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Climate crisis rages as U.S. pushes war for energy profits

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In early April, a rescue crew in McKinney, Texas, helped motorists whose cars were swept away in flash floods.

For a brief period last summer, even as the COVID-19 pandemic dominated the headlines, climate change news burst to the forefront.

There were wildfires in several western U.S. states, where record-breaking droughts dried up the water system. There were floods in China, Central Europe and India, where 1,300 people died. A Pacific Northwest heat wave took the lives of more than 1,000 people in the normally temperate and humid region.

Considered the most extreme heat wave in world history, it shocked climatologists and was a basis for the reassessment of climate change timelines.

All of this was happening as President Joe Biden's proposed "Build Back Better" legislation, which included funds for action on climate change, was being crushed in Congress. The legislation was already not enough - but still too much for the powerful energy industry and giant banks to allow.

The defeat left the White House without a plan of action to bring to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow last October.

The humiliation and consequent surrender by Biden revealed the weakness of the executive branch of the capitalist U.S. government when it is forced to confront the power of the ruling class, and in particular, giant energy corporations and banks.

Washington prioritizes war

Because of the resources ostensibly at the fingertips of the U.S. empire, capitalist media throughout the world interpret the role of the U.S. as primary in the global effort to fight climate change. This is false hope. The U.S. military is itself the worst single entity that emits CO2 in the world and has evolved into nothing less than a brutal police force for the U.S. energy industry in its efforts to control the world's oil, natural gas and coal.

The energy industry is a powerful section of the capitalist class and garners huge and growing investment by the giant banks. Instead of aiding the replacement of fossil fuels with wind and solar, or pushing reforestation on a massive scale, the major oil companies are now investing in ventures that by design can enable their continued drilling and fracking of oil and natural gas.

They can't lead this fight. A leopard doesn't change its spots.

Nonetheless, and understandably, during the leadup to the Glasgow conference, tens of millions of people throughout the world were hoping the White House would take charge and work to alleviate the menacing climate crisis.

Despite the U.S. delegation attending the conference with obvious empty promises instead of a list of actions already funded and soon to be underway, the conference stiffened some of the goals set at previous conferences. All agreed on preventing the global rise in temperature since the industrial revolution from topping 1.5 degrees, reaching “carbon neutrality” by 2050, and mobilizing financing for the global south for mitigation and adaptation.

Since the conference, the White House’s failed climate proposals are all but forgotten. The media is focused now on the conflict in Ukraine – a crisis created by Washington that threatens the world with nuclear war, as U.S. imperialism maneuvers to increase its domination of oil, gas and energy pathways.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued strident warnings that not enough progress has been made in the five months since COP26 and humanity is not on pace in the fight to save the planet. The funding promised to the global south has not come to pass.

Without the blazing headlines over climate change nagging Biden, the White House has now made a u-turn. To alleviate the consequences of Biden and NATO’s campaign against Russia and Donbass, he greenlit the auction of 1.7 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico to oil giants Exxon, Shell, Chevron and others, in a realization of right-wing Sara Palin’s cry to “drill, baby, drill.”

The people pay the price

But there’s no need to hear from the IPCC, or to do a deep dive through mainstream media, to know that the crisis is ongoing. Hundreds of thousands of people are

experiencing the consequences firsthand.

An April 5 Newsweek headline reported, "[Texas Flash Flooding Sweeps Cars Away as Roads Turn Into Rivers.](#)"

Firefighters in drought-stricken Flagstaff, Arizona, have finally made headway in battling a 19,000-acre fire that was within miles of the city.

In Durban, South Africa, families are mourning more than 400 victims and cleaning up after devastating floods swept away homes of many of the poorest South Africans.

As if the people of Iraq haven't endured enough at the hands of U.S. imperialism, after wars and sanctions that killed millions, a report by the European Union's Institute for Security Studies says that Baghdad could be uninhabitable by 2040. The number of 120-degree days will increase from 14 per year not long ago to 40 per year by then.

Awareness of the impending threat is as old as the problem itself. The pioneer of climate science was a remarkable scientist and women's rights fighter – Eunice Newton Foote, who studied and wrote about the dangers of greenhouse gasses. Her work had to be introduced to other scientists by a male colleague in 1856. But the science was isolated and largely ignored for nearly a century.

Now there are hundreds of thousands of expert climatologists throughout the world. Engineers are constantly pushing innovations that should be invested in, developed and employed. All of this science and every resource needs to be freed from the influence of the capitalist class.

Though every criminal U.S. energy corporation today claims to be "green," it's never been more clear that the fight against climate change must be severed from their grasp to turn the situation around. The needed momentum won't come from any occupant of the White House – Democrat or Republican. The only real power capable

of saving our planet is in the independent mobilization of the people.

