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## **The Climate Catastrophe is coming**

**Alan Betts (<http://alanbetts.com/writings>)**

We had a very wet spring in Pittsford with seven inches of rain in May and six in June. The springs are still running and vegetation has grown fast after a late start. Our sugar snap peas reached a record nine feet tall, so for harvesting I need a small step ladder!

Elsewhere climate extremes are much more severe. Flooding on the Mississippi River has lasted longer in many places than the Great Flood of 1927. Britain has had more wildfires in 2019 than in any year on record. The end of June was extremely warm in Europe with record temps in southern France above 110F. Slowly the realization is sinking in that as the Arctic warms and melts, the fast-moving westerly jet stream patterns are often being replaced by nearly stationary patterns of large amplitude north-south waves. This July, there was severe flooding in southern Japan as 40 inches of rain fell in a week, because the Baiu front stalled over the island of Kyushu. Anchorage hit 90F for the first time on July 5th. The melting of the Arctic sea-ice as well as the glaciers of Greenland is increasing.

A climate catastrophe is approaching, and frightened groups are desperate to keep exploiting the planet for profit, before the collapse. In Washington, many heads of agencies have been appointed with clear conflicts of interests, and charged them with dismantling government regulations that protect both people and the natural environment. Scientific advisory groups have been disbanded, or panels have been stacked with representatives from the fossil fuel industries. The EPA is looking for ways to unwind the Clean Air Acts by cynically changing how the benefits are calculated, or by simply asking industries what provisions they would like to see removed. Remarkably, efforts are being made to roll back vehicle fuel-efficiency standards to prop up the profits of the oil industry, despite the opposition of the auto industry.

Astonishingly, the Republican Party, with a few heroic exceptions, panders to the ego of this clueless President, who has neither read nor supports the US constitution; is utterly selfish and obligated to his financial backers. Incredibly he is also supported in this ethical void by right-wing Christian groups, who have long forgotten that Christ asked us to join the Father's world, the Creation, not destroy it. This is the ultimate crime of Ecocide: the destruction of the Earth's biosphere on which all life depends.

On the scientific front, a new generation of models predicts a larger warming from the doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> and the increase of the other greenhouse gases. Studies show that global natural systems are undergoing destabilization on an unprecedented scale: we are entering an era of environmental collapse. We are also entering the last decade to slow things down. Fortunately scientists at government agencies and in academia, with their global connections, continue to advance our understanding of the real world.

A few countries have declared a climate emergency, Britain and Canada. The Pope agrees that the Earth faces a climate emergency, saying that our children and grandchildren should not have to pay the cost of our generation's irresponsibility. He was speaking to oil and energy executives, urging them to hear the

increasingly desperate cries of the Earth and the poor. However the cynical attitude of the oil industry is that despite their staggering profits and decades of presenting false information, carbon taxes are the responsibility of governments, and tax payers should pay for the transition away from fossil fuels.

What can we do? We can support the many local and global groups that are calling for climate justice.

There are many: 350.org started in Vermont and has become a global network. In Rutland County CastletonIndivisible.org is helping organize many holistic projects. Across Vermont, Rights and Democracy (RadVT.org) works politically to support people and a healthy environment. Globally, Fridaysforfuture.org is helping the climate strikes by youth who realize they are to be sacrificed. Rebellion.earth is coordinating the first rebellion to save the Earth, using civil disobedience to force lethargic governments to face the climate and extinction emergency now, rather than just make promises for the future.

Support your local planning commissions and emergency management, and advise them on building resilience as we deal with increasing climate extremes. Mentor our teenagers as they grapple with the realization that they are the child sacrifices in this nightmare. Teach them how to recycle everything, grow their own food, build community and shift to light-weight electric bicycles. Teach them non-violent civil disobedience, so that can join the rebellion to save our Earth.

Just look with clear vision at the choices that we, our society, businesses and politicians keep making, and ask the very simple question. Is this good for the Earth or bad for the Earth? And then choose the Earth over our consumer society and corporate greed. The Earth is way more powerful, and our survival depends on the living biosphere of the Earth.

It is time for us all to stand up everywhere and just say no: we will not tolerate the destruction of our precious Earth and the lives of our children for greed.