



Speak Out Now

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Their System Pours More Gas on a World on Fire

Our world is burning, and those who rule this society are doing nothing but pouring gas on the fire. Large parts of Canada, the United States, and Europe are being impacted by deadly wildfires.

In Canada, more than 7.4 million acres have burned, which is nearly the same size as the entire state of Maryland. Hundreds of fires have been burning out of control from the northwest part of the country to northern Ontario, north of Toronto.

In the U.S., more than six million acres have burned so far this year, roughly 60 to 70 percent more than the ten-year average, with national fire agencies at their highest possible alert level. Cities such as New York and Philadelphia have had some of the worst air quality in the world this summer from smoke traveling down from Canada. Oregon has broken its all-time record for most acres burned in a year with two months of the fire season still left. In Washington state, fires tore through neighborhoods on the edge of the city of Spokane in the first days of August, destroying hundreds of homes and driving tens of thousands of people out.

In Europe, more land had burned by the start of August than last summer. Spain is currently experiencing the largest wildfire in its history. In France, a single fire in the Gironde region forced more than two hundred thousand people to evacuate their homes. In Greece, two firefighters died when their helicopters collided while fighting a fire near Athens. Working people are being evacuated and having their homes and livelihoods destroyed, while the smoke from all of it settles over cities a thousand miles away and into everyone's lungs.

These fires are not just based on bad luck. Hotter air, longer droughts, drier soil, and forests primed to burn are the direct product of the carbon emissions released into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuel energy sources. Last year the world passed the 1.5-degree Celsius average temperature threshold that scientists warned for decades would cause irreversible climate damage. This is what the other side of that line looks like, and it will only intensify. And faced with this crisis, what are the rulers of this system doing about it? Pouring more gas on the fire!

Environmental destruction and ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions have always been a permanent feature of capitalism. Just since 1990 alone, over 50% of all greenhouse

gases in the atmosphere have been released. And now this is going to accelerate further as energy demand increases globally to fuel the growth of artificial intelligence. Data center electricity demand in the U.S. has nearly doubled in three years. Globally, the demand from these facilities is projected to more than double again by the end of the decade. To meet this demand, renewable energy sources such as solar power are growing, but the difference is being made up by fossil fuel sources such as coal and gas. The message is clear: it is their system that is destroying the planet and causing these disasters, and they won't do anything about it.

Meanwhile, workers around the world are suffering the consequences. Climate destruction is now the leading cause of mass displacement, producing about 40 million migrants and refugees per year, more than from all the wars around the world. It is the poor and working class that is impacted the most from fires, heat, and extreme weather events. Many workers, from construction and agriculture to delivery and transportation have to go to work in conditions of extreme heat or dangerous smoke, often without air conditioning or respirators. The poor can rarely afford air conditioning or air filtration devices. Since 2006, studies have shown that over 24,000 people have died each year in the U.S. from the effects of prolonged exposure to wildfire smoke.

And when these climate disasters strike, this system has nothing to offer but more misery. The ruling class isn't even capable of using the resources of capitalism to handle the fires. They build more bombs and weapons of war than they do water planes for fighting fires. Insurance companies have stopped offering home insurance in areas of fire danger because they can't profit. Fire departments and disaster relief funds are getting cut while military spending hits record highs.

This is what capitalism has to offer. A handful of the richest corporations on Earth are making these decisions in their own boardrooms, and the rest of us are living with the results — a hotter planet that burns more every year and puts all of humanity at risk. Their whole system of exploitation and profit is making all of this worse, and they will not walk away from the trillions of dollars invested in continued fossil fuel production. These criminals cannot be in charge of our future. It comes down to this: It's our lives or their profits.

Government Should Not Be a Game of Checkers!

Across the country, Republican politicians in Red states and Democrat politicians in Blue states have been trying to redraw Congressional districts to their advantage. Maryland politicians are no exception. Even though the Dems have seven of the state's eight House of Representatives seats, they just drafted an amendment to the state's constitution. If voters approve it in November, that will make it easier for the Dems to remake Congressional districts to their liking. They could win all eight of the state's House seats in Congress. This is despite the fact that barely 50% of registered voters are Democrats, 25% are Republicans, and 25% are Independent or Other.

Why should the Dems get all the seats? That is not what democracy looks like! Both Red and Blue politicians are beholden first to big donors who are rich. Don't let either party convince you that they represent ordinary working-class people or care about fair voting.

Over 800 BPD Misconduct Cases on Hold

Maryland's Police Accountability Act, passed in 2022, changed the way allegations of police misconduct are handled. Before the act was passed, police officers could negotiate internally about how to deal with misconduct without a public trial. Now, after an initial internal investigation, misconduct cases must go through trial boards. The complex process of scheduling the trials delays the cases and the procedure gets paused if an officer disagrees with the recommended disciplinary action. There are now over 800 cases in a backlog, awaiting the trial board. Last year alone, there were over 1,000 complaints of police misconduct in Baltimore. That's a lot of accusations that cops aren't acting like public servants. It's not just these cops themselves. The system overseeing them is not protecting us.

ICE Grabs Two Baltimore Researchers

The TSA is now sharing the personal information of travelers with ICE, meaning even domestic air travel is now risky for non-citizens. In July, Dr. Fatima Ameaka, a researcher at the JHU School of Public Health, was snatched by ICE at BWI. Dr. Ameaka, who has now been released, had a work authorization valid until 2029 and a pending asylum case. Last week, another Baltimore academic with a valid work permit, Dr. Berhanu Kibret, was abducted by ICE at Dallas Fort Worth airport. Dr. Kibret was named "teacher of the year" at the School of Pharmacy at University of Maryland, Baltimore. Both Dr. Ameaka and Dr. Kibret were traveling within the US. It's up to all of us to protect our non-citizen co-workers and demand universities stand up for us all!

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

We Don't Need More Surveillance!

Starting mid-August through the autumn, Johns Hopkins hospitals will, according to management, be "modernizing" their parking process. This means they are looking to add license plate readers in the parking lots. They claim it's to make things more convenient for us, but it is clearly a form of surveillance! We have no clue what companies they are using to run these systems and what they will be doing with the data. Will they share it with data brokers who'll serve us ads, or will it end up in the hands of ICE? This is another attack on our privacy. People across the U.S. are already concerned about the government using Flock cameras, Stingray cellphone readers, and other surveillance devices. Now our employers are getting in on it, too. JHH should respect our privacy.

Billionaires want to keep us down for profit

Here's how:

AI
Data Centers
Surveillance
ICE



Learn more:

Sunday, August 30, 5pm
Sunday Room at 2640 Space
2640 St Paul St, Baltimore



A Speak Out Socialist Event