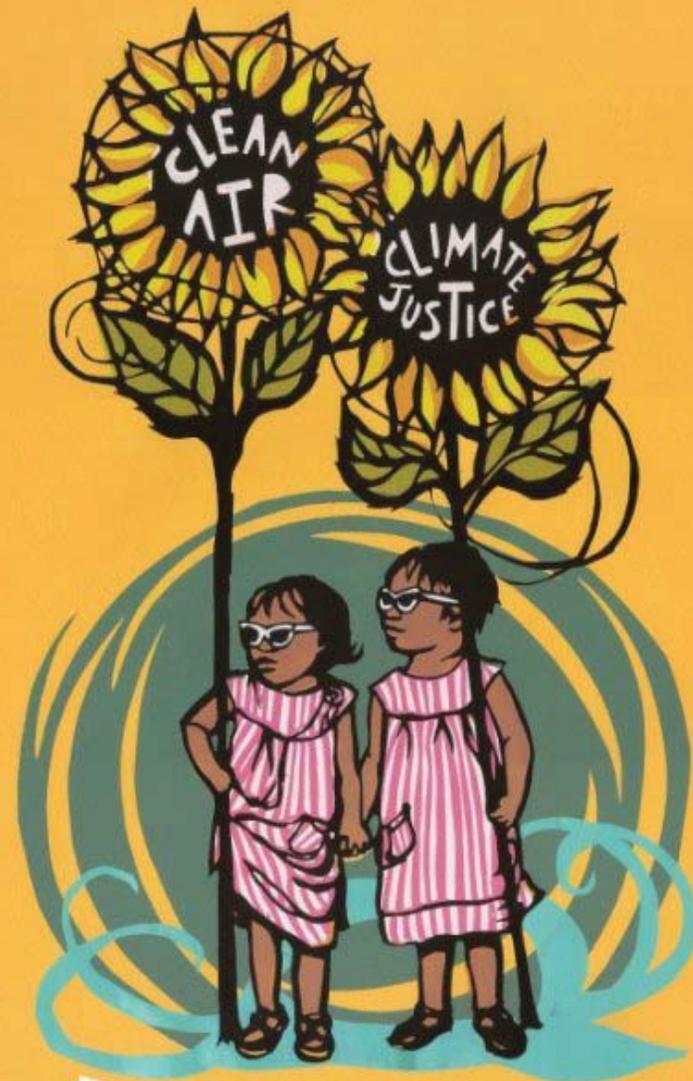


Clearcut

Kim goldberg

Spew of powdered stars,
mouthful of locks with no
keys, boundless
herds of rocks – hobbled, slurping
dustbowls, grazing hardened
thought, wasted
as three-legged atoms, as frozen oceans, crashed
as wave, vacant
with stampede, with gone, with
done for

**IT TAKES
ROOTS
TO
WEATHER
THE STORM**



**IT TAKES ROOTS
TO WEATHER THE
STORM**

**Reflections on
The People's Climate March**

**Inside:
Essays
Articles
Art**



of the mid 20th century. The reforms were a successful attempt to save capitalism from emerging alternatives that were disrupting the existing system through sit-downs, factory occupations, the development of militant unions and other actions. The scope of change required to address the climate crisis requires a similar threat, especially in those countries, such as the United States and Canada, that both drive the crisis and are most resistant to action.

Our movements, in and beyond New York, need to be holding space for these critical dialogues. What is the nature of the climate crisis? What kind of change and what actions are appropriate given its nature? There are a wide variety of activities planned in New York and I hope that the People's Climate March becomes a significant moment for the mobilization of millions. I know that many community-based environmental and climate justice groups involved in the march understand the systemic nature of the climate crisis and are articulating community-based, power building strategies. Though I haven't explored it here, I believe this approach is complementary and essential. However, I worry that

the initial choice of a march and rally to pressure heads of state, and the surface-level approaches that most of the participating large environmental (and other) organizations utilize, drown out those voices for systemic change in the contested organizing of the march.

The initial call-out for the march states "our demand is for action, not words". I believe we must also turn this statement towards our own movements and interrogate what kinds of actions are appropriate to the climate crisis. In and beyond New York, I hope that our movements continue to give serious thought to the root causes of the climate crisis and what we need to do to address it. As I have explored above I believe only actions operating from a systemic understanding of the change needed can force the radical shifts required to address the climate crisis. Such an understanding allows us to develop strategies that create new values, centered in the power and agency of communities to control their own futures, and take action that will either force the system to change or replace it with a new one.

Growing the Roots to Weather the Storm

Reflections on the People's Climate March

Last fall, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced that the opening of the UN General Assembly's 69th General Debate session would be delayed to make time for a one-day United Nations Climate Summit on September 23, 2014. The UN Climate Summit, which is being billed as a 'solutions-driven summit,' is being held one year in advance of the COP21, the Paris summit where some world leaders hope to negotiate a legally binding and universal agreement on climate change.

Shortly after the announcement of the New York summit, several NGO's most notably 350.org began calling for a mass mobilization in New York in the lead up to the UN Summit. The mobilization, which is now known as the "People's Climate March" is being billed as the largest climate march in history. In the call to action for the People's Climate

March "With our future on the line and the whole world watching, we'll take a stand to bend the course of history. We'll take to the streets to demand the world we know is within our reach: a world with an economy that works for people and the planet; a world safe from the ravages of climate change; a world with good jobs, clean air and water, and healthy communities."

The call to action has now been signed onto by over 950 organizations, ranging from large NGO's like the Sierra Club to grassroots groups like the Climate Justice Alliance. The Climate Justice Alliance, the Ruckus Society, and Rising Tide North America have put out a parallel call to action demanding that local, national, and international decision makers support local communities in "building Just Transition pathways away from the 'dig, burn, dump' economy,

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and towards ‘local, living economies’ where communities and workers are in charge!”

These calls for bold action in New York have generated a significant amount of excitement and engagement in communities across the continent. But the focus on this mass mobilization and this global legislative process raises some important questions for organizers committed to confronting the root causes of climate change:

- *Can we use a mobilization like this to build and amplify our ongoing community based work?*

- *How can mass mobilizations align with local work in a way that emphasizes and reinforces, and does not distract from local struggles?*

- *How can we use moments and mobilizations like this to build capacity for radical climate justice organizing?*

- *What does radical or transformative climate organizing mean to you?*

- *In what ways are you participating in New York and why?*

- *What are you working on now*

at home, and does New York impact it? If so, what are your hopes for the mobilization and other events?

Over the past several months, Rising Tide activists and allies have been wrestling with these important questions and discussing and debating these issues over social media, e-mail, more than a few beers, and in a handful of movement publications. Because of the sheer size and scope of this mobilization, the amount of resources we are seeing expended, and the important political and strategic questions that it prompts, we wanted to help to cultivate thoughtful analysis on these important questions.

In July, Rising Tide North America published a call for submissions for this publication, “Growing the Roots to Weather the Storm.” We asked activists and organizers around North America to help us think through and answer these important questions. In total, a half a dozen activists and organizers submitted essays, illustrations and poems

the basis for a very different way of relating to each other. Existing systems, and our so-called “democracy”, value hierarchy as the means for the efficient management of society and a structure that rewards those who exploit power and privilege for personal gain. The very structure of hierarchy perpetuates the climate crisis as a tiny minority of individuals – corporate executives and politicians – make decisions on behalf of billions, rendering communities powerless over those issues that most impact their lives. This is at the heart of the deep cynicism that we find in individual perceptions of politics. People correctly understand that these institutions are not built to serve them nor run by individuals that care to do so. Strategies of disruption can be a powerful antidote by providing an appropriate form of action that can counter this cynicism. They also ask for an investment and feel like an approach equal to the scale of the crisis, unlike the small things often asked of individuals in the face of such a calamitous situation. In the tangle of power felt taking action together, people experience a new form of engagement that creates the kind of decentralized and non-hierarchical power arrangements necessary for addressing the climate crisis.

Communities must be empowered to make the decisions that impact their lives if we are to address the climate crisis. A strategy of disruption gives us at least one starting point for building this power. Movements engaged in disruption allow us to articulate new value systems, directly disrupt the status quo, challenge the existing system and in so doing open the door to systemic change. Historical analyses of systemic change show that relatively few people need to be actively participating in the types of actions described above. As civil resistance scholars document, it can only take only a small percentage of a population moving into a place of active disruption to topple governments or create other forms of systemic change. Their small numbers can do this because their acts of disruption and resistance create and inspire a sea of passive supporters that together destabilize systems. Our cooperation is always required for the continuation of existing systems and we have enormous power in our refusal to participate. Historically we can see that when broad-based movements committed to disruption grow to the point of challenging existing systems deep change can happen. It is through this lens that we should view the social welfare reforms

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misunderstanding of the situation. Movements for systemic change cannot succeed solely by putting pressure directly on existing power structures, nor the people who occupy offices like president, prime minister or secretary general. Strategies of direct pressure can only work when the demands are focused at the surface. When we work to address issues so large that only systemic change is reasonable, we must focus on the foundations and structures that create the problem. It is only when the existing structure is threatened by our actions that power holders will work for the deep changes needed, or if they've moved too slow, be replaced by an alternative system built through the process of challenge. This is the nature of the climate moment. In order to address the climate crisis we must be oriented to creating systemic change.

We need strategies and methods consistent with the reality we face. Oil train blockades in the Northwest, the presence of the Tar Sands Blockade on the southern leg of the Keystone XL pipeline, occupations of the Line 9 pipeline pumping facilities, resistance to mountain-top removal, First Nations' resistance to fossil fuel infrastructure and many others offer inspiring

examples. What we might call "movement-building disruption" makes explicit the endpoints of the structures created by capitalism by disrupting them in the fracking fields, along pipeline routes and in our neighborhoods. These acts are inherently about making claims to what is good and bad, just and unjust, and seek to articulate an alternative system of values, often using a climate justice framework. Such action has the potential to accurately frame these practices as the logical consequence of the values and structures of capitalism and point to them directly as the source of the problem. Movement-building disruption focuses energy on disrupting existing structures, namely the flow of fossil fuels and development of new infrastructure, which is critical in establishing a credible threat. It not only creates an immediate impact on the calculations for continuing business as usual, but also begins to build the cascade that will force fundamental shifts or even the emergence of something completely new.

When people engage in strategies of disruption, they position themselves as the primary agents in creating social change. In so doing they not only create the reality of community-based power, they also assert it as a value that might be

reflecting on the People's Climate March and our broader movement for climate justice.

Many of the submissions pressed for support for action on the front lines of the fight against climate change. In *Uprooting the Liberal Climate Agenda*, Scott Parkin references struggles on the front lines of extreme resource extraction calling out national NGO's for abandoning and ignoring these struggles. Parkin writes that in campaigns in against mountain top removal, the Keystone XL Pipeline, and tar sands mining in Utah, "bold and effective organizing against oil, gas and coal companies has created moments to stop egregious practices and projects at the points of destruction only to be abandoned or ignored by the larger environmental establishment. In the wake of that abandonment, hundreds of Appalachian Mountains have been leveled while oil flows through the Keystone XL pipeline from Cushing, OK to the Gulf Coast, and ground is now broken on the first tar sands mine in the United States."

Writing from Houston, TX on the front lines of the fights against

the Keystone XL Pipeline and tar sands refining, Eric Moll writes that he's staying at home this September. The New York native writes, "though I do miss New York City's vibrant, tightly packed vastness. Right now, this frontline can't spare the people or the expense" of walking away from local organizing to travel to New York.

In a summer that saw the Israeli siege of Gaza, the shooting of Michael Brown and popular uprising in Ferguson, and the escalation of US military intervention in Iraq, the People's Climate March certainly is not happening in a political vacuum and two of the pieces reflect on the situation in Palestine. In the wake of a heated debate about so-called "Green Zionist" organizations being included in the list of endorsers of the People's Climate March, Rising Tide North America issued a Statement in Solidarity with Palestine, articulating that "We believe that from Palestine to New York City and beyond, our struggles for climate and social justice are all related." In his piece, *Palestine, A Climate Justice Issue*, Dan Fischer pushes further, imploring us to un-

derstand Palestine as a core climate justice issue, pointing out devastatingly unsustainable development in Israel, and calling out green Zionism's greenwashing of Israel. Beyond the immediate questions related to the efficacy or effectiveness of the People's Climate March, there is a broader question: What does it take to stop climate change? Anne Petermann argues that we clear demands and real action to stop climate change. In *Climate Action vs. Climate Justice*, Petermann calls out the greenwashing of the week of action by the corporate-backed "Climate Group." Petermann argues that a "lack of clear justice-based and ecologically sound demands in this march will leave a vacuum. And no vacuum remains empty for long. It's simple physics. The Climate Group has already set up shop in that space." In *A Weekend to Change the Course of History?*, David Osborn lays out a theory of change centered around cultivating movement building disruption on the front lines. Osborn argues that "Movement-building disruption makes explicit the endpoints of existing value systems

created by capitalism by targeting them in the fracking fields, along pipeline routes and in our neighborhoods. It also articulates an alternative system of values, often captured in the framework of climate justice, and present in the way we choose to work together." One thing that all of our contributors—and even the organizers of the People's Climate March—agree on is that one march in New York City is not going to stop climate change. The climate crisis is real and we need to fight harder—and smarter—than ever before to save our shared planet. Beyond New York we need to continue to mobilize, to organize, to build capacity and to take bold action to confront the root causes of climate change and build a just and sustainable world. Now, more than ever, we need to build together and fight together to grow the deep roots we need to weather the storm. We'll see you on the streets in New York, and in the mountains of Appalachia, the fracking fields in Pennsylvania, the fenceline refinery communities in Texas, the tar sands mines in Utah, the export terminals

A Weekend to Change the Course of History?

By David Osborn

That is how the call out for the People's Climate March on September 21st begins. It goes on to suggest the weekend will be used "to bend the course of history". This raises a question critical in all of our climate work; how do we make that bend, and in what direction? In other words, what understandings and methods of social change inform the New York mobilization, and where do we want it to lead? These are urgent questions. The scale of the New York mobilization and the concentration of resources for the march demands that we put these questions firmly on the table. The answers to these questions hinge first and foremost on what we understand the nature of the problem to be. We might think of there being two general kinds of problems. Imagine your house. Surface problems like paint peeling, a leaky faucet or even flooring that needs replacement can be done within the structure of your home. Problems like this might include road decay, wasteful government spending or the lack of green spaces. Deep or systemic problems like a broken

foundation or rotted support beams are problems with the structure itself and require an entirely new home. Racism and sexism are such problems. It isn't enough (or even possible) to integrate schools or create policies for pay equity, the very structures that support these systems must be challenged for them to be ultimately addressed. Climate change is also a systemic problem, and it has emerged from structures of our society, particularly capitalism, and their arrangement of values. Understanding this context forces us to consider whether existing institutions are willing to take on the problem. Unsurprisingly, existing institutions serve existing powerful interests. Established channels of recourse are built for those who hold power in the existing structure, so they provide few opportunities for the kind of systemic problem we face. Corporate and governmental institutions in power not only proliferate the climate crisis, they also benefit from its continuation. Reasonably appealing to them to change would be a fundamental

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is that it is climate change pointing its double barrels at us, but I disagree. We are sitting ducks alright, but the ones threatening our existence are the ones on Wall Street and its equivalents, buying policies that maintain business as usual. Like Chad Holliday, the Chair of Bank of America (who co-Chairs the UN's absurdly named Sustainable Energy for All initiative), the Koch Brothers, Chase Manhattan Bank, oh yes, and Duke Energy and Goldman Sachs... A smorgasbord of the power elite. My hope is that folks coming for the march will be inspired by the powerful accomplishments of the movements that came before and will form affinity groups to take their outrage and their demands directly to the source. Directly to the ones holding the shotguns. Making their business as

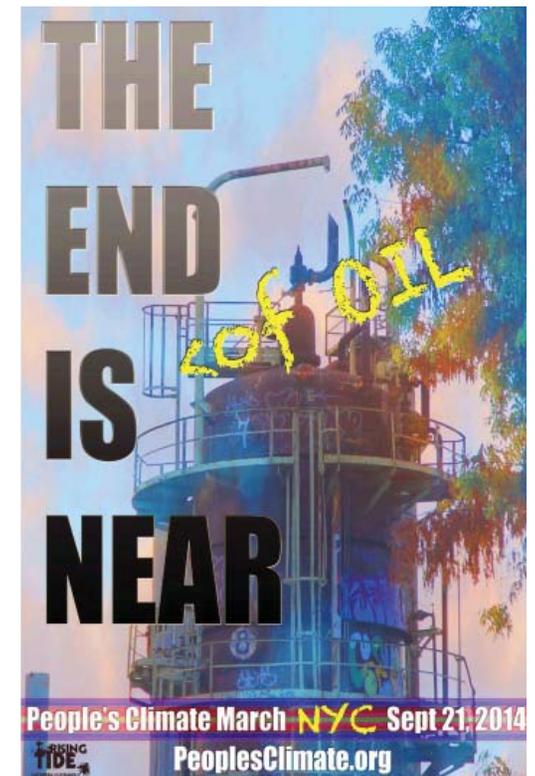
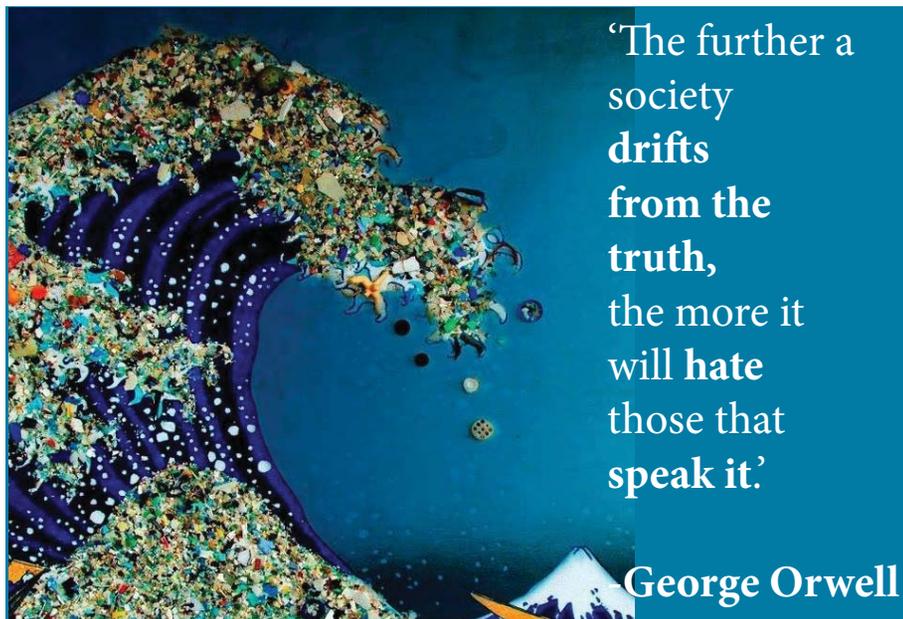
usual impossible. The Climate Group's "Climate Week" from September 22-28, for instance, might be an excellent choice... Take our rage right to the source. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. pointed out, "The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be... The nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists." For a deeper look at why Ban Ki-moon and the UN will never solve the climate crisis, and why we must have a fundamental systemic transformation, please check out The Green Shock Doctrine < <http://globaljusticeecology.org/green-shock-doctrine/>> *Anne Petermann is the Executive Director of the Global Justice Ecology Project*

in the Pacific Northwest, and the pipeline paths all across the continent.

This call to action was originated by 350.org. To date, more than 950 businesses, unions, faith groups, schools, social justice groups, environmental groups and other organizations have signed on to the call. **A weekend to change the course of history**

In September, heads of state are going to New York City for a historic summit on climate change. With our future on the line, we will take a weekend and use it to bend the course of history. In New York City there will be an unprecedented climate mobilization – in size, beauty, and impact. This moment will not be just about New York or the United States. Heads of state from around the world will be there, as will the attention of global media. Our demand is for Action, Not Words: take the action necessary to create a world with an economy that works for people and the planet – now. In short, we want a world safe

from the ravages of climate change. We know that no single meeting or summit will "solve climate change" and in many ways this moment will not even really be about the summit. We want this moment to be about us – the people who are standing up in our communities, to organize, to build power, to confront the power of fossil fuels, and to shift power to a just, safe, peaceful world. To do that, we need to act – together.



Take Non-Violent Direct Action for Climate Justice!

New York City | September 17-24, 2014

International Week of Solidarity with Frontline Communities Around the World

On September 23rd, political and corporate leaders are meeting at the United Nations in New York City for the Climate Summit 2014. This summit represents yet another step towards the corporate takeover of the UN climate negotiations, and the privatization of land, water and air resources under the guise of a global climate compact.

Meanwhile, as communities on the frontlines of climate change, we are the ones cultivating real, place-based solutions to address the global ecological crises. Indigenous peoples' communities, communities of color and working-class white communities that are the first and most impacted by the storms, floods and droughts, are organizing to create millions of family-supporting jobs in clean energy, public transportation, zero waste, food sovereignty, community housing and ecosystem restoration.

We are organizing to stop pollution and poverty at the source, confronting the extreme energy corporations causing the climate crisis. As we write, our friends and comrades around the world are putting their bodies on the line to stop the corporations responsible – mining corporations; oil, coal and gas companies; pipelines and refineries; biofuels plantations; nuclear power plants; waste and biomass incinerators, and a myriad other industries profiteering from the destruction of our communities, our cultures and our ecosystems.

From Mesa to Mountaintop, from Hood to Holler – join us as we meet the scale and urgency of the crisis by standing in solidarity with all frontlines of resistance and resilience around the world, and taking non-violent direct action against the corporations driving the extractive economy.

War and stopping segregation.

Let's just focus on the Vietnam War for a moment. Yes, there were marches and they were huge and they were great.

There were also mass direct actions, such as May Day 1971 when affinity groups took over the bridges and traffic circles of Washington, DC with the aim of shutting down the city. My husband, Orin Langelle, who was part of an affinity group there, watched the marines land at the Washington Monument. The Weather Underground conducted over 6,000 bombings of military targets in the US. There were the Yippies, White Panthers, the SDS, and the VVAW.

Moreover, the GIs in Vietnam, sick of the pointless and bloody war, started turning their weapons on their officers. The army was facing a mounting internal rebellion. And of course the Vietnamese People staged an effective and tireless resistance to the US invasion—even in the face of casualty numbers of more than 50 to one—and even in the face of their luscious homeland being turned into a toxic wasteland by Monsanto's Agent Orange.

The sum total of these parts is what ended the Vietnam War. Not a march, not promoting green alternatives to the war, and not electoral politics (unless you count the Yippies running Pegasus the Pig for President in 1968). People on many fronts made both the war and business as usual impossible.

Likewise with segregation. The civil rights movement did not make the gains it made with a march that was organized with the permission of the police. There were marches, yes, but the marches themselves were unpermitted acts of civil disobedience, and they were met with extreme repression fuelled by hate. We all remember the black and white videos of the firehoses and the police dogs, the many civil rights activists who were beaten, jailed, murdered. And not to forget the crucial role of the Black Panther party, which took up arms in 1966 in order to further advance civil rights and to defend their communities against attacks by the police. But they also ran breakfast programs for children and promoted a comprehensive set of demands.

But back to this march in New York City, planned in cooperation with the police, and void of demands. Will the mere presence of 200,000 people (including, apparently, representatives of Duke Energy and Goldman Sachs) marching in the city be meaningful enough to make a difference—to shake up the world's leaders to take climate change more seriously?

In his Rolling Stone piece, McKibben quotes a Princeton scientist who stated, "We are all sitting ducks." That is true. However, the missing analysis in this assertion is identifying just exactly who is holding the shotgun. The inference

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trees for so-called bioenergy. So clearly, not all “climate action” is created equal. A lack of clear justice-based and ecologically sound demands in this march will leave a vacuum. And no vacuum remains empty for long. It’s simple physics. The Climate Group has already set up shop in that space. The problem is not just these really creepy bedfellows: The media will not cover a march with no demands. They will find a message, and if it’s not The Climate Group’s ‘business will save the planet’ message, what will it be?

The second problem is the fundamental basis for the march itself. I first read the call to the march in Bill McKibben’s

June piece in Rolling Stone magazine “A Call to Arms: An Invitation to Demand Action on Climate Change.”

In the article, he explains the importance of the September 21st march in making real strides for climate action. He states,

“So in this case taking to the streets is very much necessary. It’s not all that’s necessary – a sprawling fossil-fuel resistance works on a hundred fronts around the world, from putting up solar panels to forcing colleges to divest their oil stocks to electioneering for truly green candidates. And it’s true that marching doesn’t always work: At the onset of the war in Iraq, mil-

lions marched, to no immediate avail. But there are moments when it’s been essential. This is how the Vietnam War was ended, and segregation too – or consider the nuclear-freeze campaign of the early 1980s, when half a million people gathered in New York’s Central Park...”

Right. Okay. Where to start. First of all, as has been pointed out to Mr. McKibben on countless occasions, stopping fossil fuels will not stop climate change—though I guess now, with this “big tent,” we’re not even calling for that. But anyway, if business as usual continues based, not on fossil fuels, but on bioenergy (the US military, for example, is transitioning some of their fleet to biofuels and is investigating the manufacture of “green bombs” using synthetic biology), then we still lose. As a scientist friend calculated, replacing the amount of fossil fuels we are currently using with bioenergy would require six planet’s worth of land. We truly do have to change the system. Not what is fueling it. Business as usual has to go. Unfortunately power concedes nothing without a demand. In fact, power concedes nothing without being given no other options.

Which brings me back to the Rolling Stone article. Marching. McKibben writes about the power of marching to make great change. Two of the examples he gives are ending the Vietnam

We call on our allies to:

- Join us in the streets of NYC for a week of creative non-violent actions for Climate Justice
- Organize a delegation to join the Peoples March & People’s Climate Justice Summit in NYC
- Organize a creative action in your home community that highlights local solutions to climate change
- Spread this /call to action/ amongst your respective networks and social media outlets
- Our demands of local, national and international decision-makers are simple:
- Support us in building Just Transition pathways away from the “dig, burn, dump” economy, and towards “local, living economies” where communities and workers are in charge!

Join us in solidarity – in the streets of New York City, in your own community, and around the world!

Alliance for Appalachia • ACE for Environmental Justice • Asian Pacific Environmental Network • Black Mesa Water Coalition • Catskills Mountainkeeper • Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy • Center for Story-based Strategy • Communities for a Better Environment • Community to Community Development • Cornell Global Labor Institute • East Michigan Environmental Action Council • Energy Justice Network • Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative • Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives • Global Justice Ecology Project • Grassroots Global Justice Alliance • Grassroots International • Indigenous Environmental Network • Institute for Policy

Studies • Ironbound Community Corporation • Jobs With Justice • Just Transition Alliance • Kentuckians for the Commonwealth • Labor Community Strategy Center • Labor Network for Sustainability • Little Village Environmental Justice Organization • Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment • Movement Generation • Movement Strategy Center • NAACP Climate Justice Initiative • New York City EJ Alliance • People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights (PODER) • POWER • Right to the City Alliance • Rising Tide North America • Ruckus Society • Southwest Organizing Project • Southwest Workers Union •

UPROSE

Uprooting The Liberal Climate Agenda

by Scott Parkin

A version of this essay was originally published on Counter Punch.

"You can't hate the roots of a tree and not hate the tree."

---Malcolm X

Somewhere between the Bay Area's environmental non-profit bubble and multi-million climate march planning in New York City, 21 people in the Utah desert took action to shut down the first tar sands mine in the United States. They'd been part of a larger encampment on the eastern plateau, where local organizers educated over 80 student climate activists about the Utah tar sands as well as trainings on organizing, direct action and anti-oppression. Utah tar sands fighters have spent the summer living in the area as a constant protest against Canadian-based company U.S. Oil Sands' extraction efforts on the plateau. Every night, black bears raided the camp looking for food and every day local and state police agencies harassed the camp with veiled threats and innuendo derived through Facebook stalking. Despite the harassment and surveillance by the state, actions happen. This particular arrest action gained lots of national media attention and a number of larger environmental organizations put out statements of support of the activists. It also included a number of escalated felony charges on some of the activists.

Utah tar sands fighters living on the ground on the plateau, in Moab and in Salt Lake City live and breathe the campaign against the Utah Tar Sands. They strategize and organize it the same way that Appalachian mountain defenders organize the struggle against mountaintop removal coal mining. They live it the same way that the Tar Sands Blockade lived the campaign against the southern leg of the Keystone XL pipeline in east Texas and Oklahoma. In all of these campaigns, it's been an alliance of unpaid radical organizers working with local landowners and community members fighting to save homes, forests, water supplies and more. Furthermore, these campaigns have defined risk and sacrifice.

In Appalachia, after numerous actions on strip mine sites, coal companies filed lawsuits against those participating in civil disobedience actions. West Virginia law enforcement imposed huge bails to further deter actions on mine sites. In Texas, TransCanada sued numerous individuals and three grassroots organiza-

for "climate action." Who is this Climate Group? They are a self-described "campaign" whose goal is a "low carbon economy." Okay, so? Well, their idea of action on climate change includes many "solutions" debunked as false by the global climate justice movement, including carbon capture and storage, and other technologies that allow business as usual to bounce happily along while the planet slowly burns. This is not surprising since The Climate Group's corporate partners include Duke Energy, HSBC, Goldman Sachs, Greenstone, Nike and many others.

The existence of this Climate Group is why clear justice-based and transformational demands are critical. After all, this corporate Climate Group has, on its website, a call for people to join the People's Climate March, using the very language from the march's own website:

"In September, world leaders are coming to New York City for a historic UN summit on climate change. With our future on the line and the whole world watching, let's take a weekend and use it to bend the course of history. Let's make the People's Climate March the largest-ever demonstration demanding action on climate change.

Together, we'll take to the streets

to demand the world we know is within our reach: a world with an economy that works for people and the planet. A world safe from the ravages of climate change. A world with good jobs, clean air, and healthy communities for everyone. This is the moment to bring our different movements together, articulate our common challenges and solutions, and go big."

Somehow I really don't think Goldman Sachs has real solutions to climate change in mind. Climate justice activists, organizations, social movements, and Indigenous Peoples all over the world for decades have debated what kind of action should be taken to successfully and justly address climate change because "climate action" can mean so many different things. It can include for example, geoengineering—manmade manipulations of nature on such a massive scale that the impacts can't possibly be known, but could definitely be catastrophic. It can also include actions already taking place, such as the building of vast hydroelectric dams that flood vast expanses of land and displace thousands of Indigenous Peoples or land-based communities. Climate action also includes ongoing grabbing of land for the development of vast plantations of oil palm, GMO soy or non-native

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Climate Action vs. Climate Justice:

The Need for Clear Demands and Real Action at the Peoples' Climate March in New York City

By Anne Petermann

A version of this article was originally published on www.Climate-Connections.org

In New York City on September 21st, a major climate march is planned. It will take place two days before UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's UN Climate Summit—a one-day closed-door session where the world's "leaders" will discuss "ambitions" for the upcoming climate conference (COP20) in Lima Peru.

350.org and Avaaz originally called for the march, but environmental and climate justice organizations and alliances based in the New York/New Jersey region and across the US demanded (and won) a seat at the organizing table to attempt to ensure that the voices of front line and impacted communities are heard. So, what are the demands of the march? There are none. That's right. The march will simply bring together an estimated 200,000 people to march through the streets of New York and then...

There will be no rally, no speakers, no strong political demands. Just people showing up with the overarching message that the world's leaders should take action on climate change. Why no solid demands? I've been informed by organizers that the reason this march is being held with no actual demands is because we need a big tent.

But this tent is so big that it even includes organizations that support fracking and the tar sands gigaproject. Yup, they're in the tent, too. Call me crazy, but I think that tent is too damn big.

According to some of the organizers, as long as everyone agrees that climate action is needed, then it's all good. But are all climate actions created equal? No.

In fact, there is another entity called The Climate Group that is planning a whole week of activities around the Ban Ki-moon summit to call

tions for over \$20 million after the same sort of action. The Canadian oil giant also compiled dossiers on noted organizers and briefed local and federal law enforcement agencies with possible crimes and charges for stopping work on its work sites. Texas law enforcement obliged TransCanada's hard work with felony charges and violent brutalization of peaceful protestors.

In each of these campaigns, bold and effective organizing against oil, gas and coal companies has created moments to stop egregious practices and projects at the points of destruction only to be abandoned or ignored by the larger environmental establishment. In the wake of that abandonment, hundreds of Appalachian Mountains have been leveled while oil flows through the Keystone XL pipeline from Cushing, OK to the Gulf Coast, and ground is now broken on the first tar sands mine in the United States.

The liberal reform agenda of the environmental establishment continues to dominate the climate movement. Organizations sitting on millions of dollars in resources and thousands of staff are now engaged in a massive "Get Out The Vote" style operation to turn out tens of thousands to marches before the September 23rd United Nations' Climate Summit in New York. Their hope is to impact the summit framed as U.N. Secretary General Bai-Ki Moon's dialogue with global politicians on climate change in the lead up to the 2015 climate talks. Civil society's demands include passing meaningful climate legislation and signing binding agreements on carbon regulation.

History continues to repeat itself as the environmental establishment had similar demands in Copenhagen at the 2009 climate talks. After spending millions of their donors' dollars and thousands of hours of staff time, successes included an email campaign that got President Obama to travel to Denmark and personally witness the failure of those climate talks. Almost simultaneously, legislation to regulate carbon emissions failed in the U.S. Congress as well. After outspending the climate liberals 10 to 1, the political will of Big Oil and Big Coal remained unbreakable. Meanwhile, these same companies continue to drill, mine, frack, pollute, poison, build pipelines and burn coal in neighborhoods and communities from coast to coast.

However, there is recent precedent for movements to effectively confront power-holders that moves beyond traditional liberal solutions of compromise and polite advocacy with grassroots organizing, direct action and meaningful solidarity with communities seeking clean and just solutions to pollution and exploitation. In 1999, the North American anti-corporate globalization movement partnered

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with peoples' movements in the Global South to literally end business as usual at the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks in Seattle. A grassroots spirit dedicated in solidarity with anti-austerity, human rights and environmental movements around the world spread like wildfire. Rooted in direct action, direct democracy and anti-capitalism of movements both in the U.S. and abroad, the global justice movement had been built over decades to stop the privatization of labor, environmental and human rights protections across the globe. The Seattle shutdown happened in defiance of Democratic politicians, Big Labor and other large organizations dedicated to reaching agreements with Corporate America in the WTO talks.

In 2011, after decades of pickets and strikes, of budget cuts, layoffs and evictions, the movement for economic justice in the United States rose to a new level as Occupy Wall Street began to occupy parks and public spaces across the nation. This happened after decades of politicians creating policies that benefited the rich and powerful while harming poor and working people. These occupations against the power of the "1%" created such a dramatic tension that the Dept. of Homeland Security coordinated a massive crackdown that ended many Occupy camps. Throughout the Global South, they fight back against the polluters and the profiteers as well. In states across India, residents living near coal plants regularly engage in direct action and street fighting against authorities defending the right of corporations to poison their communities. In China's Hainan and Guandong provinces, tens of thousands have taken to the streets in resistance to coal polluting their air and water. In 2011, Bolivia passed the rights of mother earth into law in defiance of companies in western democracies profiting from destroying the planet for financial gains.

While the liberal climate agenda is rooted in compromise with policy-makers and playing nice with corporations, a radical climate agenda must take the small disparate pieces of the existing climate movement and grow them exponentially to become a fierce counterbalance to the fossil fuel industry. It must include strategies that create an environment so toxic for the climate pollution industry, its executives, its politicians and the financial institutions that back them that business as usual becomes impossible.

Furthermore, this agenda must be rooted in principles of justice and ecological sanity as well. Lastly, it must be willing to take risks, do jail time and say what doesn't want to be heard by friends and enemies alike.

People are hungry to do more than send emails to President Obama asking him,

the Earth First! Journal.

- Prominent Zionist leaders like Malcolm Hoenlein and Samuel Eizenstat, sit with oil and gas drillers on the board of Council for a Secure America, a pro-fracking, pro-Israel outfit.

- Pennsylvania hired the Institute of Terrorism Research and Response to spy on peaceful anti-fracking activists. The shadowy group boasts of employing Israeli counter-insurgency experts as trainers.

As I wrote, "there is no conspiracy at work. These groups simply follow the philosophy of political Zionism's founder Theodore Herzl, who advocated domination of nature and subservience to Western imperial powers."

Since my article, more examples have come to my attention. This May, the Jewish Daily Forward reported that "Jewish religious and communal groups are virtually unanimous" in opposing fossil fuel divestment campaigns. The Forward quotes a climate activist who correctly says Zionists' pro-fossil fuel stance is alienating young Jews.

So-Called Green Zionism

Marginal groups like the Green Zionist Alliance, which praises Herzl on its website, try to remedy the situation by creating an illusion of Zionist sustainability. Their only effect is to greenwash Israel and

the well-financed, overwhelmingly pro-extraction Zionist lobby. Another fake green group, the Jewish National Fund, will probably attend New York's UN summit and boast about the water-sucking, ecologically inappropriate trees they've planted over uprooted Palestinian villages and native olive trees. The JNF directly controls 13 percent of Israel's land and prevents non-Jews from buying and leasing it. This discriminatory group also has 6 of 13 seats on the government body controlling a further 80 percent of Israel's land. They pretend to be green, but they are a central institution perpetuating Israeli apartheid. While Rising Tide's statement condemns Israel's post-1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, it doesn't mention Zionism, which Britain's 1937 Peel Commission identified as an "underlying cause" of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Being so adept at opposing climate change's false solutions, Rising Tide should point out the limitations of the Zionist two-state "solution" which would leave Israel as an ethnocratic state unrepresentative of the non-Jewish fifth of its population and unwilling to allow the return of its millions of refugees.

summarized, "Israel to US: Don't Delay Iraq Attack". Some self-described "realist" political scientists therefore blame Zionists for the Iraq invasion, but they have the story backwards. Although Zionists assisted, evidence shows that Washington had a primary interest in preventing Saddam from disrupting—you guessed it—oil flows. No less than General John Abizaid, CENTCOM's top commander responsible for US forces in the Middle East from 2003 to 2007, later admitted, "Of course [the Iraq war is] about oil, it's very much about oil, and we can't really deny that." Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chair during the invasion, wrote in his 2007 book, "the Iraq war is largely about oil." Greenspan further explained in a Democracy Now! appearance, that if Saddam developed nuclear weapons, "he would have essentially endeavored and perhaps succeeded in controlling the flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz". So, Israel plays an important role in the Pentagon's efforts to ensure maximum oil extraction in the Middle East. It assists the Pentagon, which is in the words of an October 2012 Business Week headline, "The World's Biggest Fossil Fuel User". Washington's massive military bud-

get—Harvard's finance expert Linda Bilmes estimates the Iraq and Afghanistan wars cost \$4-6 trillion—drains funds that the government could theoretically spend on green projects like public transportation and community-controlled wind cooperatives.

Zionists for Fossil Fuels

Here is where it gets personal for many North American climate activists. Zionists have expanded their mission from assisting energy imperialism in the Middle East to assisting North America's internal energy imperialism. In December 2013, I wrote an article for Palestine Chronicle titled "Zionism in Service of Fossil Fuel Extraction". My findings included:

- The American Jewish Committee advocates and lobbies for fracking, the Keystone XL pipeline, offshore drilling, and coal and nuclear power.
- AIPAC's 2013 energy memo approvingly noted "the United States and Israel are positioned to play a leading role" in fracking for methane gas.
- The Anti-Defamation League trained the New York police in 2008 on dealing with "environmental extremists, anarchists, and anti-globalization extremists." The organization has monitored and smeared peaceful environmental groups like

once again, to do the right thing or march in a permitted march. Real change won't come from professional activists rooted in the existing political and economic system; it'll come from a mobilization of people willing to engage in risk and sacrifice.

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I Think I'll Just Stay in Texas (But Bring Me Back a Bagel)

By Eric Moll

I'll be staying in Texas this September, though I do miss New York City's vibrant, tightly packed vastness. Right now, this frontline can't spare the people or the expense. We need more organizers against deportations and racism, for clean air, for healthcare for women, against police violence. Also, I may soon need to help move many boxes of books, because rents are rising and our radical library is losing its space. Again.

I can see why the folks at 350.org decided that we should all go to New York. New York occupies a larger-than-life space within our national identity. Events there seem to echo farther, somehow. Trends are set. Ideas seeded. I grew up in upstate New York, nearly seven hours from New York City, but we still sometimes referred to it as simply "The City". We were within its gravity, that self-described center of the world, one of the great capitols of global empire. And since Hurricane Sandy showed us that New York is also a frontline of climate change within the U.S., it makes sense that 350.org would use its unparalleled megaphone in the U.S. climate movement to bring people and resources there.

The only problem is that 350.org can't seem to find the real frontline. Those of us who were in New York during and after Sandy know the frontlines: the Rockaways, Coney Island, Staten Island, Redhook. What will the so-called "People's Climate March" do for the people who were most affected by Sandy and are most threatened by the next big storm?

Did anyone ask these communities what 20,000 climate activists could do for them? Logistical nightmares aside, do they have any buildings that need repairing, any gardens that need expanding? Is there anything the marchers could do to oppose local forces of gentrification, police violence, or racism in a way that might actually improve some lives? Some local target with a bit more relevan-

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cy than the United Nations?

I'm reminded of a conversation I had with a 350.org staffer about why they thought standing in front of the White House was a good use of the movement's energy. I wanted direct action and grassroots, ground-up solutions that ask nothing of institutional Power but instead use our collective energy to build resilience and capacity. The 350 staffer agreed with the bottom-up approach, but insisted that the situation was so dire that we had to appeal to Obama and others in power, that the grassroots need some top-down help to get the job done.

That sounds great, until you ask how much energy is being hurled at the walls of the White House (or the UN), only to splatter and evaporate like so many water balloons? Supposing Power listens, who has the privilege of being the interlocutor? Governments do not negotiate with tens of thousands of individuals. Can we trust Bill McKibben to speak for the interests of people most impacted by climate change?

But let's not bother too much with that rabbit hole. We can expect the UN to be about as useful as FEMA after a hurricane, regardless of how many attendees 350.org can tally on their lobbying resume.

We can also expect 350.org to continue to organize these rallies because they have been integral to 350's growth as an organization. Not counting the regional 350 chapters, 350.org is a small, skilled group of people with a big online presence and some institutional money. They're much more set up for success organizing a big rally than the more intricate work of mass-mobilization scale direct action (including mutual aid).

So let's just sit with the frustration for a moment. I was certainly frustrated, watching the Keystone Pipeline being built in Texas. I mean that literally. We chased the pipeline construction all over East Texas. It felt like we were running in place, watching the same dusty 75-foot wide easement clear-cut into each landscape, the same trench, the same puke green pipe. Dozens and dozens of construction sites that hemorrhage money on a bad day (meaning sit-ins but also heavy rain; let's give Mother her due when it comes to fighting these projects) – and 350.org kept talking about Keystone XL North and appealing to the better nature of the guy who routinely green-lights the murder of civilians by flying death robots.

Yeah, it was frustrating. It was also undeniably useful to fund a few folks' travel to the East Coast. Regardless of 350.org's structure or vision, a gathering of thousands is still a powerful place to be.

The question for radicals is, as usual, a question of navigating currents of human energy larger than ourselves. Though it may be relatively directionless and frustrating, the so-called People's Climate March will bring a big flow of climate aware humans into New York City, and local organizers will have to

Herzl wrote.

Israel's oppression of Palestinians has gone hand-in-hand with environmental destruction. Israeli industrial zones in the occupied West Bank pollute indigenous villages. Within Israel itself, Palestinians residents comprise the vast majority of households not connected to any sewage system, and the untreated sewage flows into people's streets and pollutes streams. Gazan children tread through raw sewage on their way to school, due to fuel shortages and infrastructure disrepair from Israel's blockade. Israel's repeated wars on Gaza leave an enormous environmental toll on the environment, with military vehicles ripping through sensitive farmland and orchards. In the future, Israel may try to grab Gaza's considerable offshore gas reserves.

Securing Oil Flows

Since Herzl, Zionism's leaders have allied themselves with Western imperial powers, betting that these powers would assist them financially and diplomatically. In Herzl's words, the Jewish state would "form a portion of a rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism." This stance has put Israel in the role of serving the US, whose main interest in the Middle East is secur-

ing the flow of oil from the region. In 1958, the US National Security Council articulated its strategy: "if we choose to combat radical Arab nationalism and to hold Persian Gulf oil by force if necessary, a logical corollary would be to support Israel as the only strong pro-West power left in the Near East."

Israel gladly obliged. In 1967, Israel crushed Egypt's subversive Nasser regime in the Six Day War. Nasser had hosted the First Arab Petroleum Congress and advocated "Arab Oil for Arab People," a troublesome slogan from the point of view of Western capitalists. In 1970, Israel helped produce Syria's withdrawal from Jordan, accelerating Arab nationalism's decline.

In the 1980s, Israel acted as a US proxy and sold weapons to Iran. Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arens explained the goal was to establish contact with the Iranian military and try to eventually overthrow the Khomeini regime, which had nationalized Iran's oil industry. In the Gulf War, Israel provided the US with bombs and desert boots, helping contain a situation where Iraq could threaten Saudi Arabia's oil fields. In the lead-up to Washington's 2003 war on Iraq, Israeli political leaders appeared all over the US media, promoting the war. A CBS headline

Palestine, A Climate Justice Issue

By Dan Fischer

On August 8, Rising Tide released a Statement of Solidarity With Palestine, condemning Israel's assault on Gaza and occupation of the West Bank. This current article aims to delve beyond Rising Tide's statement, which neglected to mention Zionism and its role in US energy imperialism. I argue that Palestine is a strategic point of focus for climate justice activists.

Political Moment

Rising Tide's statement and its endorsement of the People's Climate March's "Free Palestine Bloc" come at an interesting political moment, a flashpoint for Palestine solidarity. Outraged by Israel's brutal killing of 1900 Gazans this summer, many Americans are speaking out against Israel for their first time. A July 24 Gallup poll found Americans under 30 saw Israel's actions in Gaza as unjustified, by a two-to-one margin. Climate activists now have an opportunity to connect two of North America's most radical, rapidly growing social movements. As the editors of Jacobin Magazine wrote last year, "scarcely anywhere — except for the environmental move-

ment — are young people in motion with such a mix of revolutionary élan and disciplined militancy as they are in the case of Palestine."

Clear a Country of Wild Beasts

Israel's apologists often deny that Zionism—the movement for building a Jewish state on indigenous Palestinians' land—is a settler-colonial movement. However, Zionism's founders were very clear about their intentions. In his 1896 book *The Jewish State*, Zionism's founder Theodore Herzl used the words "colonial," "colonists" and "colonization" to describe his movement. Zionist colonists established a highly polluting and water-consuming society, displacing hundreds of Palestinian subsistence farming communities. Herzl himself expressed a willingness to exploit the colonized people's environment, which would be repeatedly bombed and bull-dozed over the next century. "Supposing, for example, we were obliged to clear a country of wild beasts ... we would organize a large and active hunting party, drive the animals together, and throw a gelignite bomb in their midst,"

harness as much as possible before it dissipates. We need to know when to ride the wave and when to redirect it or subvert it.

I can't speak to how that could best be done in New York, because I haven't been back there recently. I just hope every marcher who shows up to the so-called "People's" Climate March builds at least enough connection to the people of New York that they return when the next Big One hits the coast. The power in NYC doesn't lie with the United Nations, and most of it doesn't even lie with the NYPD. New Yorkers themselves are the primary power — and the larger movement will definitely play a role in whether New Yorkers become organizers or refugees (or both).

If y'all were coming down to Texas, I could think of a few productive things to do while you're here (though I'm a newcomer myself so I can't actually extend such an invitation). Houston may not be as much of a "symbol" as New York or DC and may not fit 350's narrative as well, but it is every bit a capitol of global empire.

This region was the birthplace of the oil industry and is a global hotspot of petrochemical plants, refineries and corporate headquarters. Boomtown Houston, with its bayous and highways, is as nakedly capitalistic as Las Vegas. While other cities hide their dirty and dangerous infrastructure (or outsource it to the Gulf Coast), Houston's infrastructural guts are splayed open for all to see. Blame it on super-lax zoning, a history of good 'ole boy politics and a race-to-the-bottom strategy for attracting toxic industry.

Coming soon to Houston: the port of Houston (and affiliated dirty energy infrastructure) is expanding to accommodate the expansion of the Panama Canal and increased domestic production from fracking and tar sands. The last abortion clinic will close this Fall. Meanwhile, gentrification, police violence, human trafficking and deportation seem to be on the rise as an increasingly dire flow of migrants, refugees, work-seekers and children cross the border, some 300 miles away. All this seems to be fueling the growth (or at least visibility) of frightened, awkward and ill-informed white supremacists with guns.

It remains to be seen whether 350.org's base, generally white and middle class, would be willing to exercise mutual aid with frontline communities, not by saying "we should do..." but rather asking "what can I do?" Still, I do know that lots of people-hours are needed to go door-to-door, make phone calls, grow food, to cook food and share stories, to make art, repair homes, teach children, to cop-watch.

That doesn't mean 350.org should flood neighborhoods with well-meaning but uninvited volunteers — sometimes it is better to support from home and donate your travel budget to a frontline group. Or, to put it simply, as a local Houston organizer did when I asked him about 350's rally strategy: "Stop tokenizing us and fund our solutions."

Rising Tide North America Statement of Solidarity with Palestine

Released by Rising Tide North America on August 8, 2014

Rising Tide North America is part of the global movement against climate chaos and for social and environmental justice. We believe climate change can only be addressed by exposing the intersections between the oppressions of humans and the earth. No effort to create a livable future will succeed without the empowerment of marginalized communities and the dismantling of the systems of oppression that keep us divided.

As such, we condemn the Israeli military's attacks on the Palestinian people in Gaza and the occupation of the West Bank. We reject any attempt to isolate the attacks on the Palestinian people and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza from the intersectional global fight for climate justice. As the broad-based climate movement prepares to march in New York City, we call upon other groups and organizations committed to fighting the climate crisis to condemn publicly the Israeli military's assault on Palestine.

In New York City, we will march with communities and groups who are working daily for community resilience against climate events like Superstorm Sandy and for food and environmental justice. We believe that from Palestine to New York City and beyond, our struggles for climate and social justice are all related.

In the movement for environmental and climate justice, we stand with those around the globe fighting war and occupation. Rising Tide North America is committed to opposing land grabs and resource exploitation by industries and state-sanctioned institutions. One of those institutions has been, and continues to be, imperial militaries which destroy communities, the environment, and the climate.

Militaries exploit land and natural resources to fuel their violent control and power over others. The unfettered burning of fossil fuels by militaries to wage war and violence on communities is exacerbating climate change and the impacts of droughts, extreme weather events, flooding, and sea level rise. This

will lead to an increase in forced displacement and the number of climate refugees hoping to seek access to food, water, and homes elsewhere. We recognize and reject that the United States financially and materially supports the Israeli military and countless other land grabs. As North American-based activists fighting against climate change, it is necessary to connect the colonization, capitalism and imperialism of our state and others with our daily work. The Israeli military's actions actively support the corporations whose profits depend on the control and exploitation of land. As many regions of the world have so called 'valuable' natural resources, including the occupied Palestinian territories, we extend our solidarity with all who are impacted by resource extraction processes, and encroachments on their sovereignty and self-determination.

We recognize that the struggle to protect the land, water, and air from colonization, capitalism, and imperialism is a struggle that the people of Palestine face everyday. We extend our voices of solidarity to the people of Palestine who are facing unacceptable escalation of violence as they struggle to end the illegal occupation of their land.

