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**Climate chaos**

I am discouraged that Joe Biden may not have the knowledge or the courage to ride the climate centaur, or at least, slow down its destructive force.

In the heat of the election, he made sensible climate promises. Yet he must have known he would break his public trust by not keeping those promises. Nevertheless, the danger of climate is not going to be swept under the rug.

It’s not like campaigning to raise the minimum wage or to build homes for the homeless or to raise taxes for the superrich. Though important, these concerns cannot turn society upside down.

With climate, the politics of ignoring science and the evidence of high global temperatures and looming higher temperatures for tomorrow are potentially fatal. They touch life at its most beautiful and vulnerable.

This pains me. I voted for Biden. I thought he took science seriously, like I do. His EPA is saying that “a warming world is making life harder for Americans, in ways that threaten their health and safety, homes and communities.”

Moreover, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, made up of dozens of international scientists who have been studying the world’s climate for decades, is not exaggerating its warnings to policy makers.

IPCC scientists are telling world leaders they have about ten years to put their house in order and turn, together, against their common enemy, which, politely, they call climate change.

This real enemy is world leaders themselves who, thoughtlessly, allowed the takeover of civilization by a few petroleum, coal, and natural gas companies.

These fossil fuel companies simply have been extracting coal, natural gas, and petroleum ‘resources’ from the land. They ‘burn’ these fossil fuels for the energy of factories producing electricity, chemicals, computers, missiles, pharmaceuticals, cars, trains, airplanes, machines of all kinds, weapons, ships, fertilizers, pesticides, tractors and countless ‘consumer’ products and even more gadgets. They even make possible the nightmare of all factories, giant animal farms for the mechanical feeding and slaughter of billions of sick animals for meat.

These fossil fuel factories made the world. They employ millions of people, advertise their products on TV, newspapers, and radio, and aspiring politicians and academics. They also earn the confidence of war boosters, profiteers and politicians.

This is the basic reason why Biden and other world leaders find it so difficult to challenge, regulate, and face out the petroleum foundations of our civilization.

Greenhouse gas emissions are largely invisible. The vast number of people driving cars, trucks, airplanes, ships and other thousands of fossil fuel devices don’t have a clue about the impact of their machines on climate.

Politicians, at least those with a consciousness, are aware of this mass ignorance, but hesitate to address its causes, including its relations to climate chaos. They are terrified with the prospect of abandoning petroleum, coal and natural gas. They have nightmares seeing multitudes seeking to avenge the loss of their jobs.

This does not mean nothing is being done to move us away from the addicting petroleum drug. Yes, there are more electric cars and more houses, like mine, receiving their electricity from the Sun. But it’s difficult to assure yourself there’s a transition from fossil fuels to green technologies.

Every day, year after year, cars, many large and aggressive, dominate the landscape. Leaf blowers and other useless gadgets are keeping the grass lawns neat and inviting. Pandemic or not, these petroleum-burning machines have been trimming and cutting grass and trees and moving tree leaves.

Meanwhile, anthropogenic heat waves and floods and fires have been hammering and harming villages and cities all over the planet, weakening ecosystems, destroying homes, forests, and killing people. In July 2021, the Bootleg Fire in Oregon burned about 414,000 acres of forest.

Every day in July 2021, the temperature of my hometown, Claremont, California, was 100 degrees Fahrenheit. August started with a daily temperature of 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

I water my trees often enough, but I suspect the heat stress is enormous. One of my fig trees started losing its leaves. Honeybees and Monarch butterflies nearly disappeared.

Just like monotheistic religions, the not so invisible climate danger is embedded into the fabric of industrialized societies. Undoing this petroleum vaccination demands enlightenment, passion for life, and personal and collective actions and responsibilities.

World leaders must do the heavy lifting. The United States should abandon its Cold War against China. In May 2021, some 65 organizations wrote to Biden and Congress and urged them to stay clear of narrow and self-defeating foreign adventures. They said to the Democrats and Republicans to avoid “a dangerously short-sighted worldview that presents China as the pivotal existential threat to US prosperity and security.”

There’s little doubt that, without responsible and ethical domestic and international politics, climate chaos will destroy the world.

This political transformation is difficult. Too much is at stake, especially on behalf of the superrich who own their wealth precisely to the fossil fuels and the culture they created around them.

In addition, we need to restrain national and imperial ambitions. The United States must come to its senses and protect its own survival and that of the world over the temporary lures of class greed and Cold Wars.

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