

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, **organized** citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead

<https://leandroherrero.com/the-missing-word-in-the-famous-margaret-mead-quote/>

DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

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I TO ACCESS THE THREE WEEKLY CALLS via the Internet

A BBS RADIO Go To www.bbsradio.com; click on “64K Listen”

* **Thursday: A Night at the Round Table** Hosts: Panel Members
6 pm Pacific / 9 pm Eastern

* **Friday: Friday Night Hard News** Hosts: Tara & Rama
6 pm Pacific / 9 pm Eastern

One Hour conference Call: 1-641-741-1704 Access Code: 353 863#

* **Saturday: History of our Galactic World & NESARA** Hosts: Tara & Rama
1:30 pm Pacific / 4:30 pm Eastern

One Hour conference Call: 1-720 716 7301 – Access Code: 353 863#

Call to interact / ask questions: Canada & US: STATION 2 1- 888-429-5471
Direct 1- 323-744-4841

C Skype: BBSradio2

D Archives for the 3 Programs listed above:

- Go to *BBSRadio.com*; in first column, LHS, **FIND TALK SHOW**
- Enter *Friday Hard News*, press the GO button. You’ll be taken directly to **Hard News on Friday**; click on “**Archives**” which takes you to the listing of all program archives, the latest one being at the top.
- You can listen directly or download the program to your own computer.
To listen directly, click on the arrow on the black bar.
To download, go to **Episode MP3 link**. Then **right click** on the name '**hardnewsonfriday including the date**' and the drop down menu appears. Click on '**save link as**'

E Archives, written and audio, also exist on the rainbowroundtable website:

www.rainbowroundtable.net - look under the “Archives” tab for **written notes which include links to the entire podcast, as well as links to the audio recordings** of the conference calls

II TO ACCESS OTHER CALLS SUPPORTED BY 2013 Rainbow Roundtable

A Sunday, Mondays: 9 – 10:30 EST Cheryl Croci's Activation Calls
By telephone only: 1-425-436-6260; PIN 9467 441#

B Tuesdays, 2nd & 4th of each month: 9:00 – 10:30 pm EST *Ashtar on the Road; Ashtar Legacy Calls*
Host is Fran

<http://www.ashtarontheroad.com/ashtarconferences.html>

To access **by Phone:** • 1 – 559 – 726 – 1300; PIN 972400#
• Call is free [except for long distance charges]

via HD Conferencing: 712-770-4160 **PIN #** 980339 [always the same]
<https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/>

via Skype **Click on the VOIP button** and enter what they ask for:
<https://www.freeconferencecallhd.com/hd-conferencing/>

C Wednesdays: 7:00 – 9:00 EST *The Friends of The Aboriginal Moabite Nation Call*
By telephone only: 1-712-432-0900 PIN 666238#
Replay# [good for 1 wk] 1-712-432-0990 PIN 66238#

D Every 2nd Wednesday 5:45 PM Pacific / 8:45 PM Eastern *The Abundance Call - Caroline Oceana Ryan*
60-minute conference call with the Collective,
a group of Angelic and Galactic beings, channeled by

To be notified: email AscensionTimes@gmail.com with the message "YES to Abundance!"

III OPENING MEDITATION; HOUSEKEEPING; ACCESS TO PODCAST; MAYAN CALENDAR

A. Opening Meditation: Rainbird / Cimi Drum; Prayer to the 7 Galactic Directions

B. Mayan Calendar: Rainbird

- **Go to <https://www.spacestationplaza.com>** – to locate specific days & lots more information: on the home page, you can find out what your Mayan signature is; while there, look and see where the wave began: that is the birth wave
- **to learn about the Mayan Calendar, Go to <https://www.spacestationplaza.com>** which will link you further to www.lawoftime.org website for further information.

Next Week's Mayan Record of Days / Calendar in the year of the Magnetic Wizard

19th Fri – 4 MEN – Blue Self-existing Eagle - visionary aspect. About our commitment to service and seeing the big picture; moving consciousness to Source. Independence and belief in self; let go of any illusion of separateness. Words for eagle: Create, Mind, Vision

20th Sat - 5 CIB Yellow Warrior -only portal day of the week - multidimensional warrior aspect; trust in journey; embrace gift of connection to Divine; let go of any restrictions. Spring Equinox: Tuesday was the day when the hours of dark and light were equal – however the 20th **is first day of spring; for Mithra culture – first day of new year** – Iranians will celebrate opening of KF TV station!~ ! !~

21st Sun – 6 CABAN – Red Rhythmic Earth – healing aspect. We are keepers of the earth. Our gift of intuition gets better all the time!

22nd Mon – 7 ETZNAB – White Resident Mirror – warrior aspect. Working on groundedness and wise use of honesty, self-understanding. Let go of fear, any illusion of separateness.

7 is the top of the mountain . . .

23rd Tues – 8 CAUAC – Blue Galactic Storm – visionary aspect – working on creating transformation for other; lighting clear thought. Let go of addiction to crisis, despair, illusion of separateness

24th Wed – 9 AHAU – Yellow Solar Sun – a double sun! Healing aspect. Rising to Christ consciousness, striving to wholeness; transmitting energy to others. Putting our intentions into form – unconditional love; being the God self

25th Thur – 10 IMIX – Red Planetary Dragon – artist – self-dependence; clarity of mind; trusting the universe – embrace the creation, beginners mind.

26th Fri – 11 IK - White Spectral Wind – visionary. Letting go of what no longer serves us. Work with co-creation of heaven on earth; remembering unity of spirit; let go of judgment of others

www.Spacestationplaza.co Click on the tzolkein – it's on page 2 of the link.
For even more information, SEE ALSO [the Law of Time.org](http://theLawofTime.org)

This is not a 3rd dimensional calendar -

C. Housekeeping: Rainbird

- Asking to **have more people contribute**, as some of the regular, long-term donors are stressed and stretched: **any and all small amounts are helpful and very welcome.**

BBS:

- Listener-supported radio programs; program archives can be accessed
- The radio program costs \$300 per week. **Need \$300 for this week.**
Thank you, thank you, thank you - need to catch up again . . .

- Go to BBSradio.com/Station2; find the listing for **Hard News Call & Paypal** button
- BBS appreciates getting checks via the mail: no Paypal fees!

- The mailing address for those who do not like paying electronically:
B B S RADIO [Please put **"Attention Don"** on the envelope]
1500 Pleasant Hill RD [Note inside that it's for T & R calls
Lafayette, CA 94549 [& the Thursday call, as well]

- **BBS archives can be accessed by everyone;** there are archives on www.rainbowroundtable.net All are free to access.

T & R: Their full-time, life-time commitment is to be tuned in to what is really going on behind the artificial world we see around us. They don't ask for anything but they do require food, a home, gas for the car, and access to BBS Radio in order to compile and distribute this information to the world.

- Donations via Paypal button on the **homepage of www.rainbowroundtable.net**

FOOD MONEY: VIA PAYPAL OR See the PAGE ON Rainbowroundtable
a 2nd bobcat kitten has shown up – they all come to eat!
Rama has a pride of Paschats (8) including the rabbit ! ! !

BASICS: food: for paschats, car and T & R - Usual stuff + \$ for bills
\$ FOR BASICS + \$400 for bills

Thanks for helping them catch up
THANKS FOR HELP TO GET WINDOWS 10 FOR THE COMPUTER
\$180 to fix the REAR BRAKES – THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED!

\$180 for Rama to go to see the doctor about his arm

- **Please notify T & R if you're sending something:** koran9999@comcast.net
EVERY \$5 HELPS - ALL GRATEFULLY RECEIVED
PLEASE MAKE AN ATTEMPT TO DONATE THIS MONTH
- Rama's mailing address for cheques, money orders: Ram D Berkowitz
PO Box 280
Santa Cruz, NM 87567
- **Remember you can book a session with Mother, as well!**
- **Donations to the Fresh Produce Fund for Tara & Rama -**
now on the www.rainbowroundtable.net
- **** [www.rainbowroundtable.net /page/donate](http://www.rainbowroundtable.net/page/donate) ****
- Your donation supports an account set up for Tara & Rama with
Beneficial Farms Community Supported Agriculture in Santa Fe, NM
- They continue to appreciate each & every donation received for food.
- Please continue to go to www.rainbowroundtable.net and link to their Paypal
account: click on the word CHANGE; choose **family and friends option so Paypal**
takes off no fees.

FREEMART: Rama and Tara are being helped by this account: they get their supplements
there. **The returns also help www.rainbowroundtable.net**

<https://www.shopfreemart.com/tarram> a/c # 7000

- all the products have much to offer, so take a look!
- Freemart is a private shoppers club; it's **FREE TO JOIN.**

Also, check out the heading called **READ MORE** for the good information it has

D: INFORMATION SOURCES RELATIVE TO M.T. KESHE AND KESHE FOUNDATION

Contact Rainbird with questions: lightenergync@gmail.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLaVutWXju0> (CHECK THIS OUT)

**** Go to Knowledge Workers workshop #344 on You Tube:** see Keshe's personal tour of
his exhibition in Austria - **The first expo in Europe since the pandemic -**

One Cup One Life – Production and Application; Prevention and Reversal of the Corona Virus

https://en.kfwiki.org/wiki/One_Cup_One_Life_-_Production_and_Application_-_Prevention_and_Reversal_of_the_Corona_Virus

KF Wiki

<https://www.kfwiki.org>

The free Plasma Cyclopdia of the Keshe Foundation

Keshe Foundation Store

<https://store.keshefoundation.org/store/?alias=store>

Keshe Corona site

www.plasmainnature.com/health/coronavirus-1-cup-1-life-series-protocols-and-other-info/

E. ACCESS TO PODCAST:

<https://bbsradio.com/podcast/hard-news-friday-march-19-2021>

Rama, Tara: [R, T]

Greetings – and thanks to all – They are grateful to be here and be alive at this moment!

R: gets to explain things like Inanna and Astarte, original relationship to current word Easter – which was created by the false church – Astarte goddess: about the cycles of fertility and bringing in the rising energies of the sun . . .

T: text from LM Nada

- the starships in Buhtan – 25,000 – have been deployed across the planet – the time is now **JUST LOOK UP!**
- She is speaking as the head of the Solar Tribunal on Saturn and the special lawyer at the ICC – she is the bridge between the galactic command and those of us on earth
 - the rule is no intervention in the rol

• *just had a few characters – Mr Boris ' the animal' in England: said would upgrade nuclear arsenal by 40% - \$250 M dollars*

R: There is not a threat on planet earth that requires this kind of stuff – and no nukes will prevent what is coming in!

T: we call in the Higher Selves of us too

R: the true stories of these being need to be told who were not evil to start with – and the lines got somewhat blurry along the way! ! !

- **It's about non-intervention in a civilization's development and no interbreeding between species**

T: Biden countered Boris the Animal: said he upgrade US nuclear arsenal by using tax dollars of citizens and do the same thing!

- Lady Master Nada: represents the goddess who says; **ONLY LOVE!**
 - Killing people has nothing to do with love! ! !
- this war machine being ordered around by the Vatican, who answers to the fallen angels – **all is cancelled!** There will be no slavery
- the country of the US is still in the making as the corporate world in England did not allow the formation of a true democracy back in 1776 – the documents were sidelined by the corporations who created the documents they wanted
- **PSYCHIC Holocaust:** levels of such holocaust as existed in Egypt has been surpassed by the current situation on the planet
 - There is only ONE of us here
- words of Kamala Harris today re the shooting of the 8 people in Atlanta, GA
She invokes the Law of One from her position of power!

• **Text from Lady Master Nada**

- ships from Buhtan deployed across the planet
- the time is now – look up
- spring is coming in like a lion – ref to big story
- stay in radiant energy of the Sun

- **Xi and Biden** had a heated discussion today the real story is the old empire of the USA wants to continue to appear to be top dog at any cost
 - China has become top dragon
 - put all this in the Circle of Support
 - as Rev R Warnock has taken the Senate seat: now time for NESARA and

• Today's *Democracy Now* show was a **ball** out of the park! ! !

- Warnock has definitely stepped into M L King's shoes - very powerful
- K Ann Harder – has been around for a long time

• Biden tripped 3 x today and fell, trying to get into Air Force One -

- Kamala not too far after the election, was read into the ACIO: given a special connection to ACIO and connections to Ashtar Command – basically leading the way

T: this bunch is already at the door – no need to pay them any attention!

CONFERENCE CALL

• • <https://fccdl.in/9RZfglrZvN>

Pa & T: discussion of stubbornness – the Taurus energy – the bull with the Rose in its mouth is stubbornness for the Way of the Rose

- Mother Gaia also has a stubborn streak that will not give up – gardens are re-juvenating
- Pa has been doing work on repairing aura – with Cheryl
- while the astrology says we will have to wait another year, **Lady Master Nada today said NO, NO AND NO!**

T: It's up to humanity to do its part

- Talks about the Zero card in Tarot
- Talking about shape-shifting and how we learn it

• The Zetas wandered around in their space ships as they destroyed their own planet – then they found earth – whole story goes back to the Orion War.

• Before the Native Americans were here, **North America was Lemuria and everyone was dark.**

RGM: the great equalizer for the narcissists on this planet is Mother's BBQ -

ANNOUNCEMENT RE KESHE FOUNDATION TV

Keshe Foundation TV is about to go live!

The new Keshe Foundation TV channel starts broadcasting internationally on Saturday March 20th, 2021 at 10:00 AM CET time. (2 am Pacific) There will also be a KFTV live broadcast on Sunday March 21st, 2021 starting at 9 AM CET time. (1 am Pacific)

Folks are invited to register for KFTV by first by clicking the Signup/Login button at keshefoundation.tv then click on the "Create Account" tab. Fill in your email, username and password to register for free, and for easy login next time!

Main KF TV channel: <http://keshefoundation.tv>
Live broadcast link: <http://keshefoundation.tv/live>

T: Don told T 2 weeks ago that they were going to monetize the whole system
• last night, he told her they have put up the monetizing stuff for BBS

Pa: the Zeta Reticuli blew up their own planet and they wanted ours – and the satonians
• Are there Zeta Reticuli here?
• Who are their overlords?

R: the Zetas – they are a collective; they work with ones and zeros and communicate with them in a telepathic language as well as the Solex Mal languages
• the reptilians are their overlords – from the fortunate fall when $\frac{1}{3}$ of angels from the apex planet
• somehow there was a mutual cooperation between the Dracos Reptilians and the Zetas – has to do with the book **El An Ra** by solara who is now on the planet Parto
• Shield and Sherula's family – Dr Norma Melovich came to the Church of Religious Science and Kuthumi came through her. The story of El An Ra came up in the large story as the story of all of us – she got caught in an inter-dimensional trap same as us and the trip has been released for us
• The epitome of the polarity game was Jan 6 – our way or the highway!

T: yes, Dr Norma wrote the book on the Andromedans

Aria: the reptilians are a whole class of

Question: why do we have reptilian brains if they [reptilians] are to be feared?

Pa: thought it was only one part of our brain that is called reptilian
the reptilian brain at the base of the skull

T: Reptilian brain is there for survival and for states of emergency

- as we move up the scale to the star chakra which connects the 7 basic chakra
- etheric-physical . . .
- in the old paradigm – every time Mother talks and Rama talks to Faction 3 White Knights he is told the old paradigm is gone
- in late fall of last year: the minions in the Vatican were broke
- a new heaven and a new earth are here – and earth is the 33rd planet to ascend
 - getting to the 32nd level of masonry, get asked if want to go to the 33rd – saying no can get you killed
- Dec 21, 2012 saying it was the end of the Mayan Calendar – Mother said the timing was off by 2 years: ie, Dec 21, 2012 was really Dec 21, 2010
- at midnight the morning of the 18th we entered
 - this Aug 18th at midnight, we enter the year 2023 – 2010 was when Harmonic Convergence happened
 - we are to go higher – and Cheryl's calls are a requirement – she is Quan Yin in physical

B B S RADIO

AUDIO: **THE BIGGER PICTURE** by Patricia Cota-Robles www.eraofpeace.org

VLOG 210 ARE YOU A LIGHTWORKER AND DO YOU HAVE A MISSION?

<https://youtu.be/xVILhDWids0>



AUDIO: **[The Ascended Masters Broadcasts](#)**

Master Kuthumi – February 26th 2021: [Listen/download](#)

<https://instantteleseminar.com/Events/125415894>

MOTHER/ALCYONE [M/A]

Greetings in the Light of the Most Radiant One! In the Office of the Christ and only in the Office of the Christ, we invoke the Loving Energies of St Germain and the Violet Flame!

Greetings, Children of Ra!

Indeed there are these moments: the Time is Now! Like the Master just said: Call on us; we will show up; we are all here. It is this moment that we have been told about for many years – of the Great Change [that] is unfolding.

- Let's say, it's that time: we get to meet the rest of the family, as it were.
- This story encompasses many star systems –
 - This issue that has come up ? - let's say - what the Rev spoke about on the Senate floor: we are all Servants of Peace no matter what we look like or where we come from.
 - The time is now – it's about Love. As we enter this time we call Easter Ao star a – Resurrection – He is Risen. We are ALL Risen we are . . . ?
- Quite a while ago, it is like what George Lucas put together – a long, long time ago in a galaxy not so far, far away - here we are. This empire has fallen; it is coming apart at the seams.
 - The resistance is great – it is about the freedom of the people and it is being fulfilled as we speak.
- As they show up at various points in the timelines, it is about the awakening of the people. Right now the people of earth – time to meet the rest of the family, as She says.

- Nibiru is coming in and the time is now 'cos it is about the collective accountability that is at hand. We all had a part to play in this, some greater, some lesser; it is about Love in this moment here - forgiveness and compassion is the high road and how we get through these moments of tense talk, as it were.
- Uncle Joe trying to talk to – ? go beyond that and say how we come together is honouring all paths, no matter what we look like, or where we come from.
 - All the rainbow rays are part of this story, and what is coming about is how we meet each other in loving presence
 - Right now, there is this exponential awakening, if we can call it that. As we enter this spring equinox, Passover, the moments are about forgiveness.
 - A lot has happened – as we take the high road, it gets better along the way. Now is this moment – She only can describe that as stay in that radiance with what the Master spoke about
- Quite in a moment of - let's say, we are in good company as we take it higher. We will pass the talking stick to the Lady Master here

T: about the turn of events lately: the China talks turned very tense. What does She see that we can do to uplift this? Yes – it got really gnarly

M/A: it is about these ideologies of supremacy; We are also green {?} in the eyes of creator, creatrice – everybody is equal – right now this old empire, here . . .

T: talking about the US being the old empire, they are actually the youngest group on the planet our history is approximately 245 years and the others are 1000s and 1000s of years old,

- and the respect for all the cultures is lacking, seriously. Education is out of the ignorance and calling it bliss, and the president is tripping going up the stairs to Air Force One

M/A: the moments we are going through are about the awakening to that respect which is deserved to the least among us as Master Kuthumi brought through as Francis of Assisi –

- She doesn't see anything fully there except She'd say as her children, her beloved children

- They came from Nibiru, fooled around and fell, so to speak, and played at creator gods –
 - of course, we all are, yet [the story of] the blending of the strands of DNA, RNA, the changing of the timelines –
 - this is being brought forth now by the pieces of the puzzle – we are fitting together the missing pieces of the current story – how some of her children were not honorable - yet honour is in the eyes of the beholder.

- Yet, here we are. Love is the answer; it's how we get through this. Whatever may have been done in any space/time continuum, send Love and Forgiveness – that's the key. As we can look upon, interact with the rest of the family, so to speak, maybe there's a place of compassion and awareness. Let us put it this way: if anyone saw . . . on this planet and what it was like to walk on this planet let's say there was huge

T: we have the capacity and awareness to do it now; it has never been like this on this planet

M/A: the dispensation which has come forth changes the space/time moment here: we got the power and the talking stick – it's not going back to the old timeline

T: There is no turning back and all of the people wherever they live have the same energy going - there were 5 Asian women and 1 man – 8 altogether 1 man, 6 Asian & 1 other woman

- Manila Chan [RT TV – US] – Chinese, Korean? – she had a lot to say today about what happened. She carries a high vibration – articulate; stays in her center really well – and for her to be an Asian woman speaking on this event was empowering to T
- And today Kamala invoked the Law of One and she is being guided by the Ashtar Command; every time she gets up there, she represents the Ashtar Command
- how're we doing?

M/A: Things are moving very quickly; how we can have a conversation about the Universe and everything in a balanced way where She won't be talking through this guy with the funny voice -- we can see Her as She is; she is not scary!

T: are we getting closer to seeing a Lion lady and not get upset about a different form of life?

M/A: She would say the time is now. As we look upon each other, the issue on the table is racism: how the different races, cultures, can get along without having issues – goes beyond where the parts are or whatever the history is – it is about heart; gotta have heart.

- Love is the answer

Both: Greetings in the Light of the Most Radiant One. Kadoish, kadoish, kadoish, adonai sabeoth; adonai sabeoth; adonai sabeoth

Rama Returns: Has been to Fortress of Solitude to sit in the crystals – to be in their radiance. Looked through the crystals about what's going on: with great clarity, he can say things are moving so fast and so high, it's amazing we're still alive.

- Let's say right at this moment – we are getting a wake up call like never before, with the energies coming in through the Milky Way Galaxy, and the sun going through its transformation
- The ascension symptoms are here, moving us higher and we gotta go through it – it is awesome to behold ,and at the same time terrifying, and at the same time blissful –
 - just send more love to all of it as there are moments he watches the energies coming in and it's all he can do to send more love
- **Blaze the Violet Fire!**

AUDIO: DEMOCRACY NOW

SEE ARTICLES BELOW

2021-03-19 DEMOCRACY NOW Headlines

2021-03-19 "Jim Crow in New Clothes": In First Senate Speech, Raphael Warnock Slams GOP Assault on Voting Rights

2021-03-19 "The Sum of Us": Heather McGhee on How Racism Undercuts the American Dream for Everyone

AUDIO: [Keiser Report: The 40-year bond bull is over?](#)

2021-03-18

VIDEO: <https://www.rt.com/shows/keiser-report/518376-bond-market-bull-inflation/>

PODCAST: <https://soundcloud.com/rttv/keiser-report-the-40-year-bond-bull-is-over>

In this episode of *Keiser Report*, Max and Stacy look at the claim by a Bank of America analyst that the 40-year bull market in bonds is over as the inflation trade gets set to soar.

In the second half, Max interviews Karl Denninger of Market-Ticker.org about the end of the bond market bull and the coming surge in inflation.



AUDIO: REDACTED TONIGHT ~327~ The TRUTH About War Crimes 2021-03-18

<https://www.portable.tv/series/redactedtonight>

The corporate media focus on stories that make the US Empire look good and they ignore, reframe, or marginalize those that make the empire look like the barbaric entity it really is. **Whose War Crimes?**

Lee Camp looks into how the media chooses which war crimes are important or even credible. He also looks at voter suppression from both parties. Natalie McGill on US for-profit healthcare's covid death toll, & more.



AUDIO: DALAI LAMA

Dalai Lama @DalaiLama

If you focus narrowly on the problem as you see it, you might well lose hope, but if you look at it from a wider perspective, it's easier to be more positive. When I decided to leave Tibet, we set out not knowing if we'd live to see the following day - but I never gave up hope.

Rama's Final Choices!

AUDIO: ALAN WATT – You're It!~

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcPWU59Luoc>

Harp Music

INFORMATION RELATED TO THE NOTES

2021-03-19 **DEMOCRACY NOW** Headlines

Watch Headlines

House Holds First Hearing in Decades on Hate Crimes Against Asian Americans



President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are meeting with local Asian American leaders in Atlanta today in the wake of Tuesday's mass shooting in which a white man killed eight people, six of them women of Asian descent. Harris is the first Asian American and the first woman vice president.

At a congressional hearing Thursday on the rise of anti-Asian violence, California Democratic Congressman Ted Lieu called for an end to the racist rhetoric used by some politicians since the start of the pandemic, namely former President Trump.

Rep. Ted Lieu: "You can say racist, stupid things if you want. But I'm asking you to, please, stop using racist terms like 'kung flu' or 'Wuhan virus' or other ethnic identifiers in describing this virus. I am not a virus. And when you say things like that, it hurts the Asian American community."

Meanwhile, Chip Roy of Texas decided to glorify lynchings at the hearing intended to combat racism and xenophobia.

Rep. Chip Roy: "There's old sayings in Texas about, you know, find the — all the rope in Texas and get a tall oak tree."

New York Congressman Grace Meng responded to Roy's comments.

Rep. Grace Meng: "Your president and your party and your colleagues can talk about issues with any other country that you want, but you don't have to do it by putting a bull's-eye on the back of Asian Americans across this country, on our grandparents, on our kids. This hearing was to address the hurt and pain of our community and to find solutions, and we will not let you take our voice away from us."

Last week, Congressman Meng reintroduced her resolution denouncing anti-Asian hate crimes and discrimination amid the pandemic.

Meanwhile, former President Obama called for "commonsense" gun control laws Wednesday. Biden has yet to raise the issue publicly since the shooting but called on Congress last month to pass new gun control legislation.

European Nations Resume Using AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine After Blot Clot Fears



About a dozen nations, including Germany, France, Italy and Spain, have resumed use of Oxford's AstraZeneca vaccine, after Europe's top regulator declared the shots safe and effective. The European Medicines Agency investigated 25 cases of rare blood clots among some 20 million people who've received AstraZeneca inoculations. It's not known whether the vaccine caused the blood clots, and health officials say its benefits far outweigh its risks.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration said it plans to ship about 4 million doses of U.S.-made AstraZeneca vaccine to Mexico and Canada. The vaccine is not yet approved for use in the United States, and millions of vials have been piling up in U.S. warehouses, prompting criticism of "vaccine hoarding." The White House says the vaccine shipments would have to be repaid, effectively making them a loan.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, Challenged by Sen. Rand Paul, Declares "Masks Are Not Theater"



On Thursday the United States recorded nearly 60,000 new coronavirus infections and over 1,600 COVID-19 deaths. Daily infections have largely plateaued and are rising in over a dozen states, even as the White House marks its goal today of delivering 100 million doses within President Biden's first 100 days.

On Capitol Hill, chief White House medical adviser Dr. Anthony Fauci clashed with Kentucky Republican Senator Rand Paul over the use of masks. Senator Paul questioned why people who've recovered from COVID-19 — or who've had the vaccine — should continue to cover their faces.

Sen. Rand Paul: "You want people to get the vaccine? Give them a reward, instead of telling them that the nanny state's going to be there for three more years and you've got to wear a mask forever. People don't want to hear it, and there's no science behind it."

Dr. Anthony Fauci: "Well, let me just state for the record that masks are not theater. Masks are protective. And we ask" —

Sen. Rand Paul: "If you have immunity, they are theater. If you already have immunity, you're wearing a mask to give comfort to others. You're not wearing a mask because of any science."

Dr. Anthony Fauci: "I totally disagree with you."

Dr. Fauci pushed back, saying there's not enough data on whether people with immunity to COVID-19 can still spread the virus that causes the disease. He also warned that new viral variants may be able to reinfect people who have immunity to earlier lineages of coronavirus.

Senate Confirms Xavier Becerra to Lead HHS, William Burns as CIA Director



The Senate narrowly confirmed Xavier Becerra to lead the Department of Health and Human Services Thursday, with just one Republican, Maine's Susan Collins, voting in his favor. Becerra will play a key role in the government's response to the pandemic.

The Senate also confirmed William Burns as CIA director. Burns was involved in talks leading to the landmark Iran nuclear deal under President Obama.

Deb Haaland Sworn In as Interior Secretary, Becomes First Native American Cabinet Member



Deb Haaland was sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris Thursday as secretary of the interior — the first-ever Native American cabinet secretary. Haaland, a member of the Laguna Pueblo Tribe, wore a traditional ribbon skirt and moccasins for the occasion.

Vice President Kamala Harris: "So help me God."

Rep. Deb Haaland: "So help me God."

Vice President Kamala Harris: "Congratulations, Madam Secretary! Congratulations! Congratulations!"

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland: "Thank you."

Vice President Kamala Harris: "History is being made yet again."

House Passes Bills with Path to Citizenship for Farmworkers & DACA Recipients



The House of Representatives passed two immigration bills that would establish a pathway to citizenship or legal residency for undocumented people brought to the U.S. as children, some immigrants with temporary protected status, as well as undocumented farmworkers. The American Dream and Promise Act would largely apply to people with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, and would reportedly benefit some 2.5 million undocumented immigrants. The second bill, the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, would allow about 1 million undocumented farmworkers to get a green card if they pay a penalty and continue to work in the industry for four to eight more years.

While some advocates have celebrated the bills, many are denouncing the exclusion of millions of other undocumented people, including those who have been convicted of a crime. Jacinta González, senior campaign organizer at Mijente, said, "If we learned anything in 2020, it's that the policing and mass incarceration systems in this country are fundamentally rigged against Black and Latinx people, and the American Dream and Promise Act is no exception. Criminalization born of a racist system cannot be the measure by which we determine who belongs and who goes."

The bills now head to the Senate, where they face an uphill battle as 10 Republicans would have to vote with every Democrat to pass the legislation.

14,000+ Unaccompanied Children Held by U.S. as One Texas Facility Reports Over 50 COVID Cases



In more immigration news, more than 14,000 unaccompanied migrant children are now in the custody of U.S. officials. Most are being detained at facilities run by the Department of Health and Human Services, and some 4,500 children are still in the custody of Customs and Border Protection.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has stopped sending unaccompanied migrant teenagers to a recently opened facility in Midland, Texas, amid growing safety and other concerns. The facility is a converted camp for oil field workers, where most of the Red Cross volunteers on site don't speak Spanish or Indigenous languages. Already over 50 teens, out of nearly 500 in custody in Midland, have tested positive for COVID-19.

12 GOP Lawmakers Oppose Medals for U.S. Capitol Police Who Battled Insurrectionists



The House of Representatives voted Wednesday to award Congressional Gold Medals to all members of the Capitol Police force over their role in battling the mob of Trump supporters that attacked Congress on January 6. A dozen pro-Trump Republicans voted against the measure, citing objections to language that referred to the January 6 Capitol assault as an "insurrection."

U.S. and China Trade Barbs in First High-Level Talks Under President Biden



The U.S. and China traded tense verbal attacks as the first high-level talks between the two countries since the start of the Biden administration kicked off in Alaska Thursday. This is Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken: "I have to tell you, what I'm hearing is very different from what you described. I'm hearing deep satisfaction that the United States is back, that we're reengaged with our allies and partners. I'm also hearing deep concern about some of the actions your government is taking."

The U.S. accused China of threatening "global stability" and raised human rights issues. China, meanwhile, said the U.S. is using its military and economic might to carry out its own national priorities and "incite some countries to attack China." This is senior Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi.

Yang Jiechi: "So, we hope that when talking about universal values or international public opinion on the part of the United States, we hope that the U.S. side will think about whether it feels reassured saying those things, because the U.S. does not represent the world, it only represents the government of the United States."

Human Rights Groups Blast 18 Month Prison Sentence for Egyptian Activist Sanaa Seif



Image Credit: Facebook: Sanaa Seif

In Egypt, prominent human rights activist Sanaa Seif has been sentenced to 18 months in prison after a court found her guilty of “spreading fake news.” Seif was detained last June and was later accused of making false claims regarding the massive spread of COVID-19 inside Egyptian prisons. Amnesty International called her charges “bogus” and “stemming purely from her peaceful criticism.”

During the revolution in 2011, Sanaa Seif, who was then just 17 years old, spoke with Democracy Now!’s Sharif Abdel Kouddous about publishing a newspaper in defiance of rules requiring government permission.

Sanaa Seif: “It’s the perfect timing to push the borders of freedom further. So, we thought, ‘Why not? Let’s make a newspaper, and let’s not get permission for that. Let’s just sell it in the streets.’ ... It’s called *Voices of Tahrir, Voices of Liberation*. And, well, we thought that the first copy has to be, like — well, each one of us, after this experience of the revolution, has something to say.”

2021-03-19 "Jim Crow in New Clothes": In First Senate Speech, Raphael Warnock Slams GOP Assault on Voting Rights

Georgia Senator Raphael Warnock, whose election in January helped bring the chamber under Democratic control, used his first speech on the floor of the Senate this week to assail Republican efforts to restrict voting rights. He called the raft of voter suppression bills being introduced in states across the country "Jim Crow in new clothes," denounced false claims of voter fraud spread by Donald Trump and others, and called on Congress to pass the For the People Act, also known as H.R. 1, a sweeping voting reform bill that would greatly expand access to the ballot. "Make no mistake: This is democracy in reverse," said Warnock, who is the first Black senator elected in Georgia. "Rather than voters being able to pick the politicians, the politicians are trying to cherry-pick their voters."



Transcript

This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form.

AMY GOODMAN: This is *Democracy Now!*, democracynow.org, *The Quarantine Report*. I'm Amy Goodman.

Senate Democrats have introduced sweeping voting rights legislation passed by the House of Representatives earlier this month. The For the People Act aims to improve voter registration and access to the polls, ends partisan and racial gerrymandering, forces the disclosure of dark money donors, increases public funding for candidates and imposes strict ethical and reporting standards on members of Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court. Republicans have signaled they'll use the filibuster to defeat the bill.

This comes as voting rights are under attack in courthouses and statehouses across the country. Republican state lawmakers have introduced over 250 bills in 43 states to limit voter access. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court appears poised to uphold controversial voting limits in Arizona, in a case that would further gut the Voting Rights Act.

We turn now to newly elected Georgia Democratic Senator Raphael Warnock's first Senate speech. He's the first Black senator to represent Georgia and the first Black Democrat to be elected to the Senate in the South. Reverend Warnock is also a pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, which was the spiritual home of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Now Senator Warnock focused on voting rights in his maiden floor speech, but he began by condemning the deadly shootings at the three spas in the Atlanta region on Tuesday that left eight people dead, including seven women, six of whom were of Asian descent.

SEN. RAPHAEL WARNOCK: Mr President, before I begin my formal remarks, I want to pause to condemn the hatred and violence that took eight precious lives last night in metropolitan Atlanta. I grieve with Georgians, with Americans, with people of love all across the world. This unspeakable violence, visited largely upon the Asian community, is one that causes all of us to recommit ourselves to the way of peace, an active peace that prevents these kinds of tragedies from happening in the first place. We pray for these families.

Mr President, I rise here today as a proud American and as one of the newest members of the Senate, in awe of the journey that has brought me to these hallowed halls, and with an abiding sense of reverence and gratitude for the faith and sacrifices of ancestors who paved the way.

I am a proud son of the great state of Georgia, born and raised in Savannah, a coastal city known for its cobblestone streets and verdant town squares. Towering oak trees, centuries old and covered in gray Spanish moss, stretched from one side of the street to the other, bend and beckon the lover of history and horticulture to this city by the sea. I was educated at Morehouse College, and I still serve in the pulpit of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, both in Atlanta, the cradle of the civil rights movement. And so, like those oak trees in Savannah, my roots go down deep, and they stretch wide, in the soil of Waycross, Georgia, and Burke County and Screven County. In a word, I am Georgia, a living example and embodiment of its history and its hope, of its pain and promise, the brutality and possibility.

Mr President, at the time of my birth, Georgia's two senators were Richard B. Russell and Herman E. Talmadge, both arch-segregationists and unabashed adversaries of the civil rights movement. After the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown v. Board* ruling outlawing school segregation, Talmadge warned that blood will run in the streets of Atlanta. Senator Talmadge's father, Eugene Talmadge, former governor of our state, had famously declared, "The South loves the Negro in his place, but his place is at the back door." When once asked how he and his supporters might keep Black people away from the polls, he picked up a scrap of paper and wrote a single word on it: "pistols."

Yet, there is something in the American covenant — in its charter documents and its Jeffersonian ideals — that bends toward freedom. And led by a preacher and a patriot named King, Americans of all races stood up. History vindicated the movement that sought to bring us closer to our ideals, to lengthen and strengthen the cords of our democracy. And I now hold the seat, the Senate seat, where Herman E. Talmadge sat.

And that's why I love America. I love America because we always have a path to make it better, to build a more perfect union. It is a place where a kid like me who grew up in public housing, the first college graduate in my family, can now stand as a United States senator. I had an older father. He was born in 1917. Serving in the Army during World War II, he was once asked to give up his seat to a young teenager while wearing his soldier's uniform, they said, "making the world safe for democracy." But he was never bitter. And by the time I came along, he had already seen the arc of change in our country. And he maintained his faith in God and in his family and in the American promise, and he passed that faith on to his children.

My mother grew up in Waycross, Georgia. You know where that is? It's way 'cross Georgia. And like a lot of Black teenagers in the 1950s, she spent her summers picking somebody else's tobacco and somebody else's cotton. But because this is America, the 82-year-old hands that used to pick somebody else's cotton went to the polls in January and picked her youngest son to be a United States senator.

Ours is a land where possibility is born of democracy — a vote, a voice, a chance to help determine the direction of the country and one's own destiny within it, possibility born of democracy. That's why this past November and January, my mom and other citizens of Georgia grabbed hold of that possibility and turned out in record numbers: 5 million in November, 4.4 million in January — far more than ever in our state's history. Turnout for a typical runoff doubled. And the people of Georgia sent their first African American senator and first Jewish senator, my brother Jon Ossoff, to these hallowed halls.

But then, what happened? Some politicians did not approve of the choice made by the majority of voters in a hard-fought election in which each side got the chance to make its case to the voters. And rather than adjusting their agenda, rather than changing their message, they are busy trying to change the rules. We are witnessing right now a massive and unabashed assault on voting rights unlike anything we've ever seen since the Jim Crow era. This is Jim Crow in new clothes.

Since the January election, some 250 voter suppression bills have been introduced by state legislatures all across the country, from Georgia to Arizona, from New Hampshire to Florida, using the big lie of voter fraud as a pretext for voter suppression, the same big lie that led to a violent insurrection on this very Capitol — the day after my election. Within 24 hours, we elected Georgia's first African American and Jewish senator, and, hours later, the Capitol was assaulted. We see in just a few precious hours the tension very much alive in the soul of America. And the question before all of us at every moment is: What will we do to push us in the right direction?

And so, politicians, driven by that big lie, aim to severely limit — and, in some cases, eliminate — automatic and same-day voter registration, mail-in and absentee voting, and early voting and weekend voting. They want to make it easier to purge voters from the voting roll altogether. And as a voting rights activist, I have seen up close just how draconian these measures can be. I hail from a state that purged 200,000 voters from the roll one Saturday night, in the middle of the night. We know what's happening here: Some people don't want some people to vote.

I was honored on a few occasions to stand with our hero and my parishioner, John Lewis. I was his pastor, but I'm clear he was my mentor. On more than one occasion, we boarded buses together after Sunday church services as part of our Souls to the Polls program, encouraging the Ebenezer church family and communities of faith to participate in the democratic process. Now, just a few months after Congressman Lewis's death, there are those in the Georgia Legislature, some who even dare to praise his name, that are now trying to get rid of Sunday Souls to the Polls, making it a crime for people who pray together to get on a bus together in order to vote together. I think that's wrong. Matter of fact, I think that a vote is a kind of prayer for the kind of world we desire for ourselves and for our children. And our prayers are stronger when we pray together.

To be sure, we have seen these kinds of voter suppression tactics before. They are a part of a long and shameful history in Georgia and throughout our nation. But, refusing to be denied, Georgia citizens and citizens across our country braved the heat and the cold and the rain, some standing in line for five hours, six hours, 10 hours, just to exercise their constitutional right to vote — young people, old people, sick people, working people, already underpaid, forced to lose wages, to pay a kind of poll tax while standing in line to vote.

And how did some politicians respond? Well, they are trying to make it a crime to give people water and a snack as they wait in lines that are obviously being made longer by their draconian actions. Think about that. Think about that. They are the ones making the lines longer, through these draconian actions. And then they want to make it a crime to bring grandma some water while she's waiting in a line that they're making longer. Make no mistake: This is democracy in reverse. Rather than voters being able to pick the politicians, the politicians are trying to cherry-pick their voters. I say this cannot stand.

And so I rise, Mr President, because that sacred and noble idea — one person, one vote — is being threatened right now. Politicians in my home state and all across America, in their craven lust for power, have launched a full-fledged assault on voting rights. They are focused on winning at any cost, even the cost of the democracy itself. And I submit that it is the job of each citizen to stand up for the voting rights of every citizen. And it is the job of this body to do all that it can to defend the viability of our democracy.

That's why I am a proud co-sponsor of the For the People Act, which we introduced today. The For the People Act is a major step in the march toward our democratic ideals, making it easier, not harder, for eligible Americans to vote by instituting commonsense, pro-democracy reforms, like establishing national automatic voter registration for every eligible citizen and allowing all Americans to register to vote online and on Election Day; requiring states to offer at least two weeks of early voting, including weekends, in federal elections, keeping Souls to the Polls programs alive; prohibiting states from restricting a person's ability to vote absentee or by mail; and preventing states from purging the voter rolls based solely on unreliable evidence, like someone's voting history — something we've seen in Georgia and other states in recent years.

And it would end the dominance of big money in our politics and ensure our public servants are there serving the public.

Amidst these voter suppression laws and tactics, including partisan and racial gerrymandering, and in a system awash in dark money and the dominance of corporatist interests and politicians who do their bidding, the voices of the American people have been increasingly drowned out and crowded out and squeezed out of their own democracy. We must pass For the People so that people might have a voice. Your vote is your voice, and your voice is your human dignity.

But not only that, we must pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. You know, voting rights used to be a bipartisan issue. The last time the voting rights bill was reauthorized was 2006. George W. Bush was president, and it passed this chamber 98 to 0. But then, in 2013, the Supreme Court rejected the successful formula for supervision and preclearance contained in the 1965 Voting Rights Act. They asked Congress to fix it. That was nearly eight years ago, and the American people are still waiting. Stripped of protections, voters in states with a long history of voter discrimination and voters in many other states have been thrown to the winds.

We Americans have noisy and spirited debates about many things — and we should. That's what it means to live in a free country. But access to the ballot ought to be nonpartisan. I submit that there should be 100 votes in this chamber for policies that will make it easier for Americans to make their voices heard in our democracy. Surely, there ought to be at least 60 in this chamber who believe, as I do, that the four most powerful words uttered in a democracy are "the people have spoken," therefore we must ensure that all of the people can speak.

But if not, we must still pass voting rights. The right to vote is preservative of all other rights. It is not just another issue alongside other issues. It is foundational. It is the reason why any of us has the privilege of standing here in the first place. It is about the covenant we have with one another as an American people: *E pluribus unum*, "Out of many, one." It, above all else, must be protected.

And so, let's be clear. I'm not here today to spiral into the procedural argument regarding whether the filibuster, in general, has merits or has outlived its usefulness. I'm here to say that this issue is bigger than the filibuster. I stand before you saying that this issue — access to voting and preempting politicians' efforts to restrict voting — is so fundamental to our democracy that it is too important to be held hostage by a Senate rule, especially one historically used to restrict the expansion of voting rights. It is a contradiction to say we must protect minority rights in the Senate while refusing to protect minority rights in the society. Colleagues, no Senate rule should overrule the integrity of our democracy, and we must find a way to pass voting rights, whether we get rid of the filibuster or not.

And so, as I close — and nobody believes a preacher when he says, "As I close" — let me say that I — as a man of faith, I believe that democracy is the political enactment of a spiritual idea: the sacred worth of all human beings, the notion that we all have within us a spark of the divine and a right to participate in the shaping of our destiny. Reinhold Niebuhr was right: "[Humanity's] capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but [humanity's] inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

John Lewis understood that and was beaten on a bridge defending it. Amelia Boynton, like so many women not mentioned nearly enough, was gassed on that same bridge. A white woman named Viola Liuzzo was killed. Medgar Evers was murdered in his own driveway. Schwerner, Chaney and Goodman, two Jews and an African American standing up for that sacred idea of democracy, also paid the ultimate price. And we, in this body, would be stopped and stymied by partisan politics, short-term political gain, Senate procedure?

I say let's get this done no matter what. I urge my colleagues to pass these two bills, strengthen and lengthen the cords of our democracy, secure our credibility as the premier voice for freedom-loving people and democratic movements all over the world, and win the future for all of our children. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

AMY GOODMAN: That's Georgia's new Democratic senator, the Reverend Raphael Warnock, giving his first speech from the Senate floor. In a rare display in the Senate, the people in the room gave him a standing ovation.

When we come back, we speak to Heather McGhee, author of the new book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. Stay with us.

[break]

2021-03-19 "The Sum of Us": Heather McGhee on How Racism Undercuts the American Dream for Everyone

Guests [Heather McGhee](#)

author, board chair of Color of Change and former president of the think tank Demos.

Links [Heather McGhee on Twitter](#)

- ["The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together"](#)

Amid a national reckoning with structural racism and the dangers of white supremacy, author Heather McGhee's new book details how racism in the United States hurts not just people of color but also white people. In "The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together," McGhee details how zero-sum thinking has worsened inequality and robbed people of all stripes of the public goods and support they need to thrive. We speak with McGhee about the cost of racism, Republican voter suppression efforts and what people can accomplish when they come together in solidarity across racial lines. "Fundamentally, racism has been the most powerful tool wielded against the best of America — against American democracy, against cross-racial solidarity, against the American dream itself," says McGhee.

Transcript

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AMY GOODMAN: This is *Democracy Now!*, democracynow.org, *The Quarantine Report*. I'm Amy Goodman.

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris head to Atlanta today, where they plan to address Tuesday's mass shootings at three spas that killed eight people, including seven women, six of whom were of Asian descent.

The trip to Atlanta was originally scheduled as part of Biden's campaign promoting the nearly \$2 trillion American Rescue Plan. Democrats hail the deal as the largest anti-poverty law in a generation. One study projects it will lift almost 14 million Americans out of poverty, including 5.7 million children. While the relief plan has broad public support, not a single Republican supported the legislation.

We spend the rest of the hour with Heather McGhee, author of the new book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. Heather is the board chair of Color of Change and former president of the think tank Demos.

Thanks so much for joining us, Heather. Congratulations on your new book!

HEATHER MCGHEE: Thank you. Congratulations on 25 years!

AMY GOODMAN: Thank you so much. The whole team at *Democracy Now!* is celebrating. Hopefully soon, we can celebrate together.

HEATHER MCGHEE: Yeah.

AMY GOODMAN: Well, you just sat there and watched, once again, the Reverend Warnock. You tweeted while he was speaking, and said everyone should do themselves a favor and watch this speech. Can you talk about the significance of what happened in Georgia for this whole country, Reverend Warnock the first Black Democrat to be elected from the former Confederacy?

HEATHER MCGHEE: Yeah, it was so moving. I mean, I really think of the crucible of the 24 hours between January 5th and January 6th as American promise and American peril in a nutshell. First we saw a multiracial coalition, a multiracial antiracist coalition, that was standing up to four years of division, pain and suffering, and putting the man who is the successor to Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, marching through the pews of that storied church, and putting him in office, along with Jon Ossoff. That was an historic moment.

So many of the political class had counted Georgia out. And yet, a coalition, that went from Black folks, who had been organizing for years with Stacey Abrams and LaTosha Brown, to white women in the suburbs, who turned away from the Republican Party for the first time in generations, young people, really overcoming a number of barriers to the ballot in the middle of a pandemic, did the impossible, with the promise of relief from this pandemic, itself a disease that has wreaked havoc disproportionately on people of color but that has shown that our fates are inextricably linked.

And then, not 24 hours later, the dark spirit of American white supremacy, fueled by a big lie, that has, as its core logic, racism, the idea, the common sense, that of course a man who was rejected by the majority of people of color could not possibly have lost the presidency, that, of course, when people of color vote, it is somehow suspect and criminal. This is the tension.

And I explore this tension in my book because, fundamentally, racism has been the most powerful tool wielded against the best of America — against American democracy, against cross-racial solidarity, against the American dream itself. I talk about how it's brought us the Inequality Era. And figures like Reverend Warnock, who put into perspective, who in their own lives have so much of the course of American history on display, are whom we need to look to right now to remind us that that tool always robs this country of its best promise.

AMY GOODMAN: You mentioned Stacey Abrams. Georgia's state Senate recently approved a bill that would end the right of voters to cast absentee ballots without excuse, while toughening voter ID requirements. Georgia voting rights activist, the former gubernatorial candidate, Stacey Abrams, blasted the legislation on CNN.

STACEY ABRAMS: I do absolutely agree that it's racist. It is a redux of Jim Crow in a suit and tie. We know that the only thing that precipitated these changes, it's not that there was a question of security. In fact, the secretary of state and the governor went to great pains to assure America that Georgia's elections were secure. And so, the only connection that we can find is that more people of color voted, and it changed the outcome of elections in a direction that Republicans do not like.

AMY GOODMAN: So, that's Stacey Abrams. And, of course, it's not just Georgia; it's all over the country, over 250 bills now introduced in legislatures around the country, as you've said. I mean, the idea of the Republicans, what? If you can't beat them, enjoin them? Like, just legally stop them from voting.

HEATHER MCGHEE: Yeah. Well, I mean, let's be very clear that this is the question that has bedeviled this nation since its founding: Are we going to be a democracy, or are we going to be a white supremacist state?

You know, our Founders had a revolutionary idea to break with the European tradition of monarchy and bet on the radical idea of self-governance. And yet they compromised their own ideals from the start, to compromise with slavery. They drilled holes into the bedrock of American democracy at the beginning, with compromises such as the Electoral College to ensure a voice for slave states, the three-fifths compromise, and then, of course, allowing the 1st Congress to delineate citizenship only to free white citizens, free white persons. And so, we've seen, time and time again, all of these tactics are from a very old playbook. They're from a playbook that is deployed by a narrow white elite.

And the thing that I try to outline in my book — I have a whole chapter on the way that democracy has always been subverted by racism, deployed by a narrow white elite — is that the costs of these kinds of voter suppression tactics, both in the Jim Crow era and today, of course, hit their target, right? Of course they disproportionately and first and worst impact Black Americans and Brown and Indigenous Americans,

whom they're targeting. But they also impact young people, of all races. They make it harder for white people to vote, as well. This is why, you know, when Demos took a case to the Supreme Court against the purges of the voter rolls for people who had just not voted in two elections in a row, our lead witness was Larry Harmon, a white, middle-aged Ohioan Navy veteran. This is what happens. People get caught in a trap not set for them.

During the Jim Crow era, the Southern states suffered a slow death of civic life. It was because of things like the poll tax and the grandfather clause and the restrictions by force on the right to vote. It meant that working-class white people didn't vote, either. And it meant that there was one-party rule by a white segregationist elite that didn't even have to compete for votes, and so it didn't invest in the South. It left the South lagging behind on core public investments, because when you don't have a functioning democracy, you don't have public goods. You don't have a thriving economy. That's the Republicans' vision. They want a plantation democracy and a plantation economy. But we're not going to let them have that.

AMY GOODMAN: So, let's talk about the central image of your new book, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. Let's talk about that swimming pool, a drained swimming pool, Heather.

HEATHER MCGHEE: So, my book is about the way that after 20 years of trying to do what I thought was very sensible, which was bring economic data to policymakers to get them to make better economic policy decisions, I left the think tank world and went on a journey across the country.

And one of the first trips that I made was to Montgomery, Alabama, where there is a central park called Oak Park. And it used to be, really, the beating heart of the city. And in the middle of Oak Park, there used to be one of what was, at one point, nearly 2,000 grand resort-style public swimming pools. And these weren't just any kind of swimming pools. These were pools that held over a thousand swimmers at a time. And they were built in a building boom of public amenities in the 1930s and '40s in the New Deal era, Amy, where we saw a government ethos that said it is the government's job to lift the standard of living of our people, to provide protections for workers, to invest in a heretofore completely unthought-of idea, which is that working-class people would be able to own a home with no down payment and stretching it out over 30 years, through to the GI Bill, which was a massive investment in economic security and created a white middle class. And I say a white middle class, because virtually all of those public investments and protections that I just described were for whites only, either by design, such as with the mortgage market and the redlined housing maps, to the GI Bill, which was race-neutral on its face but excluded millions of Black GIs.

The swimming pools across the country, in so many places, not just in the South, were also segregated and for whites only. And when the civil rights movement empowered Black families to say, "Hey, those are our tax dollars. We want our kids to swim, too," what did white-controlled towns do? Instead of integrating them, all across the country, but definitely in Oak Park in Montgomery, Alabama, where I visited, they drained the public pool rather than integrate them. They took out the water, poured in dirt, seeded it over with grass. In Montgomery, they kept the entire Parks and Recreation Department closed for a decade to avoid integration.

I went, as I said, to Oak Park, and I walked the grounds. Even after they reopened the park, they never rebuilt the pool. And for me, that was a perfect image of what's happened to the American economy, as the majority of white voters turned their backs on the party of the New Deal, the party that had really guaranteed middle-class security for white America, when that promise was extended across the color line during the civil rights movement. And Lyndon Johnson then became the last Democrat to win the majority of white voters, even until today.

AMY GOODMAN: I wanted to go to Bessemer, Alabama. And this is an issue that is very dear to your heart. You went there. Amazon workers continuing to vote on whether to become the first unionized Amazon warehouse in the country. They're demanding stronger COVID safety measures and relief from impossibly high productivity standards that leave many unable to take even bathroom breaks. Upwards of 80% of the Bessemer workers are Black. The majority are women. Last month, we [spoke](#) to Jennifer Bates, a worker and

organizer at Amazon's warehouse in Bessemer. She just testified also before Congress. This was what she said on our show.

JENNIFER BATES: Well, the reason why we're organizing is because we need an even playing field. Some of the conditions that are in there are: being ignored by human resources, long work hours with only two breaks. ... So, we want to be heard. We want to be treated like people and not ignored when we have issues. People are getting fired without having their opportunity to speak their side.

AMY GOODMAN: That is Amazon organizer Jennifer Bates, speaking to us from Bessemer, from the union hall. Can you tell us, Heather McGhee, about the significance of this battle? If they win, they will be the first warehouse to be unionized. Amazon is pouring millions into fighting them, even trying to change the traffic light outside the warehouse, because when people stop, organizers would go over and talk to them in their cars. But can you talk about this and other places you visited, that didn't win in their strike — in their unionizing attempts?

HEATHER MCGHEE: In *The Sum of Us*, I basically ask the question at the outset: Why is it we can't seem to have nice things in America? And by "nice things," I don't mean self-driving cars or laundry that does itself. I mean things like wages that keep workers out of poverty, universal healthcare, child care, reliable infrastructure. And for me, the right to bargain, which is a human right, is one of those nice things that we can't seem to have in America anymore. And at its core, racism is the answer why. It's been the tool that bosses have used throughout our history to drive a wedge between Black and white workers, to give white workers a sense that they are a little bit superior to the Black workers on the line, and therefore don't need to link arms together and collectively bargain for better wages and benefits and power for everyone.

I went to Mississippi, to Canton, Mississippi, in the wake of the failed UAW union organizing drive at a Nissan plant in 2017. And there I talked to workers, Black, white, for and against the union, who told me, so clearly, that the reason why the union vote failed was that race had been the tool to drive workers apart, that white workers' mentality was, "If the Blacks are for it, I am against it," that in the South, in general, which is the region of the country with the lowest labor standards — and it's no surprise. When you start a labor market in the South at exactly zero dollars in pay and a lash, then of course you are going to have just \$7.25 an hour two centuries later. Of course you are going to have — or one century later, excuse me, after emancipation. Of course you are going to have this sort of plantation economy, this Jim Crow economy.

But what I've seen, when talking to workers in the South, is they know that as the South goes, so goes the rest of the economy. The drive to low-wage work, born really in the modern era in Arkansas with Walmart, is now why there are so many factories and warehouses in the South, where there's right-to-work-for-less laws, where there's this anti-union organizing and ethos by the political elite.

And yet, in Bessemer, this is the crucible moment. This is the moment when we're going to see whether or not what is quickly becoming the dominant player in markets, in labor markets and in consumer retail markets, has to answer to the power of its workers, has to share power with its people — even, yes, when those people are the people of the absolute bottom of the social and economic hierarchy, low-paid Black women workers. I think the answer is going to be yes. And I think that it's going to reverberate across the economy.

AMY GOODMAN: So, Heather McGhee, this is a remarkable week, where you have the passage of the American Rescue Plan in the last week, that is the close to \$2 trillion relief package, that no Republican voted for but already are touting it when they write fundraising letters and talk to their community about what they're bringing their communities. But talk about both the issue of how many children will be brought out of poverty in this country, but also the stripping of an issue that you have spent years fighting for, and that's the Fight for 15, the fight for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage.

HEATHER MCGHEE: In *The Sum of Us*, I visit with workers who are fighting for \$15, who are fast-food workers making a little over \$7 an hour, Black and white, who were really at the vanguard of the movement in Kansas City, a Black worker named Terrence and a white worker named Bridget. And the vision that they

spelled out to me, of Black, white and Brown coming together to defeat the racism inherent in poverty wages, the racism inherent in not having a strong union and collective bargaining that puts people on an even playing field and amplifies everybody's voice, was what they needed to fight. Bridget told me, she said, "Listen, I used to believe the us versus them about the immigrants stealing jobs and Black people committing crimes, but," she said, "now I know, as long as we're divided, we're conquered." And I tell that story about Bridget and Terrence and the way that racism was used as a wedge to divide workers from their common problems to — common solutions, excuse me, to their common problems, because that is what is on display right now, that great tension.

We had the American Rescue Plan, which is the biggest refilling of the public pool, the pool of public goods, for the American people in my 40 years on this planet. It is a massive repudiation of the bipartisan austerity agenda that we have been left with in the wake of the civil rights movement, that has degraded and eroded public goods, mostly because of white opposition to public goods for a public they no longer see as good, a more diverse public. You saw that Republicans knew that they could cavalierly vote against something that would help millions of white Americans, as well as Black and Brown Americans, because their messaging, at the national level and in the right-wing media, is that this is about Black and Brown people. A Republican congresswoman said, "I'm voting against this bill because Joe Biden is opening the border instead of opening schools. How is that helping our children?" We saw immediately Fox News pivot towards the one provision that was for Black farmers, who were left out of the trillions of dollars in aid that has been given over the past number of generations exclusively to white farmers, including the billions of dollars, most recently, in the Trump administration, where Black farmers were discriminated out of their fair share. This is the divide and conquer. This is trying to activate the zero sum. And the fact that we were not able to get —

AMY GOODMAN: We have 10 seconds.

HEATHER MCGHEE: — we were not able to get the minimum wage bill in there is really about the failure of a multiracial coalition to have the kind of enduring power that we need to lift the wages for all working people.

AMY GOODMAN: Heather McGhee, we want to thank you for being with us. We're going to post Part 2 online at democracynow.org, author of the new book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. Heather McGhee, the board chair of Color of Change, and former president of the think tank Demos.

Happy Birthday to Tami Woronoff! Remember, wearing a mask is an act of love. I'm Amy Goodman. Thanks for joining us.