of agreements signed in the 1990s between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that aimed to establish a framework for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The accords involved compromises on issues such as the status of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

CHAPTER NINE

Compromise and Educational Policy

Teachers in America are facing numerous challenges that impact their ability to provide high-quality education to their students. One significant challenge is inadequate compensation. Many teachers in America are not paid a living wage, which means that they may have to take on additional jobs or struggle to make ends meet. This issue is particularly acute in low-income areas, where schools often have less funding and fewer resources to allocate to teacher salaries.

In addition to inadequate compensation, teachers in America are also facing challenges related to working conditions. For example, many teachers report feeling overworked and under-supported, with long hours and limited resources to manage increasing class sizes and diverse student needs. Additionally, teachers are often subject to significant administrative burdens, such as standardized testing and paperwork requirements, which can take time and attention away from their primary focus of teaching.

Another challenge facing teachers in America is the lack of respect and recognition for their profession. Despite the crucial role that teachers play in shaping the future of the country, they are often undervalued and disrespected, with some policymakers and members of the public even blaming them for perceived failures in the education system.

All of these challenges can combine to create a sense of feeling cheated among teachers in America. While there are many passionate and dedicated educators who continue to work tirelessly to provide high-quality education to their students, the lack of adequate compensation, challenging working conditions, and lack of respect and recognition can create a sense of frustration and disillusionment.

Thus, another important reason for mastering compromise is for America's teachers. Increasing funding and emphasizing educational policy is important to not just teachers but for all stakeholders. The art of compromise is essential to educational policy because it involves finding a middle ground between different perspectives and interests, which is crucial for achieving positive outcomes for all stakeholders. In the context of educational policy, compromise often involves balancing the interests of teachers, students, parents, administrators, and policymakers to arrive at policies that benefit everyone. Teachers are one of the most critical components of any education system, and their compensation plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining talented educators. However, determining the appropriate level of teacher pay can be a contentious issue, as different stakeholders may have different priorities. Additionally, higher paid teachers means a higher quality of education and motivation to teach students well. This in turn can lead to a smarter and more innovative youth.

Teachers may argue for higher salaries to reflect the importance and demands of their profession, while policymakers may need to consider budget constraints and the need to balance resources across various programs.

Students and parents may also have opinions about teacher pay, as they want to ensure that their teachers are adequately compensated but also want to ensure that funds are directed towards other important areas of education.

To increase wages for teachers, compromise is often necessary. This might involve finding ways to allocate resources more efficiently, such as reallocating funds from other areas of education, increasing taxes, or finding alternative revenue sources. It may also involve negotiating with teachers' unions or other organizations that represent educators to find ways to increase salaries while maintaining budgetary constraints.

Certain policies such as No Child Left Behind have harmed more teachers than helped. This policy, implemented in 2001, was designed to improve student performance through standardized testing and accountability measures. However, it has been criticized for putting undue pressure on teachers to teach to the test, narrowing the curriculum, and punishing schools that did not meet strict benchmarks.

Similarly, Race to the Top was equally criticized. Implemented in 2009, this policy aimed to improve education by awarding funding to states that implemented education reforms, such as teacher evaluations based on student test scores. It has been criticized for promoting a narrow definition of teacher effectiveness that does not take into account other factors that impact student learning.

Along with these policies, Charter Schools have largely contributed to defunding of teacher salaries.

Charter schools are publicly funded, but they operate independently of the traditional public school system and are often managed by private organizations. As a result, when students attend charter schools, the funding that would have gone to their local public schools is redirected to the charter schools. This can create financial challenges for public schools, especially in areas where there are a large number of charter schools.

Additionally, the growth of charter schools has contributed to the privatization of education, which can lead to a reduction in public funding for education overall. This is because private organizations that manage charter schools may have different goals and priorities than traditional public schools, such as maximizing profits or achieving specific educational outcomes. As a result, they may not allocate resources in the same way that public schools do. Overall, the impact of charter schools on public school funding is a complex issue that has impacted public schools greatly.

The art of compromise is essential to educational policy and policy in general, as it helps ensure that policies are fair, effective, and sustainable over the long term. By finding common ground between different stakeholders, policymakers can create policies that promote educational excellence and provide teachers with the compensation they deserve.

Georgia specifically has a long and complex history when it comes to education policy and legislative actions. Over the years, various political parties have come and gone, each with their own ideas about how to improve the state's education system. However, despite the best intentions of many

lawmakers, progress has often been hindered by rivalries between parties, particularly when it comes to the education of underrepresented populations.

One of the key challenges facing Georgia's education system is the achievement gap between different demographic groups. For example, students from low-income families and students of color are often less likely to perform well on standardized tests, graduate from high school, or go on to college. This has led many policymakers to focus on addressing this gap through various programs and initiatives.

One notable example of this is the HOPE Scholarship, which was established in 1993 to provide financial assistance to Georgia residents attending eligible public or private colleges or universities in the state. The program has been credited with increasing access to higher education for many students from underrepresented backgrounds, but it has also faced criticism for not doing enough to address broader systemic issues that contribute to the achievement gap.

Another important aspect of Georgia's education policy is the state's focus on charter schools. These are publicly funded schools that are granted greater autonomy and flexibility than traditional public schools in exchange for meeting certain performance standards. Supporters argue that charter schools can provide more innovative and effective educational opportunities for students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. However, critics worry that charter schools may exacerbate existing inequalities by diverting resources away from traditional public schools.

One major obstacle to progress in education policy in Georgia is the political polarization between the state's two major parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. Over the years, these parties have often taken opposing positions on key education issues, making it difficult to pass meaningful legislation. For example, Democrats have traditionally supported increased funding for public schools, while Republicans have focused on charter schools and other forms of educational choice.

The result has been a series of legislative battles that have often left underrepresented populations behind. For example, in 2011, Georgia's Republican-led legislature passed a law that eliminated tenure for K-12 teachers and tied their evaluations to student performance on standardized tests. This was a controversial move that was widely criticized by Democrats and educators alike, who argued that it would unfairly penalize teachers working with underperforming students.

Similarly, in 2017, Georgia's Republican governor signed a bill that created a new Opportunity School District (OSD) to take over chronically underperforming public schools. While the OSD was intended to help struggling students, it faced significant opposition from Democrats and educators who argued that it would undermine local control of schools and lead to greater inequality.

It is clear that Georgia's education policy and legislative actions have been shaped by a complex web of factors, including political polarization, demographic disparities, and conflicting visions for the future of the state's

schools. While progress has been made in some areas, particularly through programs like the HOPE Scholarship, there is still much work to be done to ensure that all students have access to high-quality education, regardless of their background or circumstances.

The significance of this situation is that it provides a broad understanding of the challenges facing Georgia's education system, and how political polarization can hinder efforts to address these challenges. The situation also highlights the importance of focusing on underrepresented populations, who are often most affected by educational inequalities. By providing this overview, the situation's description can be helpful in educating people about the complexities of education policy and legislative actions in Georgia, and how these issues can impact the lives of students and educators across the state.

Along with that, Education policy and legislative actions in Kentucky, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas have played a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape of these states. However, the progression of education for underrepresented populations has often been hindered by the rivalries between political parties, impeding efforts to achieve equitable and inclusive educational outcomes.

In Kentucky, the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 stands as a significant education policy initiative. It aimed to address disparities in educational opportunities by enhancing funding equity, raising academic standards, and promoting school accountability. While KERA was designed

to benefit all students, including underrepresented populations, political rivalries have impeded its effectiveness. Limited resources and inconsistent support have hampered the full implementation of KERA, thus hindering the progress in narrowing educational disparities.

Similarly, Alabama has witnessed its share of education policy and legislative actions aimed at improving educational outcomes. The Alabama Reading Initiative, implemented in the late 1990s, was a notable initiative to enhance literacy skills among students.

Unfortunately, political rivalries have impacted the sustainability and expansion of such programs. Competing priorities and disagreements between parties have limited the allocation of resources necessary for the successful implementation of initiatives targeting underrepresented populations.

In Tennessee, education policy efforts have sought to address the achievement gap and improve educational opportunities for marginalized students. The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) was introduced as a statewide standardized testing program with the aim of measuring student performance and informing educational decisions.

Nevertheless, rivalries between parties have influenced the focus on test scores rather than holistic educational development. Critics argue that excessive emphasis on standardized testing can hinder progress and neglect the specific needs of underrepresented populations.

In Arkansas, education policy and legislative actions have also aimed to promote educational equity.

The Arkansas Equity in Education Act of 2003 sought to reduce disparities in educational opportunities and resources among schools. However, rivalries between parties have created obstacles in the implementation of comprehensive reforms. Disagreements over funding priorities and competing visions for education have impeded the necessary collaboration and consensus-building required to address the needs of underrepresented populations effectively.

Rivalries between political parties have had a direct impact on the allocation of resources for education, hindering the progress of underrepresented populations. Disputes over school funding have been a recurring theme, with Republicans often advocating for fiscal restraint and Democrats pushing for increased investment in education. These disagreements can lead to limited resources and inconsistent support, disproportionately affecting underprivileged communities and hindering efforts to bridge educational gaps.

Standardized testing has been another contentious issue affected by party rivalries. While testing is intended to measure student performance and inform educational decisions, critics argue that it can perpetuate inequities and narrow the curriculum. However, finding common ground on alternative assessment methods has proven challenging due to the political divide.

Moreover, school choice policies have been subject to partisan disagreements. Supporters argue that charter schools and voucher programs provide increased educational options, especially for disadvantaged students. However, critics express concerns about the potential diversion of resources from traditional public schools, exacerbating educational inequalities. The resulting political rivalries can hinder efforts to find balanced approaches that effectively address the needs of underrepresented populations while ensuring the equitable distribution of resources.

The consequences of political rivalries extend beyond individual states and are observable throughout the Southern USA region. Many states face similar challenges, with political parties holding divergent views on how to address the educational needs of underrepresented populations. This partisan divide often hampers the enactment of comprehensive legislation and the implementation of impactful reforms necessary to improve educational outcomes for all students.

To overcome these challenges, it is crucial for policymakers to prioritize collaboration and bridge the political divide. By engaging in constructive dialogue, policymakers can develop comprehensive, evidence-based policies that address the specific needs of marginalized students, allocate resources equitably, and provide equal access to high-quality education. Efforts to depoliticize education policy discussions and promote bipartisan cooperation are essential to ensure sustained advancements in educational equity throughout Kentucky, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas.

Mississippi is also guilty of similar deeds.

Mississippi's education policy and legislative actions have played a critical role in shaping the state's educational landscape.

However, the progression of education for underrepresented populations has often been hindered by the rivalries between political parties, impeding efforts to achieve equitable and inclusive educational outcomes.

One of the significant education policy initiatives in Mississippi is the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP). Introduced in 1997, the MAEP aimed to ensure that all students in the state have access to an adequate and equitable education. It sought to address disparities in funding and resources among school districts, particularly those serving underrepresented populations. However, despite its initial promise, the full implementation of the MAEP has faced challenges due to political rivalries and competing budget priorities.

Rivalries between parties in Mississippi have often centered around debates over funding for education. Disagreements arise on the appropriate level of investment in public schools and the allocation of resources. While Democrats typically advocate for increased funding to support underrepresented populations and improve educational outcomes, Republicans often emphasize fiscal restraint and seek to limit government spending. This political divide has hindered the necessary collaboration and consensus-building required to prioritize the needs of marginalized communities in education policy decisions.

Moreover, the implementation of standardized testing in Mississippi has also faced challenges influenced by party rivalries. While testing can provide valuable insights into student performance and inform educational strategies, critics argue that excessive emphasis on standardized tests can narrow the curriculum and perpetuate inequities. However, finding common ground on alternative assessment methods has proven difficult due to the political divide and the lack of consensus among parties.

In addition, discussions around school choice policies, such as charter schools and vouchers, have deepened the partisan divide. Proponents argue that these options offer increased educational opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged students.

However, opponents express concerns about diverting resources from traditional public schools and exacerbating educational inequalities. The resulting political rivalries have impeded the development and implementation of comprehensive policies that effectively address the needs of underrepresented populations.

The consequences of political rivalries extend beyond education policy in Mississippi. They permeate discussions on issues such as teacher salaries, early childhood education, and support services for students with special needs. Disagreements over these matters often result in fragmented approaches and limited progress in advancing education for underrepresented populations.

To overcome the challenges posed by party rivalries, it is crucial for Mississippi policymakers to prioritize collaboration and bridge the political divide. By engaging in constructive dialogue and seeking common ground, policymakers can develop comprehensive, evidence-based policies that address the specific needs of marginalized students.

Additionally, fostering a bipartisan commitment to educational equity and investing in professional development for educators can lead to significant improvements in educational outcomes.

Overall, in regards to Mississippi, Mississippi's education policy and legislative actions have been shaped by rivalries between political parties, which have hindered the progression of education for underrepresented populations. Disputes over school funding, standardized testing, and school choice policies have contributed to the challenges faced in addressing educational disparities.

However, through bipartisan collaboration and a shared commitment to educational equity, Mississippi can overcome these obstacles and create a more inclusive and effective education system that benefits all students.

CHAPTER TEN

The Youth

America's youth holds the key to shaping the future of the nation and has a crucial role to play in dismantling political polarization that hinders progress. The next generation of political leaders has the power to unlearn political hatred and advance policies that foster unity and progress in America.

Firstly, the youth represents the embodiment of hope and change. They bring fresh perspectives, unburdened by the baggage of past conflicts, and are driven by a desire to create a better future. With their open-mindedness, they are more likely to embrace diverse opinions and engage in constructive dialogue. By actively listening to different viewpoints, they can bridge the gaps between ideological factions and promote a culture of understanding and respect.

Furthermore, the youth is inherently connected and technologically savvy...

In today's digital age, they have unprecedented access to information and can leverage social media platforms to disseminate ideas, engage with a wide audience, and challenge divisive narratives. By utilizing these tools responsibly, young leaders can foster an informed electorate, combat misinformation, and promote fact-based discussions that are essential for policy advancement.

Education and civic engagement are also crucial components of empowering the youth to counter political polarization. By promoting civic education in

schools, we can equip young individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand the complexities of political systems, appreciate diverse perspectives, and actively participate in the democratic process.

Encouraging youth participation in community organizations, grassroots movements, and political campaigns can further amplify their voices and provide avenues for collaboration across party lines.

In addition to these foundational elements, the next generation of political leaders must prioritize empathy and compassion. They should seek to understand the underlying concerns and aspirations of all Americans, regardless of their political affiliation. By emphasizing shared values and common goals, young leaders can transcend partisan divisions and build coalitions based on mutual respect and compromise. This approach fosters the development of policies that address the needs of a diverse population and ensures that no citizen is left behind.

Moreover, cultivating a culture of ethical leadership is essential to counter political hatred and restore public trust in the political sphere. Young politicians must lead by example, exhibiting integrity, transparency, and accountability in their actions. By doing so, they can inspire trust among the electorate and demonstrate that politics can be a noble and virtuous pursuit.

America's youth holds the potential to shape a future free from political polarization. By embracing their fresh perspectives, leveraging technological advancements, promoting education and civic engagement, fostering empathy and compassion, and embodying ethical leadership, the next generation of

political leaders can pave the way for a more united and prosperous America. It is through their collective efforts that we can overcome the challenges of political polarization and advance policies that benefit all citizens, ensuring a brighter future for the nation as a whole.

America's youth possesses immense potential not only to rebuild America's power but also to foster peace on a global scale. Their energy, idealism, and determination are catalysts for transformative change, and their influence extends far beyond national boundaries.

In considering the importance of America's youth, we can draw inspiration from Michelle Obama's final speech as the first lady of the United States, where she emphasized the significance of the younger generation in shaping the future and their responsibility to uphold democratic values.

America's youth represents a wellspring of innovation and creativity. They have grown up in a rapidly evolving world, immersed in technological advancements that have connected people from all corners of the globe. This digital interconnectedness empowers them to collaborate with young individuals from different countries and cultures, transcending geographic limitations to work towards shared goals. Through these cross-cultural interactions, they can foster mutual understanding, dismantle stereotypes, and promote peace-building initiatives, laying the foundation for a more harmonious world.

Furthermore, young leaders possess a unique ability to challenge the status quo and envision alternative paths to international relations. They often

approach global issues with fresh perspectives, unencumbered by the entrenched biases and rigid ideologies that hinder progress. By embracing inclusivity, empathy, and diplomacy, the youth can redefine the norms of political discourse and facilitate constructive dialogue that paves the way for peaceful resolutions to conflicts.

Michelle Obama's final speech as the first lady highlighted the pivotal role of young people in shaping a brighter future. She emphasized the importance of engaging with one another across differences, reminding us that progress requires active participation and collaboration. The speech resonated deeply with America's youth, inspiring them to embrace their agency and work towards creating a more just and equitable society. It served as a call to action, urging the younger generation to take responsibility for their role in building a better America and a more peaceful world.

Moreover, America's youth has a crucial role to play in fostering international cooperation and addressing pressing global challenges such as climate change, economic inequality, and the promotion of human rights. By advocating for sustainable practices, spearheading grassroots movements, and amplifying marginalized voices, they can drive global agendas towards greater inclusivity and sustainability. Their collective action can spur governments and international organizations to prioritize these critical issues, leading to more effective policies and global cooperation.

The next generation of America holds the potential to not only revitalize America's power but also contribute to global peace and stability. Through

their innovative thinking, cross-cultural collaborations, and commitment to democratic values, they can break down barriers, foster understanding, and promote peaceful dialogue. Michelle Obama's final speech as the first lady served as a reminder of the vital role that the youth plays in shaping the future. By harnessing their energy, passion, and determination, we can build a world that embraces diversity, prioritizes cooperation, and ensures a better future for all. The world looks to America's youth as agents of change, and their contributions have the power to transcend borders, inspire other nations, and establish a more peaceful and prosperous world for generations to come.

In examining the contrasting styles of politics between the younger and older generations, it becomes evident that the youth's approach has the potential to steer international politics towards a more progressive and helpful path in the coming decades.

The generational divide is characterized by differences in values, perspectives, and experiences, which ultimately shape their political ideologies and policy preferences.

One notable distinction between the younger and older generations is their response to societal change. The youth, having grown up in a rapidly evolving world, tend to embrace and adapt to social transformations more readily. They are more open-minded, inclusive, and accepting of diversity, which influences their policy priorities. This generation places a greater emphasis on issues such as climate change, social justice, human rights, and

equality, recognizing the interconnectedness of these challenges on a global scale.

In contrast, older generations often exhibit a more conservative approach, rooted in traditional values and established systems. They may be resistant to change, cautious about departing from established norms, and inclined towards preserving the status quo. While this perspective offers stability and continuity, it can sometimes hinder progress on critical issues that require bold and innovative solutions.

The younger generation's style of politics is characterized by a greater willingness to challenge the existing power structures and engage in grassroots movement: They have demonstrated an ability to harness technology and social media platforms to mobilize and organize collective action on a global scale.

This activism, driven by a desire for positive change, has the potential to shape international politics by placing pressure on governments and institutions to address pressing concerns.

Furthermore, the younger generation's emphasis on inclusivity, collaboration, and cooperation bodes well for future international relations. They tend to prioritize diplomacy, multilateralism, and global cooperation as means to address global challenges.

This stands in a complete contrast to older generations that may have experienced or witnessed more confrontational approaches to international

politics. The youth's inclination towards building bridges rather than erecting barriers can foster a more harmonious and collaborative global community.

Importantly, the youth's progressive policy agenda aligns with the urgent global issues that require immediate attention. Climate change, economic inequality, gender equality, and human rights are just a few examples of areas where young leaders advocate for significant change. Their willingness to think beyond short-term gains and focus on long-term sustainability positions them as drivers of progress in international politics.

The contrasting styles of politics between the younger and older generations point towards a shift in international politics that may lead to more progressive and helpful policies. The youth's open-mindedness, adaptability, activism, and emphasis on collaboration offer a fresh perspective on global challenges. Their inclination towards inclusive and sustainable approaches, coupled with their ability to mobilize collective action, has the potential to shape future international relations towards greater cooperation, justice, and progress. As the torch is passed to the younger generation, their ideals and aspirations have the capacity to redefine the trajectory of international politics, paving the way for a more progressive and impactful global order

For instance, the youth-led global movement for climate action, exemplified by initiatives such as Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future, showcases the younger generation's commitment to addressing the urgent issue of climate change. Their active involvement in demanding policy changes, advocating for renewable energy, and pressuring governments to take immediate action

demonstrates their determination to prioritize long-term environmental sustainability.

Along with that, The Black Lives Matter movement, sparked by the killing of George Floyd, witnessed widespread support and participation from the younger generation. Their demands for racial justice, police reform, and an end to systemic racism highlight their focus on social justice issues. Through organized protests, awareness campaigns, and engagement with policymakers, they are actively striving to build a more equitable society.

Furthermore, the youth's proficiency with technology and social media platforms has transformed the way political discourse takes place. Online activism, viral campaigns, and digital organizing have become powerful tools in their political arsenal.

The utilization of hashtags like #MeToo and #NeverAgain, which gained momentum through social media, demonstrates their ability to amplify voices, mobilize communities, and drive significant social and political change.

Moreover, the younger generation's inclination towards international cooperation is evident in their support for organizations like the United Nations and the European Union. Many young leaders advocate for diplomacy, dialogue, and partnerships to address global issues. Examples include the involvement of young activists in international conferences, such as the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP), where they raise awareness and push for ambitious climate action at a global level.

Lastly younger generations are more attuned to the importance of diverse representation in political leadership. They emphasize the need for diverse voices, backgrounds, and experiences to shape policy decisions that accurately reflect the interests and concerns of all citizens. The election of a more diverse group of young leaders, such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ilhan Omar, to the U.S. Congress signals a shift towards a more inclusive and representative political landscape.

These examples highlight how the youth's progressive and helpful policy agenda manifests in real-world actions and movements. Through their activism, advocacy, and utilization of technology, the younger generation is actively pushing for change on critical global issues, challenging established norms, and advocating for a more inclusive and sustainable future. Their engagement and determination to address pressing challenges have the potential to shape the trajectory of international politics in the coming decades.

The example that stands out the most is the BLM movement...

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that gained significant momentum in 2020 served as a powerful catalyst for social justice and political change. BLM became a global movement advocating for racial justice, police reform, and an end to systemic racism. The movement's impact on the younger generations and its potential positive influence on the future of politics can be analyzed in several ways:

The BLM movement saw active participation from a diverse range of young individuals who took to the streets, engaged in peaceful protests, and raised their voices against racial injustice. This mobilization demonstrated the power of young people in driving social change and challenging the status quo. It highlighted their passion, determination, and commitment to addressing systemic issues, igniting a fire within the younger generations to demand more accountability from political leaders.

Additionally BLM focused on amplifying the voices of marginalized communities, especially those of Black individuals who have long been victims of racial discrimination.

The movement shed light on the deep-rooted systemic injustices prevalent in society by centering their own experiences and demanding justice. The emphasis on intersectionality within the movement further underscored the need to address interconnected forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and economic inequality.

The movement also sparked a significant shift in the national conversation surrounding racial justice and police brutality. It prompted discussions and debates at various levels of society, forcing political leaders, institutions, and corporations to confront systemic racism and take a stance on critical issues.

This shift in narrative ultimately has the potential to shape future policy discussions and reforms, with an emphasis on addressing racial disparities, promoting police accountability, and pursuing equitable justice.

The BLM movement also inspired many young individuals to become more politically engaged and pursue political leadership roles. It encouraged them to run for office, engage in grassroots organizing, and challenge existing power structures. This increased representation of young, diverse voices in political spaces can lead to more inclusive policy-making processes and decisions that prioritize social justice, equality, and anti-racist agendas.

The movement's influence extends beyond immediate policy changes. It has the potential to shape the future of politics by challenging societal norms and expectations, promoting empathy, and cultivating a culture of anti-racism and social justice. The movement has brought conversations around race, privilege, and inequality to the forefront of public consciousness, leading to a greater recognition of the need for structural reforms and creating an environment that is more receptive to progressive policies.

The Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 not only served as a powerful force for social justice but also ignited a fire within the younger generations. It mobilized young individuals, amplified marginalized voices, shifted the policy discourse, promoted political engagement, and has the potential to impact the future of politics in a positive way.

Through challenging systemic racism and advocating for equality, BLM has contributed to a broader movement towards a more inclusive and just society. Its legacy may shape political agendas, drive policy reforms, and foster a new generation of leaders committed to addressing social issues and advancing racial justice.

America's youth holds immense potential to shape the future of the nation and the world. The next generation of political leaders, driven by their fresh perspectives, technological savvy, and commitment to inclusivity, have the power to dismantle political polarization and advance policies that foster unity and progress.

By actively engaging in constructive dialogue, leveraging technology responsibly, promoting education and civic engagement, cultivating empathy and compassion, and embodying ethical leadership, young leaders can pave the way for a more united and prosperous America.

The youth's approach to politics, characterized by their willingness to challenge existing power structures, embrace grassroots movements, and prioritize issues such as climate change, social justice, and human rights, aligns with the urgent global challenges we face. Their inclusive and collaborative mindset has the potential to shape international relations towards greater cooperation, justice, and progress.

The youth's activism and commitment to driving change have been evident in movements like the Black Lives Matter movement, which not only demanded racial justice but also inspired political engagement and a broader conversation on systemic racism.

Through their determination, passion, and utilization of technology, young individuals have the ability to challenge established norms, advocate for a more inclusive and sustainable future, and drive significant social and political change. Their influence extends beyond national boundaries, as they

connect with young individuals from different countries and cultures to foster mutual understanding and promote peace-building initiatives.

The legacy of the Black Lives Matter movement and other youth-led movements serves as a powerful reminder of the potential positive impact of the younger generations on the future of politics.

Through continuing to challenge systemic injustices, center marginalized voices, shift policy discussions, and inspire political engagement, they can shape policy agendas, drive reforms, and create a more inclusive and just society.

As the torch is passed to the next generation, it is crucial for society to support and empower young leaders, provide platforms for their voices to be heard, and ensure that their values and aspirations are reflected in policy-making processes.

By recognizing and nurturing the potential of America's youth, we can collectively build a brighter future that embraces diversity, prioritizes cooperation, and ensures a more peaceful and prosperous world for generations to come.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Long Game

Polarization, an increasingly prevalent phenomenon in contemporary politics, has far-reaching consequences for democracy, governance, and societal cohesion. This chapter explores the long-term impact of polarization and its implications for future generations. Additionally, it examines strategies to foster inclusivity and collaboration in the policymaking process, which are essential for mitigating the detrimental effects of polarization.

I. Polarization's Erosion of Democracy

Polarization undermines the core tenets of democracy, leading to the erosion of democratic institutions and norms. In the United States, for example, increasing polarization has resulted in the erosion of trust in democratic processes and the rise of partisan gridlock. As parties become increasingly polarized, compromise and collaboration are viewed as signs of weakness rather than essential components of democratic governance.

II. Governance Challenges in a Polarized Environment

Polarization poses significant challenges to effective governance, impeding the implementation of policies and responsiveness to societal needs. When ideological battles overshadow evidence-based policymaking, policy paralysis ensues, marginalizing groups whose voices are stifled by dominant factions. The United Kingdom's protracted and acrimonious Brexit process exemplifies the governance challenges posed by polarization, leaving many

feeling excluded from decision-making and exacerbating divisions within society.

III. Societal Cohesion Under Strain

Polarization has detrimental effects on societal cohesion, intensifying social divisions and eroding trust. Continuous exposure to polarized rhetoric reinforces in-group biases and fosters an "us vs. them" mentality. This exacerbates social tensions, breeds hostility, and undermines cooperation among different social, economic, and cultural groups. The rise of populist movements in Europe and beyond serves as a clear manifestation of polarization's strain on societal cohesion.

IV. Implications for Future Generations

Polarization has concerning long-term implications for future generations.

Growing up in an environment characterized by division and animosity shapes the attitudes and behaviors of young individuals. Interactions influenced by polarization risk perpetuating intergenerational conflict and stifling prospects for cooperative problem-solving. The disillusionment of young people with democratic processes can lead to disengagement and a decline in civic participation, further undermining the functioning of democracy.

V. Fostering an Inclusive and Collaborative Policymaking Process

To address the negative consequences of polarization, it is crucial to promote inclusivity and collaboration in the policymaking process. This requires a multifaceted approach that combines various strategies:

1. Encouraging Deliberative Democracy: Deliberative democratic practices, such as citizens' assemblies and participatory budgeting, offer avenues for meaningful dialogue, facilitating consensus-building and informed decision-making. For instance, the Irish Citizens' Assembly on abortion provided a platform for citizens to deliberate and shape policy recommendations, fostering inclusivity and trust.
2. Strengthening Civic Education: Investing in comprehensive civic education equips future generations with critical thinking skills, media literacy, and empathy necessary for constructive engagement and deliberation. Countries like Finland and the Netherlands have prioritized civic education, resulting in higher levels of political engagement and a greater ability to navigate complex policy issues.
3. Promoting Electoral Reforms: Implementing electoral reforms can mitigate the polarizing effects of the winner-takes-all system, promoting greater representation and encouraging more moderate voices. Ranked-choice voting, as seen in Australia and Ireland, allows voters to express nuanced preferences, leading to a more diverse and inclusive political landscape.

4. Facilitating Cross-Partisan Dialogue: Creating spaces for cross-partisan dialogue, both online and offline, is vital in bridging ideological divides and challenging echo chambers. Initiatives like the Bridge Alliance in the United States bring together diverse groups to foster dialogue, empathy, and collaboration, promoting a more inclusive and constructive political discourse.

VI. International Experiences and Lessons

International experiences offer valuable insights into addressing polarization and fostering inclusive governance:

1. Canada's Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform successfully engaged citizens in designing an alternative voting system, demonstrating the potential for inclusive decision-making processes.
2. Germany's Consensual Democracy model emphasizes coalition-building and consensus-seeking, enabling a multiparty system to address diverse societal needs effectively.

Polarization poses a significant threat to democracy, governance, and societal cohesion, with long-term implications for future generations. By adopting strategies that promote inclusivity, collaboration, and deliberation, societies can work towards mitigating polarization's detrimental effects. Nurturing an inclusive and collaborative policymaking process is essential to ensure a

healthier and more resilient democracy, safeguarding the well-being and interests of present and future generations.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Cold War Three

The polarization between China and the United States has been a prevailing global issue, characterized by an increasing divide in ideologies, economic systems, and geopolitical interests. While the Sino-US rivalry encompasses numerous implications, one significant aspect that often goes unnoticed is its adverse impact on the Earth. This chapter aims to argue that the polarization between China and the US is inevitably harming the planet, as it hinders collective global action on crucial environmental challenges, perpetuates unsustainable practices, and undermines collaborative efforts towards a sustainable future.

The lack of cooperation and shared commitment between China and the US amplifies the difficulties in tackling pressing environmental issues. The Earth faces multifaceted challenges such as climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, all of which demand unified global efforts. However, the polarization between these two major powers creates a divide that impedes meaningful collaboration, often leading to disjointed policies and inconsistent implementation of environmental agreements. The inability to align their environmental goals limits the effectiveness of global institutions and hampers progress towards sustainable development.

China and the US, as two of the largest economies and carbon emitters, play a pivotal role in determining the trajectory of global environmental sustainability. However, their polarization exacerbates the persistence of unsustainable practices. Each country is compelled to prioritize its own economic growth and national interests over environmental concerns, resulting in a race to exploit natural resources and disregard the consequences of such actions. This rivalry-driven pursuit of dominance further intensifies resource depletion, pollution, and habitat destruction, exacerbating global environmental degradation.

The polarization between China and the US undermines collaborative efforts aimed at achieving a sustainable future. International agreements such as the Paris Agreement, which require collective action and shared responsibility, are weakened when these two influential nations remain divided. The absence of cooperation between them reduces the likelihood of reaching consensus on critical issues, obstructs the sharing of knowledge, technological advancements, and financial resources, and undermines the trust necessary for effective global governance. Consequently, the lack of collaboration exacerbates the challenges posed by climate change and other environmental crises, impeding progress towards a sustainable future for all.

The polarization between China and the United States has far-reaching consequences that extend beyond their bilateral relationship. The Earth is bearing the brunt of this division, as the lack of collaboration and shared commitment hinders collective global action on environmental challenges. Furthermore, the perpetuation of unsustainable practices driven by this

polarization exacerbates environmental degradation on a global scale. To mitigate the harm caused by this polarization, it is imperative for both countries to prioritize cooperation, bridge their differences, and forge a common path towards environmental sustainability. Only through concerted efforts and collaboration can we ensure a healthier and more sustainable future for the planet and its inhabitants.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Supranational Organizations

In an increasingly polarized world, where divisions and conflicts threaten progress and hinder cooperation, international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN) play a crucial role in promoting unity, cooperation, and collective action. With their commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, and multilateralism, these organizations have the potential to bridge divides, foster understanding, and address global challenges. This will explore the importance of NATO and the UN in combating polarization and helping the world move forward together rather than divided.

NATO, an intergovernmental military alliance, was founded in 1949 with the primary objective of promoting collective security among its member states. Over the years, its role has expanded to include conflict prevention, crisis management, and cooperative security. NATO serves as a powerful mechanism for countering polarization by bringing together nations with diverse geopolitical interests under a shared framework of collaboration and cooperation.

Firstly, NATO's commitment to collective defense acts as a deterrent to aggression and helps to maintain stability in the face of global challenges. By promoting a sense of shared security among member states, NATO reduces the likelihood of conflicts and the escalation of tensions. This collaborative approach not only safeguards the interests of member countries but also

fosters an environment of trust and understanding, discouraging the growth of polarizing narratives that fuel hostility.

Secondly, NATO serves as a platform for dialogue and diplomacy, enabling member states to address differences and find common ground. Regular consultations, joint exercises, and shared intelligence among member countries help build relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. Through dialogue and cooperation, NATO encourages nations to overcome their differences, strengthen partnerships, and work towards common objectives, mitigating polarization and fostering a spirit of unity.

Furthermore, NATO's engagement with partner countries and organizations promotes stability beyond its member states. Through programs such as the Partnership for Peace and the Mediterranean Dialogue, NATO extends cooperation, dialogue, and capacity-building efforts to countries outside the alliance. By engaging with diverse nations and regions, NATO promotes inclusivity, bridges divides, and encourages collaboration on shared security challenges. This outreach contributes to the broader mission of countering polarization by building networks of trust and cooperation that extend beyond the traditional boundaries of alliances.

The United Nations, established in 1945, serves as a global forum for dialogue, cooperation, and the pursuit of peace, security, development, and human rights. As an organization with universal membership, the UN plays a pivotal role in combating polarization by promoting multilateralism and facilitating international collaboration.

One of the key strengths of the UN lies in its ability to bring together diverse nations and cultures on an equal footing. Through platforms such as the General Assembly and specialized agencies, the UN provides a space for nations to voice their concerns, address grievances, and seek solutions to global challenges. By ensuring the participation of all member states, regardless of their size or influence, the UN fosters inclusivity and reduces the potential for polarization based on power dynamics or geopolitical divides.

Moreover, the UN plays a crucial role in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts, which are essential in mitigating polarization and promoting stability. The Security Council, with its mandate to maintain international peace and security, seeks diplomatic solutions and authorizes peacekeeping missions in areas of conflict. These efforts contribute to the reduction of polarization by facilitating dialogue, promoting reconciliation, and addressing the underlying causes of division and strife.

In addition to conflict resolution, the UN actively addresses socio-economic disparities and human rights issues. Through programs and agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN promotes inclusive development, gender equality, access to education, and protection of human rights. By addressing the root causes of polarization, such as inequality and discrimination, the UN works towards creating a more equitable world that values diversity and fosters unity.

Furthermore, the UN serves as a platform for global cooperation on pressing challenges such as climate change, public health crises, and humanitarian emergencies. The Paris Agreement on climate change, for instance, demonstrates the importance of multilateralism in tackling a shared global threat. By bringing together nations to negotiate and implement solutions, the UN encourages collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and the pooling of resources. Such cooperative efforts are crucial in countering polarization, as they emphasize the shared responsibility of all nations in addressing common challenges.

In a world increasingly marked by polarization, NATO and the United Nations play vital roles in fostering unity, countering division, and promoting collective action. Through their commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, multilateralism, and collaboration, these organizations provide platforms for nations to address differences, build trust, and work towards common objectives. By promoting shared security, conflict resolution, inclusivity, and global cooperation, NATO and the UN contribute to the reduction of polarization and the advancement of a more united and prosperous world. In an era where global challenges require collective solutions, the importance of these organizations cannot be overstated, as they serve as beacons of hope, guiding humanity towards a future where progress is achieved through unity rather than division.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Unity in a Polarized World

Throughout this book, we have explored the multifaceted nature of polarization and its detrimental impact on the progression of our world. We have witnessed how societies, communities, and even individuals have become entrenched in their respective ideological camps, fostering division, and hindering meaningful progress.

It is evident that polarization is not merely a difference of opinions but a growing chasm that threatens the very fabric of our societies. As we conclude this exploration, it is imperative to reflect upon the urgency of unity as a means to counter the negativity of polarization and pave the way for a more harmonious and prosperous future.

Polarization, in its essence, is the result of a complex interplay of factors such as politics, media, socio-economic disparities, and the erosion of trust in institutions. It perpetuates a vicious cycle where individuals are pushed further apart, leading to echo chambers and the entrenchment of extreme viewpoints.

The consequences of this polarization are far-reaching, impacting governance, public discourse, and ultimately our ability to address the pressing challenges that face us.

One of the most profound effects of polarization is the erosion of empathy and understanding. When we view the world through the lens of "us versus

them," we diminish our capacity to recognize our shared humanity. The "other" becomes a faceless enemy rather than a potential collaborator. In such an environment, it becomes increasingly difficult to find common ground and engage in constructive dialogue. Progress requires collaboration, compromise, and collective action, all of which are hindered by the deep divides created by polarization.

Moreover, polarization undermines the foundations of democracy and governance. It fuels partisanship, where political opponents are seen as enemies rather than individuals with differing visions for society. This breeds gridlock, as the focus shifts from finding effective solutions to scoring political points and maintaining power. The result is an inability to tackle critical issues such as climate change, inequality, and global conflicts, leaving the world in a state of inertia.

In addition to impeding progress, polarization also stifles innovation and creativity. When we limit ourselves to rigid ideological frameworks, we close our minds to new perspectives, fresh ideas, and alternative solutions. Progression requires intellectual curiosity, a willingness to challenge preconceived notions, and the courage to embrace change. By embracing polarization, we deny ourselves the opportunity to harness the diversity of thought that is essential for societal advancement.

However, amidst the dark clouds of polarization, there is hope. We have seen throughout history that societies have overcome deep divisions and achieved remarkable progress. It is not an insurmountable challenge, but it requires

collective effort, empathy, and a commitment to bridge the gaps that divide us.

To counter the negativity of polarization, we must strive to rebuild trust in our institutions. Transparency, accountability, and integrity should be the cornerstones of our governance systems. We must demand a higher standard from our leaders and reject the politics of division and misinformation. Similarly, we must hold ourselves accountable as citizens, engaging in constructive dialogue, and seeking out reliable sources of information to counter the echo chambers that reinforce polarization.

Education also plays a crucial role in combating polarization. By fostering critical thinking skills, promoting media literacy, and encouraging open-mindedness, we can equip future generations with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of a polarized world.

It is through education that we can cultivate empathy, respect for diversity, and a sense of shared responsibility, laying the foundation for a more inclusive and united society.

Furthermore, it is essential to prioritize open and respectful dialogue. We must create spaces where individuals from diverse backgrounds can come together to exchange ideas, challenge assumptions, and find common ground. This requires active listening, empathy, and a genuine willingness to understand perspectives that differ from our own.

Only by engaging in meaningful conversations can we bridge the divides and find solutions that benefit the collective.

Lastly, we must celebrate the power of collaboration.

Progress is not achieved in isolation but through the collective effort of individuals and communities. By fostering partnerships and coalitions that cut across ideological lines, we can harness the diversity of thought, skills, and resources necessary to tackle complex challenges.

Collaboration breeds innovation, resilience, and the collective wisdom required to overcome the barriers of polarization.

In conclusion, the negativity of polarization poses a significant threat to the progression of our world. However, we are not powerless in the face of this challenge. By embracing unity, empathy, and a commitment to constructive dialogue, we can dismantle the barriers that divide us. The path to progress lies in our ability to rise above our differences and work together toward a more inclusive, equitable, and harmonious future. Let us embark on this journey with hope, determination, and an unwavering belief in the power of unity to shape a better world for generations to come.