

The Environmental Crisis: The Problem is Capitalism



A Speak Out Now pamphlet

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Fighting For Our Planet – Fighting For A Future

There have been five major extinction events in the planet's history. The dinosaurs were killed during the fifth extinction, which scientists believe was caused by an asteroid crash that drastically changed the climate. Now, scientists say we are living in what could be the sixth extinction. But this time, our species is the cause of climate change and also the victim.

Scientists have pointed out the dangers of climate change for decades but the problem has only gotten worse. But the response from governments, the energy industry, banks and corporations has been to accelerate environmental destruction. We can't leave the fate of the planet in the hands of those who have created this environmental crisis. They will continue to pollute the earth as long as it is profitable, even if it means destroying much of the life on this planet.

Severe weather is just the tip of the iceberg. For the last three years, each year has been the hottest on record. Warmer temperatures have increased the amount of moisture in the atmosphere because warmer air holds more water. Extreme weather changes, from massive downpours and flooding to intense hurricanes and blizzards, have been happening more often than at any time in the last 100 years. Rivers are drying up; oceans are becoming more acidic; sea levels are rising; grasslands are turning into deserts – the ecology of the planet is in crisis.

Climate change causes ice caps and glaciers to melt, raising sea levels. Ice that took 1,600 years to form in the Andes Mountains in South America has melted in the last 25 years. The Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets have melted by 30 percent since 1972. Global sea levels will rise by seven feet by the end of the century.

Climate change is rapidly turning fertile land into desert. The major deserts of the world are all increasing in size. As droughts increase and deserts grow, the U.N. estimates that more than 250 million people have been pushed off their lands and one billion people in over 100 countries are at risk.

As a result, ecosystems all over the planet are being destroyed. Scientists explain that ongoing carbon emissions in the atmosphere are causing this worldwide change in climate patterns that threatens another extinction event that would wipe out more than half of

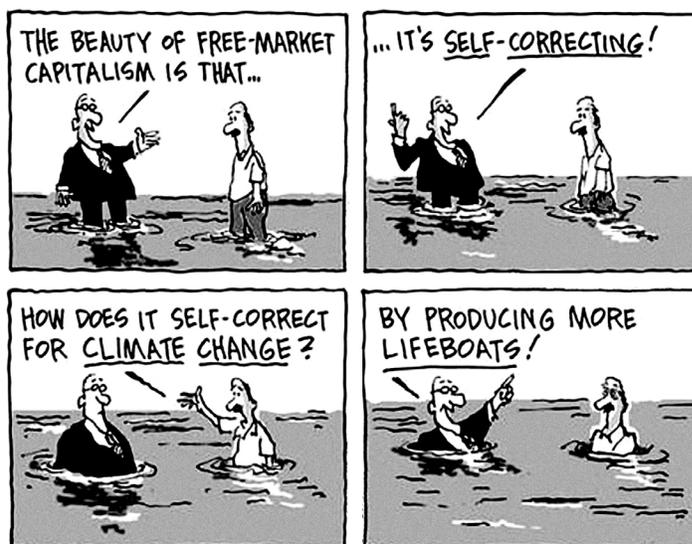
the world's species including our own. It's true that the carbon emissions are the immediate source of the rising temperatures. But the real problem here is not climate change.

Capitalism – A Deadly System

Climate change is just one part of this deadly system known as capitalism, where the only goal is the endless generation of profit. This economic system is what's heading our species down a path of extinction. And as long as the corporations and the politicians who serve them are left in charge, they will keep heading us in the same direction. They know exactly what they want – to maintain their profits at all cost. Their motto is: to grow or die. Since there is always money to be made in the short run – they have no concern for what will happen in the long run.

Their disregard for the environment is nothing new. Rivers, lakes, oceans and the air have been dumping grounds for the poisons produced by their industries. Entire mountaintops are being blown up to get at coal, one of the deadliest polluting fuels. Their priority is not life on this planet but only what's best for their bank accounts. As the planet heats up faster than ever, these companies are slamming on the accelerator.

As rising temperatures break up the glaciers in the arctic, energy companies are excited for new sea passageways opening up the possibility for future oil drilling in areas that were previously out of reach. All



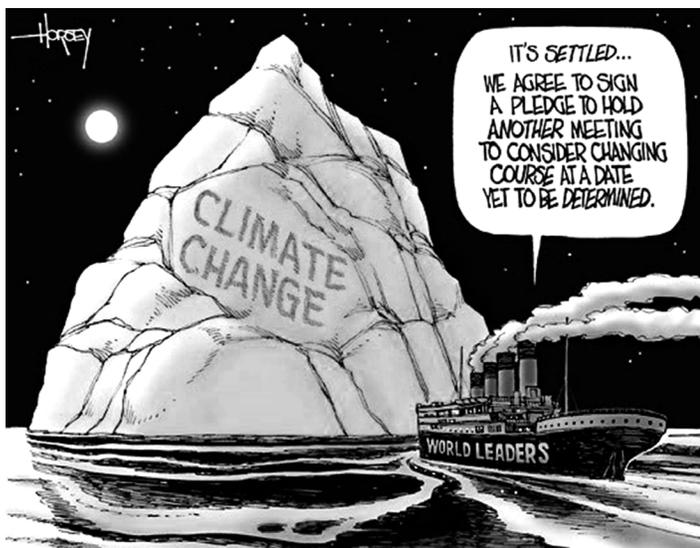
major oil companies have begun drilling in the Arctic and plan to expand.

Across the Appalachian Mountains in the U.S., companies are blowing up mountaintops to get at the coal. Communities are being destroyed, their health ruined, their homes destroyed, and their history erased before their eyes. As these mountains are blown up, some of the world's most biologically diverse forests are being cut away. Local rivers and streams are being filled with toxic debris from the blasts, destroying the drinking water, killing off local species, flooding the area.

One of the fastest growing industries in the U.S. is hydraulic fracturing or "fracking," a method of drilling for natural gas by forcing toxic chemicals into the ground, poisoning the groundwater, polluting the air, killing the animal life, and causing cancer, brain damage, and bone depletion in humans. New fracking wells are planned all over California.

In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon drilling platform of British Petroleum failed, causing the worst oil spill in human history. The danger from offshore drilling is clear but in 2012, the U.S. government issued more than 90 new drilling permits — more than the last two years combined. As the dangers of offshore drilling get worse, the number of wells keep increasing.

To keep track of global warming, scientists measure the amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) dumped into the atmosphere each year. Last year, the amount of CO₂ emissions increased by the largest amount ever recorded. So as we endure the impact on the environment, more carbon is being dumped into the atmosphere, not less.



Regulations have been imposed when people mobilize an opposition but eventually any restrictions are either ignored or overturned in order to keep the profits coming. Laws are sometimes passed, imposing restrictions on pollution but corporations would rather break the laws and pay the fines because the profits are so enormous.

The challenge we face is one that will decide the fate of humanity. The source of these problems is this system of capitalism, which has led to the misery of billions of people and destroyed vast areas of the earth. If we are to have a future – we must put a stop to this system.

There is no debate about the path humanity is on living under this economic system. Scientists agree that if world temperatures rise more than two degrees Celsius, then massive extinction of life is likely. If we leave the future of our planet up to the energy companies, financial institutions, and the world's largest corporations, they are clearly going to take us far beyond that two-degree limit. According to NASA's former top climate scientist, James Hansen, if corporations continue on their same course, the amount of carbon that will be dumped into the atmosphere will likely raise global temperature 4 to 8 degrees Celsius. As Hansen has said, this will be "game over for the climate."

We Must Look to Ourselves

Capitalism is based not on meeting the needs of people or the planet, but on exploitation – of workers at their jobs and of the planet for raw materials. Whenever experts make recommendations to reduce carbon emissions, the response from business leaders has been to reject the recommendations, claiming that they would require the reduction of too much production, bankrupting too many companies. To them, nothing is more important than the profits of their companies, even when it means the destruction of the environment. People around the world know that something is deeply wrong. Our schools, our cities, our lives and our planet are being torn apart. We are working harder for less. We can't hope for change from politicians with their false promises.

Across the U.S., people have been gathering to resist the devastation from energy companies. In Appalachia, communities have banded together trying to block mining companies from destroying the forests. Small farm towns across the country have been trying to block energy companies from coming in and destroying their water and

living areas through fracking, and in some entire states and counties they have been successfully organized to ban fracking.

One of the biggest fights so far is to stop the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, a destructive project that would pump over one million barrels of oil daily from Canada's tar sands to the Gulf Coast. The oil in the Keystone pipeline could poison drinking water, threaten the communities it runs through, and will speed up the warming of the planet. Protests have been coordinated from Canada to Texas to try to block this project from continuing.

The large response around the world demonstrate the urgency of the problem of global warming. And they are a sign that more people are ready to act to stop the devastation of our planet. We can't allow those responsible for wrecking our planet to remain in control of our world. Our future, the future of humanity, depends on us, on ordinary people, on workers who make this society and our world run.

We can't leave our future in the hands of those who have put humanity on the endangered species list. They will continue to pollute and ravage the planet to get at the profits that await them, even if it means destroying the precious possibility of humans and other species to live on the planet.

Our lives and our planet are worth more than their system of pollution for profit. It is in the interests of

the vast majority of people on this planet to stop this environmental destruction. It's up to us to change it. We can organize a society that doesn't need to blow up mountains or drill through the arctic or destroy the planet.

We can organize a society that is based on the idea of producing what we need to survive, using as few resources as possible, of harnessing the least destructive sources of energy, of eliminating wasteful production – of recognizing that in order for our species to survive, we have to preserve the planet and not destroy it.

We need a society that is organized to meet human needs, that develops scientific knowledge to understand the world and how we can live well within it. Working people are the ones who do the work to make this society run, and together we can organize a society that truly puts our needs and the needs of the planet above all else – a truly socialist society. Only when we remove the interests of profit and corporations, and put the needs of humanity front and center, it is only then that will we be able to tackle the problem of climate change, and begin to live in harmony with the planet.

That society is possible. It is the only possibility for our species to avoid extinction, and to provide all human beings with healthy, fulfilling lives. Either capitalism will lead to the extinction of our species, or we will carry out the extinction of capitalism – the choice is up to us.



Destruction of the Environment – A Ticking Time Bomb

Climate change is an immediate danger to humanity. Every year for the past 37 years has been warmer than average. And the twelve warmest years have all happened since 1998. We are experiencing this through rising global temperatures, increased numbers of storms and natural disasters. These environmental changes will cause massive human suffering and destruction in the decades to come unless human beings change the way we live on this planet.

The majority of scientific researchers agree that human beings are causing global climate change. How do we know human beings cause this change? Climate scientists have understood for decades that carbon dioxide in the air causes a greater amount of the sun's heat to remain in the atmosphere, heating the planet. Since humans began burning fossil fuels – oil and coal – the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has increased by 500 billion tons, one third of the total. The temperature is rising fast as the carbon dioxide traps heat. The last time that carbon dioxide was as concentrated as it is today, the earth was three degrees hotter, melting the ice caps and raising the sea-levels by 100 feet.

What does this rise in temperature lead to? Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, the Earth's temperature has been raised by 0.8 degrees.

This has already resulted in drastic changes. One third of the ice in the arctic has melted, and there is five percent more water in the atmosphere. This has resulted in rising sea levels and an increase in the sort of floods, hurricanes, and tsunamis that have been in the headlines in the last years. The changing composition of the oceans has led to a 30 percent increase in acidity, causing massive destruction of fish and other marine animals. Increasing temperatures have released carbon dioxide as well as methane and other gases trapped in arctic ice, speeding up the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, accelerating the warming process. The consequences of these environmental changes will continue to be drastic.

Climate change will cause even more massive expansion of deserts. Farmland will be destroyed by this process of desertification. Climate scientists predict that if this takes place, within a generation as many as three billion people will face famine and starvation. In other words, climate change threatens to kill almost half of humanity.

Time is running out. Scientists predict that if the Earth's temperature increases beyond two degrees, the changes will be irreversible. Too much ice will have melted and too much carbon dioxide will have been released. The problem is that scientists predict we will likely reach the tipping point within 16 years, and if so we won't be able to stop the earth from reaching the two-degree limit.

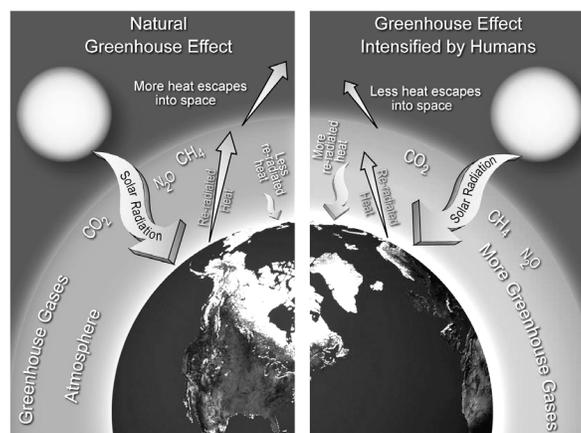
What stands in the way of reducing carbon emissions? The money which corporations stand to make. In 2006 Nicholas Stern head of Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy in London issued a report responding to dozens of

investigations done by climate scientists. The climate scientists set a firm limit of carbon in the atmosphere in order for humans and about 50 percent of the world's species to survive. The Stern report said that the proposed limit was too low because the world economy would go into crisis. In other words, in order for capitalism to continue, 50 percent of the world's species including our own must go extinct. It is as if we are headed for a cliff and these companies are putting their foot down on the gas pedal and asking us to close our eyes.

There is a simple solution – to dramatically reduce carbon dioxide emission by changing the way human beings live on the planet. To begin to use human creativity to restore rather than ruin the environment – to live consciously in the world. We have a choice – Climate change or system change.

The Carbon Cycle – Maintaining A Balance

The carbon cycle is the exchange of carbon, in the form of carbon dioxide (CO₂) or methane (CH₄), between the



earth's atmosphere, oceans, land, and all plant and animal life. This exchange of carbon, along with sunlight entering our atmosphere, has regulated the earth's temperature and climate since earth's atmosphere emerged over four billion years ago. This interaction between sunlight, the land, the atmosphere and the oceans also produces the Greenhouse Effect.

The Greenhouse Effect

When sunlight (solar radiation), enters our atmosphere about half of it is absorbed by the earth's surface, warming it. The other half is reflected back by arctic ice, clouds and greenhouse gas molecules in the atmosphere. But another portion of solar radiation is absorbed by those same greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, creating more warmth. Over millions of years a balance of sorts has been established, which provides the earth with the climate we are familiar with. That is why the elements involved create an environment similar to a greenhouse, which is used to provide a constant climate to grow plants. One of the key greenhouse gases is carbon. And that is why the dumping of carbon into the atmosphere is creating such havoc with the environment.

Carbon Emissions and Global Warming

Scientists say the massive amount of carbon being put into the atmosphere is responsible for much of the extreme climate change we are witnessing today and threatens to

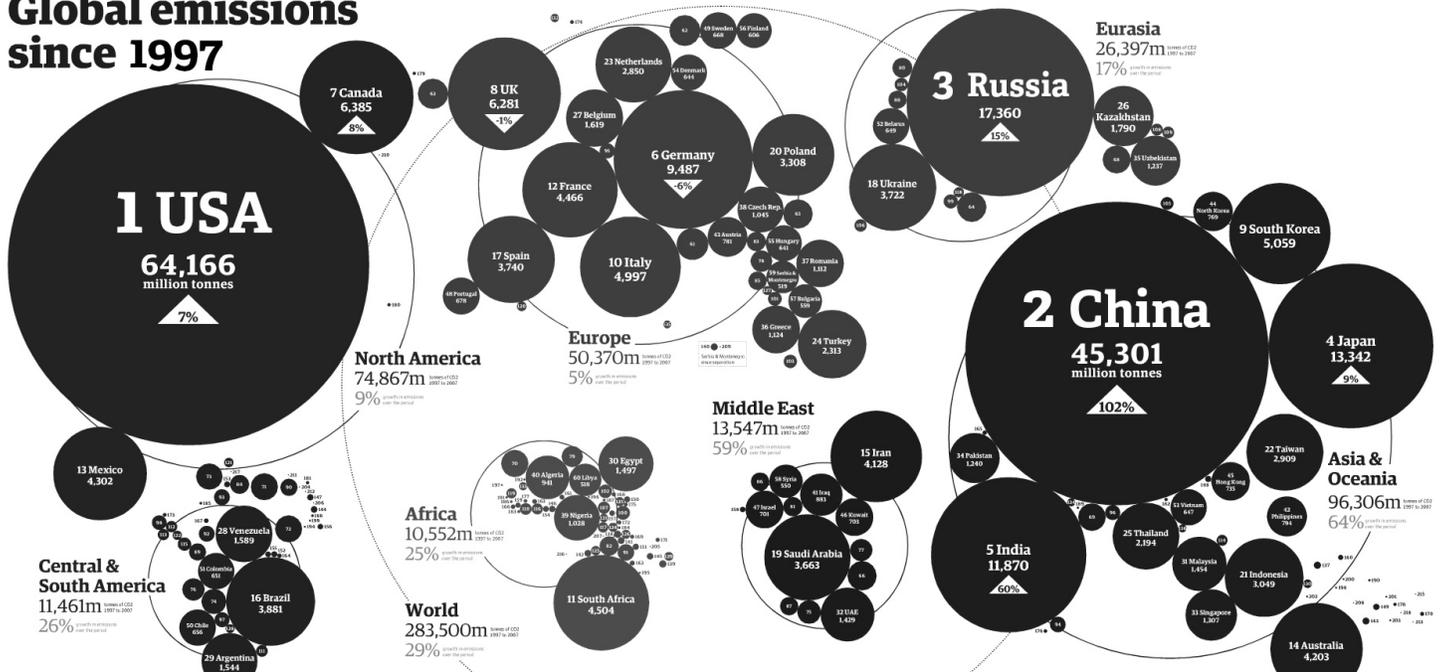
disrupt the entire ecology of the planet, with rising sea levels and changing weather patterns.

Carbon plays an important role as a greenhouse gas in the form of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄). Like other greenhouse gases, carbon traps energy, in the form of heat, from the sun. The more carbon or other greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, the warmer the planet will become. The result is droughts and desertification, melting glaciers and ice caps, ocean warming and severe storms and temperature fluctuations around the world.

The earth's history has seen many fluctuations in carbon in the atmosphere, creating much colder and much hotter climates, higher and lower sea levels, than what we have today. But for the past 49 million years our earth has been in a cooling period that created a climate allowing for the evolution of many of the life forms we see today, including humans.

The concentration of carbon in the atmosphere is measured in "parts per million" or ppm. For all of human existence, the ppm of (CO₂) in the atmosphere never exceeded 308 ppm. It was within this environment that our ancestors developed agriculture around 10,000 years ago. But after the birth of capitalism and the Industrial Revolution that followed in the mid-1700s, capitalists started to dig up and burn ancient carbon in large and increasing amounts. This ancient carbon is from animal and plant life that died millions of years ago, decomposed,

Global emissions since 1997



and can now be found in the form of coal, oil and natural gas buried deep underground. This is why they're also called "fossil fuels."

So besides all the carbon in our atmosphere, keeping our earth around a steady 300ppm, large companies began burning all this ancient carbon as well, putting millions of tons more of CO₂ into the carbon cycle. And for the past 260 years CO₂ has been steadily increasing. This heating

up of the planet by burning fossil fuels is what is called "Global Warming." So James Hansen and other climate scientists said that 350 ppm was the limit. After that it is "Game over". On May 2013, levels at the Mauna Loa observatory in Hawaii hit 400 ppm for the first time in all of human history. This in essence means we are now living on a planet that humans have never lived on before. And the fossil fuel industry keeps pumping out the carbon.

Fracking – Another Sign of an Insane System

Hydraulic fracturing, also known as "fracking," is a process that mixes massive amounts of fresh water into a poisonous cocktail of toxic chemicals and silica sand, and then forces it into wells drilled thousands of feet into the earth to extract oil or natural gas trapped underground. Energy companies use millions of gallons of fresh water per well to force natural gas or oil to the surface.

Fracking has disrupted towns across the U.S. and in Europe. The methane released from fracking seeps into the water supply and is so concentrated that people can light the gas coming out of their water faucets on fire. Many communities have already reported serious health problems among children, the elderly and farm animals. This whole process poisons the underground water supply, causes cancer, brain damage and birth defects in humans and animals, and can trigger earthquakes. The fracking concoction contains over 300 chemicals that are poisonous and cancerous to the skin, the brain, the lungs, the heart, the stomach – just about every part of the human body. Millions upon millions of gallons of these toxins have been dumped across the country, poisoning communities.

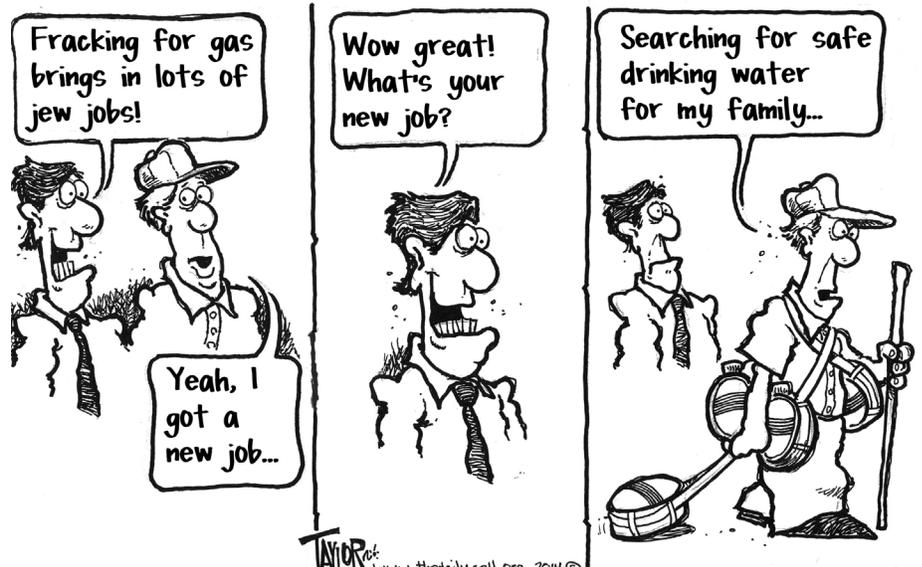
These toxins were never a secret. In 2005, with the help of then-Vice President, Dick Cheney, energy corporations teamed up to change federal laws in order to allow fracking. The Energy Policy Act was passed, exempting fracking from restrictions in the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act, allowing energy companies to freely

poison the water supply without having to comply with any federal restrictions.

In 2013, because of fracking, the U.S. hit a 25- year high for energy production. And by 2015 the U.S. is expected to surpass Saudi Arabia as the world's largest oil producer because of the acceleration of fracking across the country. The U.S. plans to use these new energy supplies as further leverage to impose its economic interests around the world.

Fracking is one of the fastest growing industries in the U.S., already having spread across fifteen states, from New York to California. The driving force behind this growth is pure greed. In drought- stricken Texas, the same amount of water it takes to grow \$200,000 worth of crops can be used to frack \$2.5 billion worth of gas or oil. Fracking methods have already spread to 15 countries around the world as energy companies race for the last deposits of oil and natural gas.

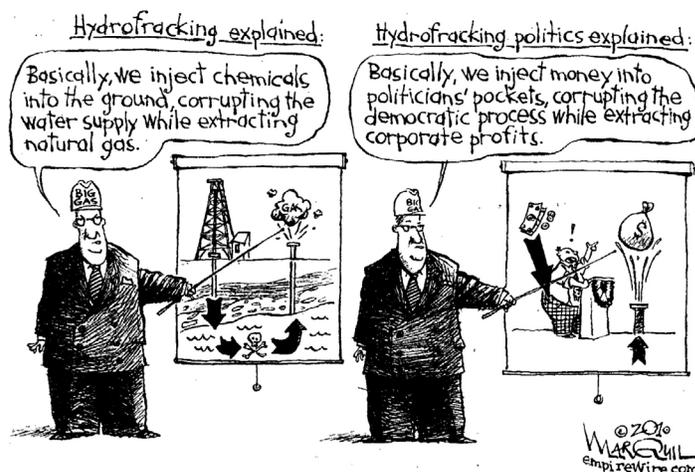
In California, energy companies want to open up the Monterey Shale deposits to fracking, an area covering



1,750 square miles. Opening this land up to fracking would destroy the habitat, further poison the air and water, and dump catastrophic levels of carbon into the atmosphere, three times as much carbon emissions as expected from the Canadian tar sands set to supply the Keystone XL pipeline.

People have begun to resist the oil companies' fracking drive. Moratoriums and bans have been put in place across the U.S., including the states of Vermont and New York, in the cities of Los Angeles, Dallas, and Pittsburgh and internationally in France, Ireland, South Africa, the Czech Republic, Romania and more. But an even bigger fight must be waged to ban fracking completely.

Fracking is truly an insane process of an insane system.



Keystone XL Pipeline – A Toxic Disaster

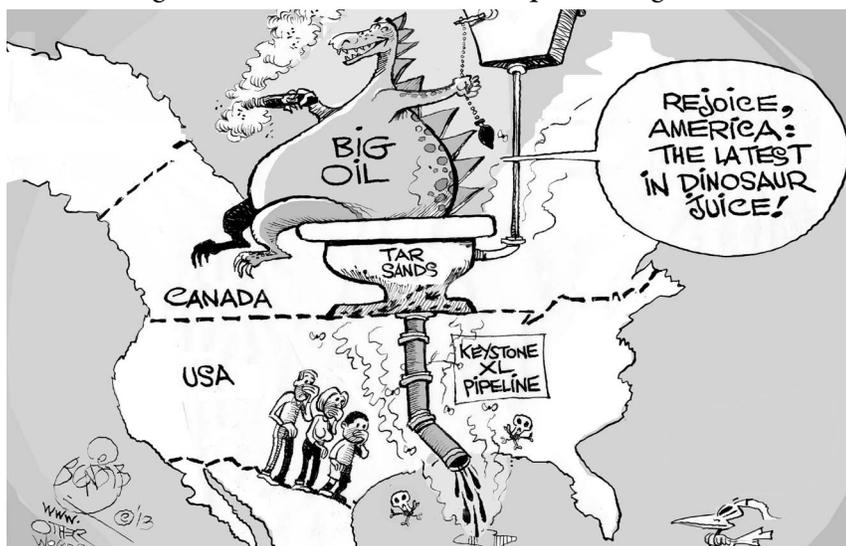
There have been many recent protests against the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. This pipeline is designed to carry 830,000 gallons of oil per day, travelling over 1,000 miles from Canada to the gulf. The Keystone XL pipeline will ensure that oil will be available to use as a fuel in the U.S. for decades to come. The problem with this is that the tar sands are incredibly polluting sources of oil and they are guaranteed to cause massive environmental destruction along with immediate risk to communities that the pipeline will pass through.

Tar sands are actually a type of rock formation that contains oil within its structure. Extracting this oil is much more polluting than drilling, as the tar sands contain huge amounts of carbon. The processing of

the tar sands will release 10-17 percent more carbon emissions than crude oil. Keystone XL will release 27 million megatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. According to James Hansen, a former NASA climate scientist who resigned after criticizing U.S. climate policy, if Keystone XL becomes fully operational it will mean game over for the planet – climate change will be irreversible if this much carbon dioxide is released. In addition to the greenhouse gases, the Keystone XL pipeline threatens to release, the processing of tar sands creates a danger of pollution from spills.

The extraction of oil from the tar sands requires boiling it in huge amounts of water – a process that produces toxic waste-water. The tar-sands oil pumped from these sites is also incredibly toxic and communities with pipes running through them are in danger of mass-poisoning. Already, tar sands leaks have caused toxic pollution in Marshall, Michigan and Mayflower, Arkansas. Residents of these towns have reported nausea, headaches, and other health problems.

While Keystone XL threatens life on the planet, the politicians in Washington continue to support its development. President Obama has pledged to support the construction of Keystone XL, as long as scientists carry out a thorough study of its impact on the environment. But what is there to study!



There is no question: the Keystone XL pipeline will be a massive disaster. Why is it receiving the support of Washington? Because Oil companies such as Shell and Trans-Canada stand to make billions of dollars from the development of the Keystone XL pipeline and the tar sands.

The battle over Keystone XL is not over. We should do everything we can to stop the advance of these destructive projects, and raise the question: what is worth more – the profits of the oil corporations or our lives and our planet?

The Destruction Of West Virginia

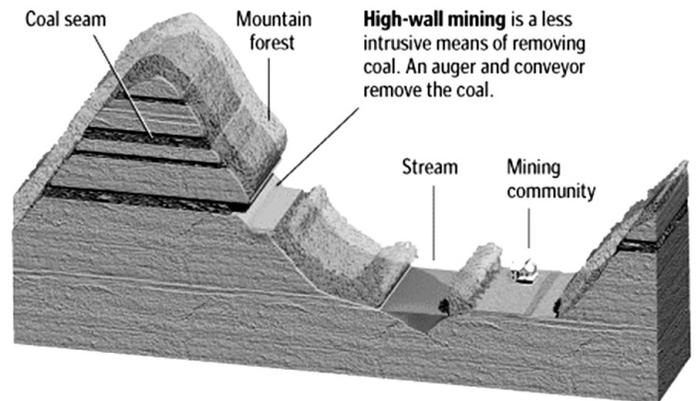
A look at what is going on in West Virginia shows us how ruthless corporations can be to make profits. In West Virginia and all over the Appalachian region, there is a massive push to destroy the landscape and to get at the last deposits of coal available. The new technique is called mountaintop removal, a process of blowing up tops of mountains in order to get at the coal underneath, and then dumping all the debris into nearby valleys. The explosives that are used are up to 100 times stronger than those used in the Oklahoma City bombing, equal to one Hiroshima per week in West Virginia.

Once the mountains are destroyed and the coal harvested, workers scoop out the excess soil and dump it into nearby valleys and rivers. When rainwater runs through this pulverized rock, it is more easily dissolved, releasing highly toxic metal ions (such as mercury, lead, cadmium, arsenic, manganese, beryllium, chromium and other carcinogenic substances) into local streams, rivers and groundwater. So far, the coal companies have destroyed more than 500 mountains. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that almost 1,200 miles of Appalachian streams have been buried since 1992.

The water has become so contaminated that it is poisoning people. According to 21 peer reviewed studies, people that live near mountaintop removal sites have a 50 percent greater risk of fatal cancer and a 42 percent greater risk of birth defects than the general population.

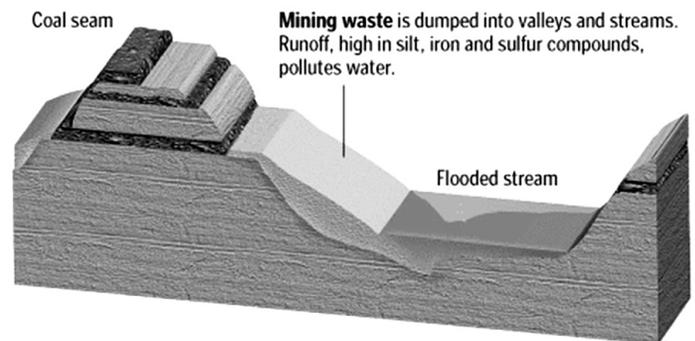
Because people can't rely on locally sourced water, they are forced to depend on bottled water. What were once biologically diverse ecosystems have now been pulverized into barren wastelands. Plant and animal wildlife have lost their homes. Around 100 different species of birds are now gone. Because many of these regions are economically devastated, mining companies are able to buy off the land from families that have lived there for generations, ripping apart local communities. There has been a massive drop in employment in the mining

Original profile



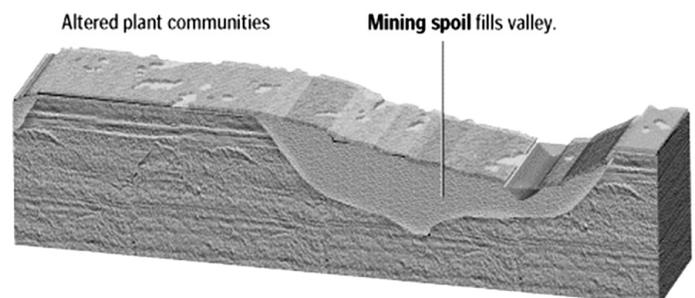
Mountaintop Removal

The mining company strips away forests and topsoil, then blasts apart the mountain to get at coal seams.



Reclamation

In some cases, after the coal is taken, mining waste is smoothed out and steep slopes are terraced. Regular chemical treatments allow the infertile and highly acidic soil to grow pine and locust trees and a non-native grass. At other sites, mining companies pile up dirt and rock to re-create the mountain's approximate silhouette. But much is often left over and dumped into valleys.



industry due to the industry's widespread reliance on mountaintop removal, which employs far fewer workers. In a couple decades, employment in the industry has dropped from its peak of 130,000 to 14,000, almost one-tenth of what it once was. This has meant that areas with a lot of heavy mining have the highest unemployment rates in the region. In the city of Welch, 93 percent live on less

than \$10,000 per year, 40 percent of families live below the poverty line, and 28 percent of high school students drop out, compared to eight percent nationally.

The extent of destruction in areas such as rural West Virginia shows how far capitalists will go to squeeze the last drops of profit from nature and humanity. They are literally willing to blow up the country.

Typhoon Haiyan – Not A Natural Disaster

More than 6,000 people have been killed in the Philippines from one of the most powerful storms ever recorded. Typhoon Haiyan created huge waves and winds as strong as 195 miles per hour, destroying entire towns along the coast. More than four million people have been displaced, and thousands have no access to food, water or medicine. The city of Tacloban has become like a warzone, with bodies scattered in the streets and buried under buildings as the smell of death has polluted the air.

The devastation left by this typhoon is overwhelming. The impact from all of this will last for a lifetime. It was one of the most powerful storms ever recorded. But at the same time it was just a glimpse of the kind of extreme weather that will only continue so long as the financial interests of corporations and energy companies are more important than the lives of human beings. There is nothing natural about this disaster.

To call an event a natural disaster means it occurs for reasons independent of human influence. That's not the case here at all. This was not a disaster from nature, nor even a disaster from weather – this was an economic disaster. When the reason this typhoon was so powerful is because of climate changes caused from corporations continuously dumping carbon into the atmosphere, then we must call this an economic disaster.

As millions of people in the Philippines are trying to recover from this devastation, a global climate conference has just finished up in Warsaw, Poland. For years, these sorts of gatherings have been happening. Delegates from countries all over the world come together to discuss the growing problem of climate change and its impact on the planet

and the world's people. And every year, the conference plays out like political theater, and nothing changes.

Regardless of the devastating impact of these weather events around the world, the response from the world's largest economic countries – led by the U.S. – is the same. They continue to defend their economies despite the environmental and human destruction that follows from them. As increasing numbers of people on earth are impacted from climate change, these corporations are busy making things even worse.

The extent of the damage from this typhoon is still being discovered. The death toll keeps rising every week. The damage to the infrastructure was estimated at a minimum of \$14 billion. The U.S. – the world's largest economy, and by far the greatest contributor to climate change – has promised to provide \$20 million in relief. This is an insult. Not only is it a miniscule amount, but it does nothing to address the role of U.S. corporations in forcing these sorts of events on the rest of the world. This is like destroying whole countries and then throwing



money at them, hoping they will shut up. To call it relief is a joke.

Let's let this typhoon and other extreme weather events be a wake-up call. We've seen enough of the type of disasters that will only continue to happen, with increasing intensity, if we allow these corporations to continue to wreck our planet. We can't count on them to do anything differently.

If we want to see an end to the destruction of our planet, we are going to have to take control of our society, take it out of the hands of these corporations. Only then will we organize society to meet people's needs – starting with the need to maintain a planet that we can actually live on.

Nuclear Power: Lining Their Pockets, Risking Our Lives

On Friday March 11th, a major earthquake hit Japan's east coast. The quake and the tsunami that followed together killed over 10,000 people. It was followed by another man-made disaster, which continues today. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant was damaged in the quake and tsunami, and its reactors started to lose their coolant. The damaged plant has begun to leak radioactive material contaminating the area for 20 miles.

The leak has not turned into a full-blown meltdown. But some experts are worried that it could if more explosions occur – and if it did, it would be as if a nuclear bomb were dropped on the east coast of Japan. Thousands more would die from radiation exposure for years afterward. And the fallout from the explosion would shower radioactive material across the world, as far as California. The natural disaster of the earthquake has given way to a man-made disaster.

This could easily be happening here in the U.S., which has 103 nuclear reactors, 23 of which are identical in design to the Fukushima Daiichi plant. Many of these plants were built decades ago and have faulty equipment. Recent tests showed that the emergency power generator at the Fermi 2 reactor in Michigan was non-functional from 1986 to 2006. If the plant's primary power failed, nothing would have stood in the way of a meltdown.

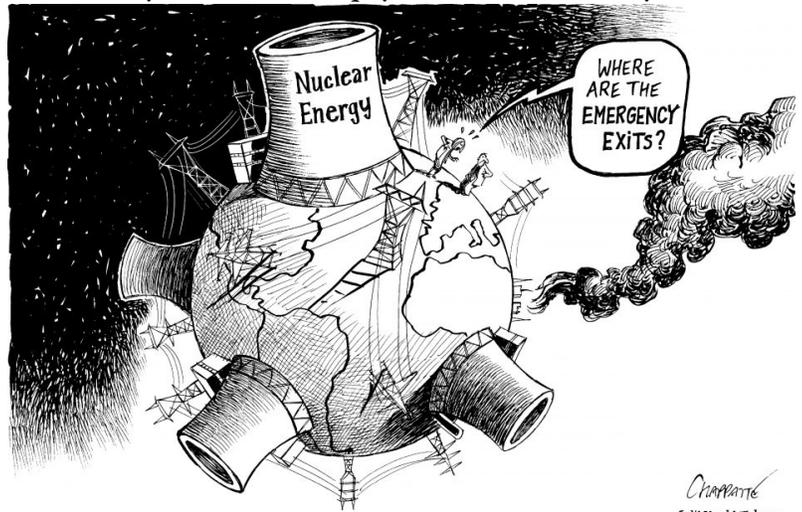
Four nuclear reactors are located in California, including the San Onofre plant in Southern California and the Diablo Valley plant in San Luis Obispo. Both of those plants are located on fault-lines, where earthquakes are expected. Government regulators and paid analysts have promised over and over that there is no risk and that these plants are safe. The Japanese government said the same thing about the Fukushima Daiichi plant!

Geologists who study patterns of earthquakes predict that California is due for another big earthquake, like the one that destroyed much of San Francisco in 1906.

In California, the damage from an earthquake would be even worse than in Japan, where building standards and regulations are much better than in the U.S. And the stakes are much higher than that with nuclear meltdown and radioactive contamination a distinct possibility.

Today there are 440 nuclear plants in the world, atomic bombs waiting to go off in our midst. But the big energy companies and the government continue to rely on nuclear power to generate energy and profit. In February, the Obama administration set aside \$36 billion to build new nuclear plants. The nuclear power company Exelon was one of Obama's biggest supporters, donating \$340,000 to his campaign. The more plants, the better for Exelon.

So why use such a dangerous source of energy? Nuclear power is actually the cheapest form of energy for the energy companies to produce. It's cheaper than coal, or hydroelectric, or wind, or solar. But it's only cheap because they don't have to pay the real costs. They don't have



to pay for the thousands of lives they destroy. They don't have to pay for all the cases of cancer caused by radiation when their systems fail. They don't have to pay for the polluted landscapes and poisoned environment. The real cost is paid by us, the people who live and work around nuclear power plants. And our children who will have to live with the consequences. They are playing Russian roulette with our lives.

Their system is built for profit, not to meet the needs of people in a safe and healthy way. There is no reason we couldn't meet our energy needs by developing more efficient wind, solar, and other safe energy sources. The choice of nuclear power is a choice made by the wealthy elite and rich corporations



who are putting the whole world at risk. Their system of production for profit is a disaster waiting to happen, and we should put a stop to it before any more disasters happen.

The BP Oil Spill: Profits First, People Last

For seven weeks, millions of gallons of oil have been flowing into the Gulf of Mexico. British Petroleum, the oil company drilling the well when it exploded, refuses to allow accurate measurements of how much oil is leaking out. Official estimates are around 40,000 barrels per day while many scientists think it is as high as 110,000 barrels per day, possibly even one million. Depending on the calculations, an oil spill the size of the 1989 Exxon Valdez spill is happening every four days or every 24 hours. Without a doubt, this is the worst oil spill in U.S. history, possibly in the history of the world.

The impact from this spill is horrific. Eleven workers already died when the oilrig exploded. There have been reports of fisherman dying from the toxins in Corexit, the chemicals used by BP to thin out the oil. The oil is already hitting hundreds of miles of seashore in the Gulf. The entire fishing industry along much of the Gulf coast has been shutdown by BP. Fishermen aren't even allowed to take their boats out. Wetlands, bird sanctuaries, marshes, marine life are getting covered in oil. Birds and sea life are turning up dead, completely coated in oil. As hurricane season approaches, the disaster is expected to only get worse.

Estimates of the economic costs of the spill, from clean up to job losses, to the shut down of the fishing industry, to the crash of the tourist industry, and so on, are as high

as 1.3 trillion dollars. That's not including the permanent damage to the local environment and animal life.

The damages from this spill will never be addressed. Current U.S. law sets a cap on how much money an oil company can be fined in an oil spill at \$75 million. That is about one day's worth of profits for an oil company. Some politicians are trying to increase that amount to \$10 billion. This is still only a tiny fraction of the total damages, and a slap in the face as BP is prepared to pay out about \$10 billion in stock dividends to top shareholders this month.

For oil companies, things like devastating oil spills, huge explosions, and dying workers are just part of the game of profits. Over 30 years ago, in 1979, a different oil well exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, called the Ixtoc 1. It leaked over 30,000 barrels per day and lasted over ten months. The response then looks no different from the response now. The politicians pretended to act tough against the oil companies. The legislators promised to carry out some investigative review of off-shore drilling. And the oil companies paid a small fine before continuing right where they left off.

Oil companies have been responsible for hundreds of oil spills since 1979 and nothing has changed. New reports have just been leaked by former BP employees showing a constant history of safety and environmental

violations. Dozens of safety complaints by workers went ignored, and workers were threatened with firing if they spoke out against any problems. The reports show a constant pattern of BP failing to maintain key equipment or saving money to skip maintenance. BP would ignore broken warning systems, broken blow out preventers, failed gas detections. All of these violations could have prevented this recent oil spill. These were violations that the federal government was well aware of but chose to ignore.

What we're seeing unfold around this oil spill is just business as usual. Profits are more important than the planet, more important than people's lives, more important than animal life, more important than our futures. The politicians protect the interests of the corporations and perhaps pay lip service to the effects on working people. And meanwhile we're expected to shut up and deal with it. It couldn't be any clearer that their business as usual has nothing to do with what we need in our lives.

BP's Disaster: Business as Usual for the Oil Industry

The BP oil leak is the biggest oil-related disaster in history. But its size is the only thing that makes this disaster unique. Disregard for the environment and human life, the corrupt relationship between government and the oil company and the attempt to conceal the true scope of the disaster – that's business as usual for the oil industry.

The Niger Delta

In Nigeria, oil giants Chevron, Exxon, and Shell have destroyed delicate ecosystems and poisoned and terrorized local populations in their quest for oil-profits. In the Niger Delta, home to Nigeria's largest oil reserves, people are forced to live amidst pollution from leaking pipelines and gas flares that burn constantly. It is estimated that as much as 11 million gallons of oil per year leak into the Delta's marshlands from poorly maintained pipelines, some of which are over 40 years-old. The leaks have turned the Delta's marshlands into dead zones. To access the Delta's oil, whole forests are often cleared and entire villages are uprooted to make way for pipelines and oil wells. The oil companies have a cozy relationship with the Nigerian government, who use armed forces to repress the population and protect the oil companies.

In May of this year, a pipeline owned by Exxon burst and leaked millions of gallons of oil into the Delta. The leak lasted more than a week before it was contained. When people organized demonstrations against Exxon, they were attacked by armed thugs.

In the 1990s, Shell worked in collaboration with Nigeria's military dictatorship to murder and imprison activists among the Ogoni people who were fighting the destruction of their land in the Niger Delta. Shell supplied weapons and hired Nigerian soldiers as mercenaries to shoot at people protesting the construction of pipelines through their villages. The government brutally attacked the activists who organized protests. In 1995, nine Ogoni activists were arrested and hanged.



Ecuador

From 1964 to 1990, Texaco (now owned by Chevron) dumped 18 billion gallons of toxic wastewater into the rivers of the Amazon rainforest. Texaco calculated that dumping the waste would save \$3 dollar on each barrel of oil. But local communities used these rivers and streams for drinking, bathing, and cooking. The poisoned water caused cancer rates in Ecuador to rise to 30 times higher than in any other part of the country. Over 1,400 people in region the have died from sicknesses caused by contaminated water.

Texaco left Ecuador in 1992, but left behind over 1000 toxic oil pits throughout the Amazon. This poison continues to leak into the region's river and streams. Chevron, as the new owner of Texaco refuses to

compensate the victims of the pollution, or to clean up the mess. A lawsuit filed by indigenous groups against Chevron is now in its 17th year. The company has done everything it can to disrupt the trial, including fabricating evidence against the presiding judge.

Not Out of the Ordinary

What we are seeing today in the Gulf of Mexico is nothing new for the oil industry. In every oil-producing region in the world, the oil-companies are there squeezing out every last dime of profit they can. They do this every day — polluting, manipulating, and murdering, all in the pursuit of profit. Cost-cutting for them means destruction and disaster for us. The life of every living thing on the planet is threatened by their actions every day.

Chevron: Robbing and Poisoning For Profit!

Last week, a major fire and explosion at the Chevron oil refinery in Richmond, CA sent toxic, black fumes all over the city. Richmond residents were ordered to stay indoors with the windows and doors shut and avoid breathing any outside toxic air. But only some residents were able to receive the messages because the warning system malfunctioned due to inadequate maintenance. According to Contra Costa County Health Services, more than 1,700 people have sought medical treatment for difficulty breathing, eye, nose and throat irritation, and dizziness.

This is the third major explosion at the refinery in twelve years, all of which have been caused by leaking pipes. In January 2007, there was a giant explosion and a massive fire with 100-foot flames that burned for nine hours. In March 1999, an 18,000 pound black plume of poisonous sulfur dioxide smoke was released in an explosion caused by a leak in a more than 30-year old pipe. In both of these explosions, hundreds of Richmond residents went to emergency rooms with the same symptoms as those caused by the latest explosion.

Like in previous explosions at the refinery, Chevron knew in advance that the plant's equipment needed repairs. In the latest explosion, Chevron had known for two years that it needed to upgrade its piping. But they did nothing — they didn't want to pause the operation of the refinery and miss out on record profits. This refinery

was built in 1902, and it has definitely shown its old age over the years.

This refinery produces about 16 percent of California's gasoline, over 245,000 barrels of oil per day. Rather than use any of its average \$27 billion in profits every year to run the cleanest and safest refinery possible, Chevron runs the Richmond refinery as a constant health and safety hazard to its over 1,200 workers and thousands of nearby residents.

The heads of Chevron are only concerned with one thing — how much money they can make in their next fiscal quarter. Chevron is California's largest corporation. In the last ten years, Chevron has been among the most profitable corporations in the world. The lives of the workers, local residents, the rest of us who pay outrageous gas prices — we mean nothing to Chevron.

For Chevron, the worst that can happen is it gets a minor slap on the wrist, pays a fine, and continues with business as usual. Last year, Chevron was fined a tiny \$170,000 for air quality violations over a five-year period. This is nothing compared to the estimated \$22 million in oil the refinery processes each day. With that kind of money, Chevron couldn't care less about health and safety.

Chevron's refinery in Richmond is the single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in California. Since 2006, the refinery has been in repeated violation of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, continuously

dumping toxins into the air and the bay. At least one third of the children who live in Richmond have asthma. Chevron pays no taxes to California for the oil it takes out of the ground. And now, after this fire, Chevron has sent gas prices to record levels to make us pay for their problems. For Chevron, pollution, health and safety risks, major accidents like this one – these are just minor obstacles on their path for profits. As one of the most profitable and powerful corporations in the world,

Chevron paints a clear picture of the priorities of the society we live in. The lives of working people – our own health, the health of our children, of our neighborhoods, our cities, of our entire planet, none of this matters as long as profits can be made. What happened in Richmond was not an accident. It's not an accident if it was avoidable, if it happens regularly, if it's viewed as a normal part of business. Events like these are not accidents – they are just part of the disaster of living in this kind of society.

Chevron: Our Planet or Their Profits?

Last month the Richmond city council approved a billion dollar project for Chevron's Richmond facility to refine dirtier and higher sulfur crude oil, which is more toxic than regular oil. This is barely two years after the 2012 explosion which sent 15,000 people to local hospitals. That was the third major explosion over twelve years.

After the explosion, Chevron was charged with willful neglect by Cal-OSHA for having known in advance that the plant's equipment needed repairs. Leaks that needed permanent fixes were just clamped shut all over the plant. Chevron, one of the world's most profitable companies, pulled in 71 billion dollars in profit the year of the explosion. Of course they could have afforded the repairs and safety maintenance, but Chevron made a clear and conscious choice to put profits first.

Chevron has made the argument that their expansion project is about job creation versus the environment, saying that if they were denied the right to expand production, then new jobs that Richmond desperately needs won't be created. Everything about how we make a living is phrased as do it their way or kiss our jobs goodbye. If we voice concern about conditions at work they tell us we're even lucky to have a job at all – implying that we must simply accept our conditions.

In return, Chevron promises to upgrade plant safety, as if they need to be paid off in order to operate a safe plant. One of the promises they made was to fix corroded pipes. As if that were a concession! They also promised to give \$90 million over ten years for special projects in Richmond.

Some money will go for education resources and student scholarships, Chevron will also give some land to the city for the development of solar panels. This money will go to a few programs, but an expansion of the refineries means more health problems for the community.

Richmond has double the child asthma rates compared to Marin across the bay. As one resident said, "Don't give our kids backpacks and ice cream and then give them asthma and cancer." What good are jobs and college if we all get sick?

This isn't just about the Chevron Richmond oil refinery. This is part of a much larger problem that we are facing. The warnings become more desperate, environmental disasters more catastrophic, and the signs much clearer. But capitalism continues to press forward in finding newer and more dangerous ways to exploit the environment and make the problems even worse.

Capitalism is based on the extraction of maximum profits, with complete disregard for the environment



Rivers are drying up, oceans are becoming more acidic, sea levels are rising, and what's left of forests are dying on a massive scale – our planet is in crisis. But the corporations maintain their destructive practices.

The system we live in is pushing our species down a path of extinction and taking the whole planet with us. As long as the corporations and the politicians who serve them are left in charge, they will keep pushing us in the same direction.

Around the world, people are taking up the struggle against global climate change. From Peru to India to the

United States, groups of people have begun to protest the pollution of the planet. This past Saturday in Richmond, hundreds of people gathered to voice their anger and to say that Chevron has no right to bargain with our lives and our planet. Of course, it is not just Chevron. Their system which values profit over life is the root of the problem. It's up to us to say, our lives and our planet are worth more than their profits. And it's up to us to change their system, because it is our planet and our future at stake.

The Destruction of Public Transportation

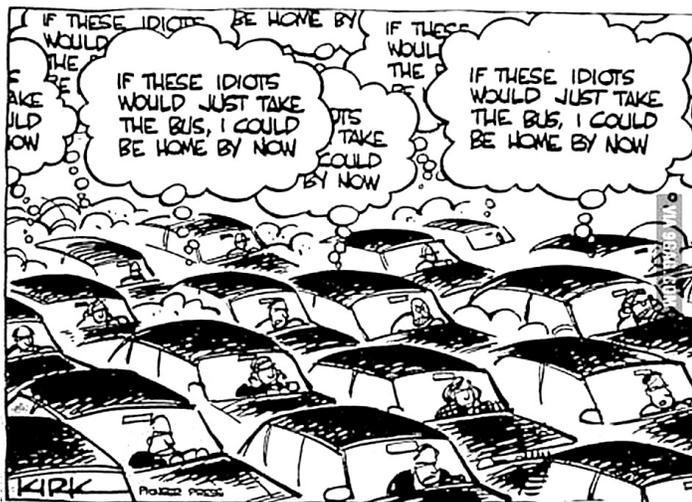
Across the country, in every major city, our public transportation systems are under attack at the same moment that more people than ever are relying on public transit. Since 2010, the number of people in the U.S. who rely on public transportation has reached its highest level in fifty years. Overall, the use of public transportation has increased 38 percent since 1995 – this is almost three times the rate of increase in the population. But transportation budgets are facing massive service cuts, layoffs, wage cuts and fare increases. Both riders and transit workers are under attack at a time when public transit is most needed.

share of the cost for public transit projects than for highways and roads. A local community has to provide a dollar for each federal dollar received in public transit funding, but only 25¢ for each federal dollar received for highways. This encourages cities to build roads and highways rather than public transit systems.

Public transit agencies also have restrictions on how they can spend their federal funds. Many federal grants can only be spent on new construction and new equipment. They can't be spent on wages and hiring, or maintenance of current equipment. In this way, federal funding ends up in the pockets of corporations through contracts to supply new buses, trains or other transport vehicles, and large construction firms that construct new lines and stations. Often many transit agencies end up buying new equipment without having the staff to operate it.

So far this restriction only applies to larger transit systems which serve an area with 200,000 people or more. But the federal government is trying to impose the same restriction on all transit agencies by lumping several smaller areas together, creating larger regional transit agencies, so that in total the number of people is greater than 200,000. This way the restrictions apply to every individual city within the larger area.

Transit agencies have to rely on state and local funding to survive. These sources of funding have suffered massive funding cuts due to state budget deficits. States continue to have record budget deficits. It's not that the states don't have the money for these services – it's just that they refuse to tax the super rich to get the money in the first place.



Funding Cuts

Public transportation is funded in complicated ways. Most transportation funding supports private automobile transportation through highways and roads. Only 18 cents of every federal dollar for transportation supports public transit. This is because cities have to pay a bigger

The result is that funding for transportation along with other public services, has been slashed. Transportation funds in California have been cut by about eight to ten billion dollars since 2000. And only 15 percent of these funds go to public transportation. These Attacks Aren't New

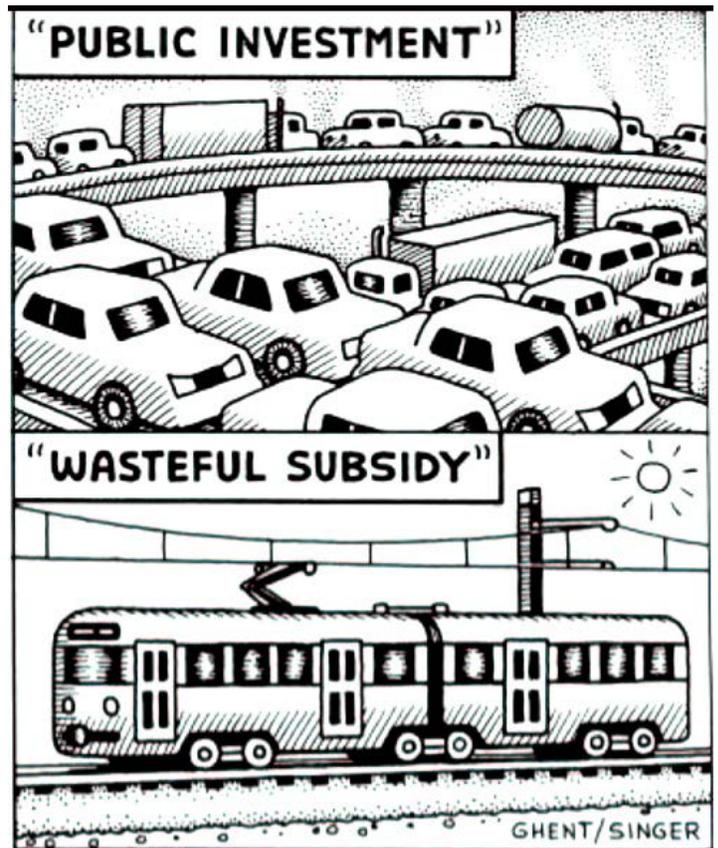
The assault on public transportation is not new. In 1926, every major city had a functioning public transportation system. But in the 1930s, major auto, oil, and tire companies (General Motors, Standard Oil, Firestone tires, and others) teamed up to destroy public transit in 45 cities across the country. Together these corporations pushed through huge taxpayer-funded programs exclusively for 16 Written July, 2013 highways, tunnels and bridges for automobiles, forcing millions of people to buy cars just to get around. In other words, for the sake of their profits, these companies destroyed a working public transportation system, replacing it with a horribly inefficient and extremely expensive individualized automobile system.

Having a Future Depends on Public Transit

Our systems of transportation impact our lives in many ways. In most of the U.S. today, it is necessary for most adults to own a car. The individual automobile is the main method of personal transportation to and from work and home – everybody in their own car. This method of transportation causes huge problems for the environment, for people's health, and for quality of life. If we are going to have a future, we need to change our method of transportation, and public transit will be a necessary part of the solution.

For decades, scientists have pointed out the dangers of climate change. The major cause of global warming is the emission of what scientists call greenhouse gases, which trap much of the sun's energy close to earth, creating this warming effect. Cars and trucks are responsible for almost 25 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. If we are going to reduce greenhouse gases, we must reduce the number of cars on the road.

What about hybrid and electric cars? Some people argue that we can stop greenhouse gas emissions by choosing better cars. But it doesn't matter what kind of car we drive – it takes massive amounts of energy to build a car. If an electric car is being charged with electricity from a coal-powered energy plant, it's still polluting, just



from the powerplant's smokestack rather than the car's exhaust pipe.

Cars degrade our quality of life. Hours spent in traffic cause stress, and waste time, and threaten our health and even our lives. The areas with the highest traffic congestion have the highest rates of childhood asthma, and 1.3 million premature deaths a year are caused by pollution from car exhaust. Traffic is also unsafe. Traffic accidents take up to 33,000 lives a year making them the number one cause of death for people under the age of 34.

Public transit has the potential to address all these problems. It's simple math. Public transportation produces five to ten percent of the greenhouse gases that cars and trucks do – and that's not even with the most advanced transportation technologies, like solar and magnetic. Putting more public transit in place will dramatically reduce the need for cars on the road and significantly reduce carbon emissions.

The main reason people rely on cars is because of the poor state of public transit. A Natural Resource Defense Council survey polled that 55 percent of Americans would prefer to drive less, but 74 percent say they have no choice. The average American spends one week per year

in traffic. Who in their right mind would prefer spending hours alone in traffic to a quick ride on a train or bus?

Public transit is safe. Traffic accidents are caused by thousands of drivers hurrying to and from their destinations. All of the thousands of deaths caused by traffic pollution could be eliminated by clean efficient public transportation. Studies have shown that communities with better public transit systems have one quarter as many traffic fatalities.

Public transportation would improve our lives on all fronts, from the environment, to health, to quality

of life. The only thing that is stopping us is the fact that our current system of transit is organized for the benefit of the gas, tire and other auto companies, profiting by putting each of us in a car as we pour dollars into our gas tanks and into their pockets. We need a different set of priorities which takes into account the environment, our health, and our quality of life. If our society is going to have a better future, public transit will be an necessary part of the equation.

Paris Climate Talks – A Useless Ritual

From November 30 to December 11, The United Nations 2015 Paris Climate Conference (also known as COP21) will bring together so-called world leaders from nearly 200 countries, along with scientists, environmental groups, and the heads of many corporations, some of which are in the fossil fuel industry. The stated goal of this conference is to come to some sort of international agreement to reduce carbon emissions – the leading cause of climate change.

Many have hoped that this year's climate talks would be different than any of the similar past meetings. Last year saw over 300,000 people converge in New York City for the People's Climate March – the largest single gathering on this issue ever. Demonstrations were held all over the world on the same day. Overall, there has been an increasing awareness of climate change and its causes.

At the same time, climate scientists have tried to make clear how severe the threat of climate change truly is. The consensus among scientists on this issue is that if carbon emissions continue for much longer, causing the planet to continue to heat up, then life on earth will likely face mass extinction. Their research has shown that every measurement of the impacts of global warming is worse than previously predicted. Glaciers are melting faster, species going extinct at higher rates, oceans becoming more acidic, deforestation worse, desertification and droughts more severe, temperatures rising, and extreme weather events continue to intensify.

Here's what James Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies for 46 years, had to say about the climate agreement reached in Paris:

It is best described as unadulterated 100% pure bullshit...It's a fraud really, a fake. It's just bullshit for them to say: 'We'll have a 2C warming target and then try to do a little better every five years.' It's just worthless words. There is no action, just promises. As long as fossil fuels appear to be the cheapest fuels out there, they will be continued to be burned.

But despite the urgency and the growing opposition among people around the world, we can expect next to nothing from the Paris talks. U.S Secretary of State, John Kerry, made the intentions of the U.S. very clear in an interview with the Financial Times on November 11. He said that there is "definitely not going to be a treaty" and there will be no "legally binding reduction targets." The



position of the U.S. remains the same: it will continue to do whatever it wants.

But even a legally binding agreement wouldn't bring about the changes necessary. Despite all of the past meetings, despite previous international agreements, corporations have continued to dump ever-increasing levels of carbon into the atmosphere. Each year continues to be hotter than the previous, with 2015 being the hottest year so far.

This past August, after posturing as a global leader in the fight against climate change, President Obama gave the final approval for further drilling of fossil fuels in the Arctic. As glaciers have melted at increasing rates, new sea passageways have opened up, allowing for new drilling opportunities, and ultimately increasing the environmental destruction from global warming. Obama's decision makes clear the true position of world leaders on this issue: as long as profit is to be made, further environmental destruction will continue.

We are at a point where there is no longer any such thing as a "successful solution" that can come from any of these intergovernmental meetings on climate change. To be sure, there are steps that must be taken to halt further global warming, stop further emissions, and begin reducing the level of carbon in the atmosphere that is causing climate change. There is a wide agreement among scientists on the kind of emergency changes that are necessary to sustain life on this planet. The obstacle around this issue is not the scientists, not the data, and not the research. The obstacle is this world-wide economic system called capitalism.



This is a system where profits come first, above everything else. This is a system that must increasingly produce in order to sell more in order to make more money. And the fossil fuel industry, along with all of the industries that are tied to it, is not simply some small piece of the global economy but is the vast majority of it. This includes the energy industry, agriculture, the transportation industry, the banking industry, shipping, building, plastics, armaments, and more. These are industries that make trillions of dollars every year. The people who own this wealth are the ruling class around the world, and their governments exist to represent their interests at all cost, even at the cost of potential mass extinction.

As a species, we have arrived at a crossroads. The ruling class has no choice but to try to maintain capitalism, even though it is incompatible with a climate that can sustain life. Either we put an end to capitalism or we will likely have to face our own extinction. This is not a task that is going to be carried out by the ruling class of the world or the governments who serve them. This task is in the hands of the vast majority of the world, the people who do the work to make this system run. Scientists have provided us with a clear indication of what needs to be done. We have the masses of people on our side. We have an environment to save and a world to win. It's time to get going.

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Stopping Climate Change – Stopping This System

We are told that we are “addicted to oil.” We do use a lot of oil, for just about everything from our cars to soap, baby aspirin, shoes, lipstick, toothbrushes and more. In 2011 the U.S. was responsible for approximately 22 percent of the world’s petroleum consumption. If we are addicted, then we are supposedly the problem and need to focus on our individual consumption. We can each pay more attention to our place in the petroleum stream. But that is not really the solution.

Fossil fuels are central to the system of production of this society – and provide enormous profits to those who control it. We have no real alternatives because other energy sources have not been fully developed; mass transit is inadequate, and oil is in so much of what our lives are based on.

The basis of the system of capitalism is profit. And oil is very profitable. Of the largest ten corporations in the world, six are oil companies; two are auto companies, and one is a Chinese power company. Last year their total reported profits were \$192 billion. Of the ten largest corporations in the U.S., four are oil companies and two are auto companies. Last year their total reported profits were around \$176 billion.

The 2013 profits reported by BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, and Shell were \$93 billion last year, or \$177,000 per minute.

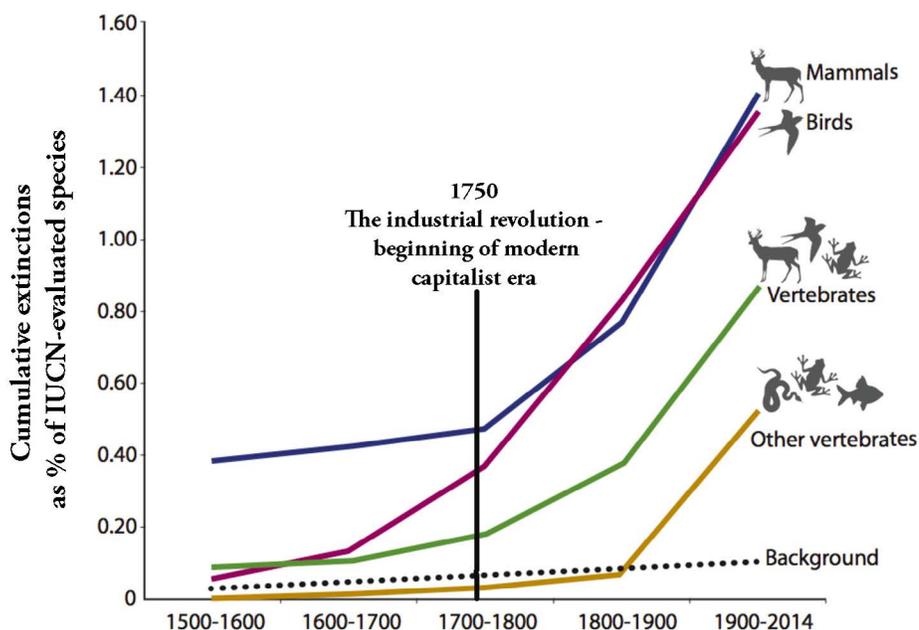
The oil companies have spent millions of dollars campaigning against the reality of global warming and climate change. They want people to ignore the scientists around the world whose research proves that global warming poses a serious threat to life.

In a recent report to its stockholders, ExxonMobil, the largest U.S. oil and gas company, said that world climate policies are “highly unlikely” to stop it from producing and selling fossil fuels in the near future.

Their Wealth = Mass Extinction

The enormous wealth of these corporations, the banks and wealthy people linked to them is based on their control of the ancient carbon in the earth. So, their trillions of dollars of wealth in carbon, if released, will bring about a rise in temperature around the world, which will cause global warming and an acceleration of the problems the world’s scientists are warning us about.

We are locked into an insane situation, where those who hold the power in this society must destroy life on the planet to maintain their wealth. The governments defend their interests, so we cannot turn to them. We cannot rely on anything or anyone other than our collective power. It is possible to change this system!





Speak Out Now

Revolutionary Workers Group

Where We Stand

The world we live in today has enormous possibilities: the potential to open up the most challenging epoch of humanity's existence. We have the prospect of living in a conscious fashion, using all the advances of human knowledge and engaging the creative potential of each person on the planet. Instead we see the world moving in the opposite direction — increasingly ruled by prejudice and fear, a world of widespread violence and war, where exploitation and oppression are the rule, with the many dominated by the few.

The Force For Change Exists Today

Everywhere, working people's labor makes society run. The exploitation of labor is what generates profits, which are at the heart of capitalism. Working people have the power to bring this system to a halt and bring about the changes needed to transform our lives. Like slavery, feudalism and other systems that enriched the minority at the expense of the majority, capitalism's removal is long overdue. The time for socialism has come.

We Stand For Socialism

A world based on peaceful collaboration and international cooperation of working class people — not the exploiters who rule today.

- The common ownership and sharing of the world's resources and productive capacity under the democratic control of the world's peoples.
- An egalitarian and democratic government, organized and controlled from the bottom up, which facilitates people's active participation in making decisions about how society is run.

- Protection of the world's ecological systems, putting science to work to sustain life, not destroy it.
- A society where human relations are based on respect, equality and dignity of all peoples, not racism, sexism or homophobia.

Our Political Heritage

We base ourselves on the ideas and actions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, on the model of the Russian Revolution of 1917 when the working class showed its capacity to take over and exert its power, and on the revolutionary ideas of the Fourth International in its struggles against Stalinism.

We Must Go Beyond Reforms

We support the struggles of those who are fighting against the oppression of capitalism, even if the goals of those struggles are not aimed at replacing the capitalist order. We support the right of people to determine how they will live and to throw off the forces of imperialism — be it the domination of the corporations, the World Bank, the IMF, military forces or other agents of imperialism. We support the fight against racial and sexual discrimination. We fight against attacks on the standard of living of working people — wage and benefit cuts, attacks on health care, education, housing and other basic rights.

Socialism cannot come through a modification of the existing system. It is not replacing corrupt politicians or union officials with those who are more honest or who are willing to see more of society's resources shared with the poor. It is not getting better contracts or laws. These systems based on privilege and exploitation must

be removed and replaced by one that can guarantee the reorganization of society for the benefit of all.

What Is Needed To Bring This Change About?

It will take a massive social struggle, a revolution, by the majority, the workers and poor of the world, with the working class at its head, taking power in its name and reorganizing society.

It will take the construction of an international revolutionary leadership actively engaged in these struggles.

It will take the development of a party, based in the working class, in the U.S., the richest country of the world, as part of this international leadership. The fate of the world depends on building such an organization, though today it is represented only by individuals or small groups, scattered and marginalized, who share those goals.

The decisions made by a few individuals today, who are ready to start acting on these ideas and who are willing to collaborate with other groups who agree with this program and who are ready to work to implement it, could play a role in determining the future of the world.

Who We Are

Speak Out Now/Revolutionary Workers Group is a revolutionary group. We believe that a socialist world is possible and can be brought into being by the active

struggles of the majority of the people of the world. We believe the international working class is the social force that can transform society and create a new world. But to do so, revolutionary organizations must be built in the working class. For this reason our group aims its activity primarily at large workplaces. Our newsletters are distributed at several workplaces every two weeks.

We think it is important to both analyze the current world situation as well as to know and understand the history of past struggles. We have forums on current events and political topics and a yearly weekend called the Revolutionary University. We organize Marxist discussions and classes. We have pamphlets on past working class struggles, the revolutionary movements around the world and the current problems we face. We organize with others around many issues – racism, immigrant rights, climate change, police brutality, and more.

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