

No More Pipelines!

As global temperatures reach record levels for the past three years, Earth Day 2017 approaches at a time of earth emergency in which burning fossil fuels must be stopped quickly. But the Trump Administration is proceeding full speed ahead to build more oil pipelines! Most famously, Trump has ordered revival of the Keystone XL pipeline that Obama eventually rejected, as well as ordering that the temporarily-suspended Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) be built.

Meanwhile, many other pipelines are planned or under construction. Burning the full quantity of fossil fuels planned to be shipped through them will contribute to global warming, and inevitable leaks or spills will poison precious waters. For example, the Keystone XL pipeline will run over the large Ogallala aquifer, while the DAPL endangers countless waterways and wetlands, including eight major tributaries and the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. This is a reason why many anti-DAPL protesters on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation call themselves water protectors.

The struggle of the Standing Rock Sioux to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline

The fight against DAPL combines the struggles against global warming and pollution of the waters with the struggle to defend Native American treaty rights. Although the protesters have been completely peaceful, the state and the construction company have met them with violence: beating protesters, siccing police dogs on them, shooting them with rubber bullets, tear gassing them, fire-hosing them in sub-freezing temperatures, arresting over 600 often brutally. In spite of this, over the months thousands of people have joined the encampment and blockades and refused to back down. Their determined actions have fueled support demonstrations all over the country and world. As well, Seattle was forced to divest \$3 billion from Wells Fargo – a major investor in the DAPL – and there are movements in other cities to do the same.

Why the people need to build their own organizations

The Democrats are part of the problem. The

program of Trump and the Republicans is ecocidal. But beneath their statements that the science is clear, human activity is causing global warming, the practice of the Democrats is also ecocidal. For example, Obama championed more oil and gas drilling and shale fracking in the name of gaining “energy independence,” and opened more lands and waters for those purposes. Obama also licensed two new nuclear power plants. Driving home the inherent danger of nuclear power is that deadly radiation levels from the Fukushima Daiichi meltdowns have jumped to their highest in almost six years. And the Republicans and Democrats alike fight for ecocidal policies because their first allegiance is to the big banks and corporations. The Democrats are just more deceptive about it.

The labor bureaucrats are betraying the people. The leaders of the AFL-CIO and CTW don't just work to prevent and sell out workers' strikes, they faithfully serve their capitalist masters on all fronts. The leaders of the building trades unions have heaped praise on Trump, and rejoiced when he issued orders restarting construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. The oil companies are driven to destroy the planet by the need to profit, and these lackey labor officials smooth their way by saying some jobs will come out of it. This is why we need to build an environmental movement that directly appeals to the rank-and-file workers, and demands that workers laid off in the transition to renewable energy sources be reemployed in other industries for at least as good wages. In fact, renewable energy, energy-efficient retrofits in buildings, public transit and light rail, etc., will require millions of new workers once the capitalist government is forced to seriously get behind them.

The tribal leaders cannot be trusted. Last April, Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman David Archambault II supported the call for setting up a protest camp. But when the federal government temporarily refused to issue the permit needed to run a pipeline under the Missouri river in December, Archambault II told protesters to go home – despite everyone knowing the permit denial was only temporary. This year Archambault II has continued along these lines: *“I’m saying that the fight is not*

here. It doesn't have to be here. We can fight this in Washington...The purpose (of the encampments) has been served." <https://www.youtube.com/shared?ci=Ojkopd1BD3U> So the great white fathers of the corporate Republican and Democratic parties are now going to stop the DAPL? Many Standing Rock Sioux and others are denouncing Archambault II's stands <http://sacredstonecamp.org/blog/2017/2/4/to-save-the-water-we-must-break-the-cycle-of-colonial-trauma>.

Establishment environmentalism and false solutions

For decades the mainstream environmental groups have championed market measures – versions of cap and trade and carbon tax – as the solution to global warming. The main “virtue” of market measures is they preserve the profits of the polluters, at the expense of simple, effective measures to reduce greenhouse gasses. In this they've trailed after the Democrats. But the “cap and trade” system embodied in the Kyoto Protocol has failed. Moreover, it has induced companies seeking carbon credits to destroy rain forests and drive indigenous peoples off the land to make room for palm oil plantations that have *increased* carbon emissions due to the burning or drying out of peat lands.

<http://communistvoice.org/41cAlGore.html> The latest establishment environmentalist favorite, the carbon tax, also won't meet environmental goals. Moreover, it's a regressive tax that will tend to drive the workers and poor away from environmentalism while the worst-polluting corporations pass their tax onto their customers. <http://communistvoice.org/42cCarbonTax.html> Even

the World Bank and International Monetary Fund—who make life hell for the workers, small farmers and indigenous peoples of the poor countries—now promote the carbon tax!

<http://www.comunistvoice.org/DWV-160429.html>

We must rely on mass struggle

But life on this planet is too precious to sacrifice to the profits of capital! **What is needed are direct regulations, environmental and economic planning, and a fight for mass involvement in their formation and implementation.** To win this is going to take a mighty movement that is boiling up everywhere. This means it must be based in the majority class in society, the working class. It requires standing up for indigenous rights and the fights of national-minorities and immigrants against environmental racism. And it must stand against Trump's moves to divide and pick off the working people one by one, i.e., immigrants, national minorities, women. There have already been big protests against his reactionary program everywhere, and environmentalists are already a part of this resistance. More should join in!

We call on everyone to urge their fellow workers, fellow students, neighbors and friends to join the demonstrations against the DAPL and Keystone XL pipelines as well as other actions in defense of the environment. Further, let us work to make Earth Day 2017 an important stepping stone in the struggle to end the burning of fossil fuels!

Seattle Communist Study Group,
February 11, 2017

March For Science on Earth Day!

Saturday, April 22 at 10:00 am – 1:00 pm (Rallying place to be announced at

<https://www.facebook.com/events/123680848146054/> or

<http://www.wherevent.com/detail/Miles-Greb-March-For-Science-Seattle>)

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