

Stop Shell from Drilling in the Arctic!

Oil drilling in the pristine Chukchi Sea is a disaster in the making. Spills are almost certain, and even the partial “cleanups” done in calmer, less isolated waters are impossible. Being driven by the bottom line, Shell has already had one major “accident,” the 2012 grounding of a drilling rig when trying to tow it out of Alaskan waters in stormy seas in order to avoid paying state taxes. There will be more such accidents, witness the *Exxon Valdez* in Alaska, BP's gigantic *Deepwater Horizon* spill in the Gulf of Mexico, and Shell's own spills in Nigeria and elsewhere. Moreover, this same rule of the bottom line is driving all the fossil fuel extractors to continually expand operations no matter what the burning of their product does to the earth and its people.

Global warming, an earth emergency

The rising carbon dioxide level in the earth's atmosphere is now at the highest level in 2 million years. This is being caused by the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, and by deforestation. As well, another major greenhouse gas, methane, is continually being released into the atmosphere by fracking and deforestation. The result is serious global warming, with the first three months of 2015 being the hottest on record.

No help from the world's governments...

It has been a quarter century since the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) first pointed out that global warming had already begun, and 17 years since adoption of the Kyoto Protocols to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But the market “solutions” adopted by a large number of countries—cap and trade with carbon offsets, etc.-- have failed miserably. They've also resulted in fiascos like the release of previously trapped methane into the atmosphere when polluters finance destruction of rainforests in order to plant palm oil plantations so they can be rewarded with carbon offsets. This is the sorry result of market-worshipping, neo-liberal avoidance of environmental regulations and planning, which must be extended to overall economic planning.

...or from the Republicans and Democrats

The Republicans in large part remain stuck in denying that human activity has anything to do with global warming and climate change. On the other hand, the Democrats can talk a good environmental fight, but their proposals and actions betray their words. Al Gore, for example, has done much to expose the dangers of climate change and even attacked the polluting corporations as “merchants of poison”. But the actions he advocates—the already-failed “cap and trade,” working hand-in-hand with the corporations and giving them subsidies, pricing carbon, etc.—are no fight at all. Meanwhile our “green president,” Obama, boasts in his state of the union speeches about how the U.S. has become “energy independent” through more oil drilling and shale fracking. Moreover, Obama has opened the Eastern Seaboard to offshore oil and gas exploration for the first time in decades, and has opened more of the Arctic. As well, it is no less than Obama who has “fast-tracked” Shell's efforts to drill exploratory wells in the Chukchi Sea.

What about establishment environmentalism?

It's stuck searching for other market measures with which to replace the failures, with the carbon tax being a current favorite. But the carbon tax will also fail to achieve the necessary reductions in the use of carbon fuels. More, it is a regressive tax that threatens to undermine mass support for environmentalism. Establishment environmentalism also continues to look for saviors from the Democratic Party. Its entire outlook must be broken with and opposed.

The need for an environmental program

The struggle to stop Shell from using Seattle's Terminal 5 as home port for its Arctic drilling fleet takes place while struggles to stop fracking, coal and oil trains and pipelines rage everywhere. And this is in midst of an overall movement demanding that coal, oil and gas be left in the ground. So this immediately raises the issue of the movement needing a positive program to draw workers into motion who presently

feel they're under attack by environmentalism.

Switch to renewables, yes, but don't rely on the market. Leaving fossil fuels in the ground means large numbers of mining, oil, transport, and other workers will be thrown into unemployment, and the market "solution" for that is they should walk the streets until they find another job, any job at any miserable wage, if they can.

The environmental movement must say **NO** to this. There must be a plan for reemploying these workers in other industries at good wages, and this must be part of overall environmental and economic planning. Indeed, replacing use of fossil fuels with renewable energy sources is not only going to require government investments in new infrastructure, but also lots of economic planning as well as regulations. Additionally, there are many other environmental issues that must be dealt with.

Governments are going to begin regulating and planning as the environmental crisis becomes even

more devastating, and we should demand this be done *now*. But if this takes place in the normal way the interests of the masses of people will continually be sacrificed to the prerogatives of capital, including those of the polluters themselves. Thus there is going to have to be a huge fight demanding that the masses of people be involved in formulation of regulations and in planning. Such a fight will inevitably come.

Millions upon millions of everyday working people are deeply concerned about the future of the planet. Through victories and defeats, many of them have long participated in environmental actions all over this country and world. Today they look upon mega-corporation Shell's plans to drill in the Arctic with justified hatred. We join them in shouting...

Shell No!

**Join the day of action: Monday, May 18, 2015
7:00 a.m., Duwamish Channel Fishing Dock
(Spokane Street Bridge)**

On the California drought and water restrictions

The four-year-old drought gripping much of the Southwest and West is a warning of things to come in much of the country and world. Reservoirs are near empty, aquifers are being depleted and there is no snow pack. Hence the need to restrict water usage. But after closed-door meetings with the captains of industry and agriculture, the restrictions ordered by Democratic California Governor Brown are a scandalous outrage: the people are ordered to cut back water use by 25% while there are few or no restrictions for industry and agriculture even though they account for some 82% of the state's annual water consumption.

Watering most food crops is obviously necessary, but what about almonds? It takes over a gallon of water to grow a *single* almond, and almond trees soak up about 10 percent of California's total water supply each year. But growing almonds is profitable for the capitalists, so much so that they've expanded production by 70,000 acres since this drought began. To defend those profits Gov. Brown lets them off the hook.

And while burning fossil fuels is going to cause even worse droughts than the present, Brown—without batting an eye—lets the oil-drilling and fracking companies off the hook too! Not only that, his administration has authorized oil companies to inject production fluids and waste into water aquifers, and has pushed state oil and gas regulators to *speed up* the permitting process for this poisoning of the water.

Then there are the giant water-bottling corporations. Nestlé alone bottles and sells up to 80 million gallons yearly of what should be the peoples' water, and in one area U.S. Forest Service has let Nestlé run since 1988 without a permit. And now, right in the middle of the drought, Crystal Geysers is to be allowed to open a new plant near Mt. Shasta which will eventually consume 365,000 gallons of water daily.

So these are the kind of restrictions/regulations the ruling class has in store in absence of a powerful movement of the working class and all oppressed people. The lesson is to build that movement.

Read *Communist Voice!* at www.comunistvoice.org. Especially look at <http://communistvoice.org/DWV-150423.html> and <http://communistvoice.org/00GlobalWarming.html>. Email: mail@communistvoice.org. Or write: CV, Box 28536, Joyfield Sta., Detroit, MI 48228