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Extreme weather & capitalism: DEADLY

By Scott Scheffer

Climate scientists around the world are alarmed by a triple climate-change-related crisis that hit the western U.S. and Canada in June and July.

Normally climatologists are careful in their assessment of extreme weather events, under pressure from energy industry profiteers and anti-science climate change deniers. They go to great pains to avoid being accused of exaggeration, and rarely (really never) point to climate change as the cause of specific freakish weather events.

The severity of what has happened in June and July has pushed past many of their carefully calculated projections. The fingerprints of capitalist-induced global warming are all over the crime scene.

A severe drought in the western states of the U.S. that has been worsening for months has nearly drained Lake Mead in Nevada, Lake Oroville in California and other major reservoirs, threatening power generation for millions of people. A series of intense, widespread, sustained heat waves tortured a quarter of the U.S. as well as western Canada for weeks, taking the lives of hundreds of people.



The super-dry conditions in the region have caused 83 wildfires, including the Dixie Fire in Northern California and the Bootleg Fire in southern Oregon. They are two of the largest wildfires in history and are both still raging.

Mild Pacific Northwest goes wild

The Southwest U.S. is no stranger to deadly heat, but what is most unexpected is that this extreme heat has hit the Pacific Northwest, a region known for mild temperatures and damp weather.

Roads buckled in Seattle from the sweltering heat. For several days Portland, Ore., was the fourth-hottest place on earth. British Columbia suffered the highest death toll with more than 800 deaths between the end of June and middle of July — quadruple the average number of deaths.

The village of Lytton in British Columbia burned to the ground just as Paradise, Calif., did in 2018 — essentially nothing left but ashes and smoke.

In Canada's British Columbia province, and the U.S. states of Washington, Oregon and Northern California, the heat broke all-time temperature records, and then broke those records again, and then again.

Nevada and California's livability depends on a system of 1,500 human-made reservoirs, not only for drinking water and agriculture but for electricity from hydroelectric generators.

Engineers say that the water level in Lake Mead will be below the minimum water level needed to generate power to 13 million people in a matter of days. Lake Oroville will likely last until September, when it won't be able to supply electricity for another 800,000.

Normally, power companies buy power from nearby regions when needed. But constantly running air conditioning in a wide swath of the western U.S. during 2021 has diminished power surpluses that normally allow that to happen.

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Long Live Revolutionary George Jackson!

By Gloria Verdieu

"If I leave here alive, I'll leave nothing behind. They'll never count me among the broken men, but I can't say that I'm normal either. I've been hungry too long, I've gone angry too often, I've been lied to and insulted too many times. They've pushed me over the line from which there can be no retreat. I know that they will not be satisfied until they've pushed me out of existence altogether. I've been the victim of so many racist attacks that I could never relax again. ... I can still smile now, after ten years of blocking knife thrusts, and the pick handles of faceless sadistic pigs, of anticipating and reacting for ten years, seven of them in Solitary. I can still smile sometimes, but by the time this thing is over I may not be a nice person. And I just lit my seventy-seventh cigarette of this 23-hour day. I'm going to lay down for two or three hours, perhaps I'll sleep."

George Jackson —
"Soledad Brother:
The Prison Letters" April 1970

August 21, 2021, marks the 50th anniversary of the assassination of revolutionary George Jackson. In 1960, 18-year-old Jackson was accused of stealing \$70 from a gas station in Los Angeles. His court-appointed lawyer advised him to plead guilty in exchange for a light sentence in the county

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Cuba's freedom and Assata Shakur's

By John Parker

For all of those saying that Cuba is not free, consider the freedom of our sister and former Black Panther Assata Shakur, who, like many other Black liberation fighters, was framed for murder in a blatantly racist and unfair trial.

Her freedom today would not be possible if not for the solidarity and principled leadership of the Cuban Communist Party and the revolutionary people who make up the great majority in Cuba. They gave our sister asylum.

If not for Cuba, Assata would instead be dead (the U.S. currently has

a \$2 million bounty on her head, dead or alive) or among the ranks of over 2 million incarcerated people in the U.S. The U.S. has the largest jailed population in the world; by far the largest in actual number and percentage of population, predominantly Black, Brown and other oppressed people.

So for those people who live in the U.S. and continue to lie about Cuba, we say enjoy your "freedom" and your ignorance and we'll enjoy wishing our free sister Assata a very happy belated birthday. (She was born on July 16.)



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