

#1434 Confronting Climate Chaos Through Time (Remix)

[00:00:00] **JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT:** Welcome to this episode of the award-winning Best of the Left podcast, in which we shall dig through the archives to give context to the news of the 2021 IPCC report ringing the alarm bells for the climate crisis. We're trying something new for this episode, so be sure to let us know what you think about it.

We got thinking about the immense value that we have stored up in our own archives. You know, I've been doing this since 2006, so there's a lot of nuggets of gold buried in the sort of geologic layers of this podcast feed. And so we started to think maybe we could make a better use of those gold nuggets by creating remixes that include both new and archival audio. And that's what we're doing today.

So clips today are from the *Green News Report* from 2014 as well as the *Green News Report* from 2021; *The David Pakman Show* from 2014; the *Muckrake Political Podcast* from this year; *Vox* from 2017; *All In with Chris Hayes* from 2014; *Economics & Beyond with Rob Johnson* from 2021; *What Comes After What Comes Next* from 2020; *America Adapts* from 2021; and *Bill Moyers and Company* from 2014.

[00:01:17] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Well on Monday, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its latest report detailing the impacts of climate change, not just in coming decades, but impacts that are already hitting across all sectors of human society right now, from water to energy, to our food supply, from agriculture and the oceans.

The IPCC's new report - @greennewsreport - Air Date 4-3-14

[00:01:38] **DR. CHRIS FIELD:** We see impacts from the equators to the poles and from the coast to the mountains. There's no question that we live in a world that's already altered by climate change.

[00:01:46] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** That was the lead author of the new report, Dr. Chris Field. Now the head of the IPCC, Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, warns that unless we swiftly ramped down our greenhouse gas emissions, we risk pushing the climate beyond our ability to adapt as a species.

[00:02:01] **DR. RAJENDRA PACHAURI:** Nobody on this planet is going to be untouched by the impacts of climate change. If the world doesn't do anything about mitigating the emissions of greenhouse gases, then the very social stability of human systems could be at stake.

[00:02:16] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Oh, that's all.

[00:02:16] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Yeah, that's all. However, the IPCC report does offer some hope: while some serious impacts are already baked in and unavoidable, the window of opportunity has not yet closed to cut our emissions. And this is about risk management. We can still take the exit ramp by cutting fossil fuel emissions, and we can avoid the worst impacts.

[00:02:37] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Kudos to Brian Williams and the NBC Nightly News for giving this report, frankly, the coverage that it deserved, right at the top of the network newscast. Contrast that, frankly, to the rest of cable news, and we got almost nothing on this startling new report.

[00:02:52] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Now I did see good coverage on MSNBC, but CNN pretty much ignored it almost entirely.

[00:02:57] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And Fox News, nothing. Nothing. Well, certainly they ridiculed it. Yeah.

[00:03:01] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** But here's the kicker: Exxon Mobil is banking that we will fail. On the same day as the IPCC's sobering climate impact report, Exxon Mobil released a report to shareholders acknowledging, quote, "the need to adopt policies to address climate change," but concluding that, quote, "governments are highly unlikely to adopt policies that cut emissions." And of course, Exxon will continue to use its oil profits to hire lobbyists who will influence politicians to ensure there's no climate legislation.

In other words, Exxon says, yeah, we're going to overheat the planet and you can't stop us.

[00:03:38] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** As Stephen Colbert described this phenomenon of Exxon Mobil taking its profits from dirty energy and taking this green cash to give to Congress to allow them to emit even more pollution:

[00:03:49] **STEPHEN COLBERT:** it's a phenomenon called the green House effects. Also the green Senate effects.

[00:03:55] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Yeah, there you go.

Green News Report w/ Brad Friedman & Desi Doyen - Air Date 8-10-21

[00:03:57] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** We knew this report was coming. We knew it was going to be bad. I guess what we didn't know is that it would come out amid all of these disasters going on around the world that seemed to underscore this report.

[00:04:09] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Indeed. Wildfires driven by heat and drought, for example, are erupting across the world. Greece is experiencing its most severe heat wave in 30 years, and that is triggering catastrophic wildfires. Surreal video taken from a ferry showing people fleeing a massive fire engulfing the Greek island of Evia looked like something out of a movie, but it was all too real.

[00:04:33] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And not just surreal, but terrifying.

[00:04:35] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Here in the US, California's Dixie fire in Northwestern California is now the largest fire in the country, and the state's single largest fire in its history. It's already outpaced the massive Bootleg fire in Oregon. State officials say the extent of this year's wildfires is nearly double that recorded this time last year. Heat and drought are fueling this wildfire threat and also are threatening the water supply. For the first time in its history, the major hydroelectric power plant at Lake Oroville has been taken offline because water levels have fallen below the minimum necessary to generate power.

Against the backdrop of wildfires, catastrophic extreme floods, and deadly record heat waves, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has published the first part of its sixth assessment report, which will form the cornerstone of climate science for years ahead. It arrives just months before the next major climate negotiations in Glasgow to pressure countries to increase their pledges to cut emissions under the Paris agreement. Right now with current commitments, the world is on track to blow way past the agreement's goal of limiting warming to just two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, much less the harder target of meeting the 1.5 degrees Celsius aspirational goal that scientists say offers us the best chance at avoiding catastrophic climate outcomes.

[00:05:57] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** The UN here seems to be saying, great try on that agreement in Paris, but there is no foreseeable way of actually meeting those goals at this time on our current trajectory.

[00:06:07] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** The report summarizes the physical science basis for climate change, synthesizing the findings for more than 14,000 peer-reviewed studies. As expected, its conclusions are grim, and show how close the world is to irreversible climate change.

As UN Secretary General, Antonio Gutierrez, put it in a statement, the report is, quote, "a code red for humanity. The alarm bells are deafening and the evidence is irrefutable."

[00:06:33] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Other than that, no worries.

[00:06:34] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** The top takeaway, as Dr. Amanda Maycock of the University of Leeds told WBUR, is that human activity is warming the planet, and that is affecting every corner of the Earth's land, sea and air.

[00:06:46] **DR. AMANDA MAYCOCK :** It's unequivocal that human influence is the cause of the changes in the climate that we've observed. And also, a big update since the last assessment that was in 2013 is that we can now link more concretely many of the extreme events that we're observing around the world -- so extreme heat wave events, extreme rainfall events -- to the warming that's occurred and human-induced climate change.

[00:07:08] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Humans have already heated the planet by roughly 1.1 degrees Celsius or two degrees Fahrenheit over preindustrial levels. Thanks to deniers and the delayers funded by the fossil fuel industry that have blocked action, nations have delayed cutting fossil fuel emissions for so long that we are locked into some 30 years of worsening climate impact no matter what the world does.

The report also finds that changes are happening more quickly now than even in recent years. For example, the rate of sea level rise has roughly doubled since 2006. Even in the best case scenario in which the world takes quick and far reaching climate action, we are still likely to cross the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature threshold within the next decade or two, at least temporarily.

The other takeaway from this report is that there is still a window in which humans can prevent the most harrowing future, that the choices we make today will make a difference if world leaders enact an unprecedented shift away from fossil fuels and make other changes to society at large to cut emissions.

[00:08:10] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** So I don't see why they wouldn't.

[00:08:11] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** The bottom line is we do have the tools and we can bend the curve back in the right direction and avoid long-term truly catastrophic climate outcomes if we take action.

[00:08:23] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Good luck to us.

Global Water Shortages Pose Threat of Terror & War - @davidpakmanshow - Air Date 02-16-14

[00:08:24] **DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW:** The idea of war and conflict around water shortages or the water supply is not really a new concept to many movies to science fiction. I mean the entire book *Dune* is based around having to store and manage water reserves at the micro level, albeit on another planet, not exactly an earth-based story. But that may be not that far off with plans to go to Mars within the decade.

And now The Guardian has a very interesting report about global water shortages actually posing the threat of both terror and war. California, middle east, very large areas around the world are drying up. Billions of people do not have access to safe drinking water. And US intelligence -- which we can trust or not trust, and many people would have good reason not to trust it -- but it seems to be corroborated: US and foreign intelligence suggests that the danger around the shrinking of drinkable water resources could bring us to a point where there could be full-out war and terrorism around the acquisition and protection of water. And data show that California is on the verge of an epic drought. It has backup systems of underground water reserves that are down lower than they've been for a long time. We have Brazil, the middle east, north Africa, south Asia, China are at risk.

And it's still not feasible to simply run desalinization processes in order to turn salt ocean water into drinkable water. It's very expensive and it requires a lot of energy. It might just exacerbate the energy problem that we have.

Certainly to me, number one, an indication that we need to stop the fracking. Any process that is using so much water to derive a non-renewable source of energy needs to stop right away, as if we didn't already have countless environmental concerns over it. And water is another environmental concern. But we really may be heading in a direction, Louis, where once again, we've talked about food. Food is not a supply problem on this planet. We have

plenty of food for everybody to not be hungry. We have a distribution and resource allocation issue. And with water, we may be quickly heading towards water as a catalyst for war.

[00:10:45] **LOUIS MOTAMEDI:** Yeah. I don't see why not. Just one of the many things we can add to the list that that is a huge problem and that will eventually run. It's not not fun to think about. I don't think it will happen in our lifetimes, but you never know.

[00:10:58] **DAVID PAKMAN - HOST, THE DAVID PAKMAN SHOW:** You never know. And I don't know for sure that it won't happen during our lifetimes.

If you look at the middle east and you look at places like Israel and surrounding areas that already are in a heightened states of tension, and you look at the limited water resources that are there, water could become -- in a way, it already is a political issue there, but it could become an even more acute catalyst for political tension.

We're we're obviously going to stay on this story. It's something that affects everybody. You can't say I'm not going to worry about water.

The World's On Fire and There's Money in the Flames - The Muckrake Political Podcast - Air Date 8-10-21

[00:11:28] **JARED YATES SEXTON - HOST, THE MUCKRAKE PODCAST:** I assume that you understand that climate change is real, and that we are hurdling headlong towards a climate catastrophe. This report, which I think a lot of people expected to read this way, we discovered that not only has this been escalating, but we, more or less, have another finish line up ahead of us right now. I'm going to go ahead and read a little bit from the coverage of this.

" Not all is lost, however, humanity can still prevent the planet from getting even hotter. Doing so it would require a coordinated effort among countries to stop adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere by around 2050. We can go ahead and cut back on the amount of carbon dioxide going into the environment if we make a concerted international aggressive push."

That's not great. That's not great, because we... and this is what we want to talk about today, in part, are the forces that keep us from actually addressing existential crises such as this. But it's not that hopeful of a situation.

[00:12:32] **NICK HAUSELMAN - HOST, THE MUCKRAKE PODCAST:** I think the biggest concern for me would probably be the refugee crisis that's born out of all of that, because you'd end up having half of continents of people having to escape where they live to survive. And that means other countries having to accept them, and willing to accept them, and treat them like humans.

That, to me, for some reason, that image is the most powerful thing I can conjure up, besides just roasting in some distant apocalyptic future where there's no food, we can't drink the water, all that kind of stuff.

[00:13:01] **JARED YATES SEXTON - HOST, THE MUKRAKE PODCAST:** I wrote a substack about this last week and I was talking about how this is, first of all, completely avoidable tragedy. We know that this is real. We've known that this was real... absolute conservative estimates, the energy companies and the people around them knew that this was a problem going back into the 1970s. And instead of taking care of the problem, instead of becoming part of the solution, they doubled down on what they were doing, and they pushed all of their money, resources, and power into downplaying the actual threat, undermining scientist, and throwing out disinformation, and aligning themselves with the Right in order to continue profiting off the destruction of the planet.

But we now live in a position where, in America, we have this militaristic ideology. We have this anti-immigrant ideology that is taken hold. We've already seen refugees at the southern border, not just put in cages, but some of them forcibly sterilized, abused, assaulted. We know that hate crimes have gone up in this era of targeting. It's really obvious where that's going. It's really obvious what the consequences of this are going to be, not just human suffering, but human suffering on a scale that is almost unfathomable if this continues going down the path that we are. And so we have to ask ourselves: if we were aliens looking at this society...

[00:14:29] **NICK HAUSELMAN - HOST, THE MUCKRAKE PODCAST:** I do this every day though, you know that, right?

[00:14:31] **JARED YATES SEXTON - HOST, THE MUKRAKE PODCAST:** Some of these Tic Tac shaped crafts that the disappear, reappear, whatever, if we were looking and this society, you would have to look at it and say, why in the hell aren't you listening to the experts? Why aren't you effecting some sort of a change? And it really comes down to why this happened in the first place, which we're going to get into the history of a little bit today, which is capitalism, the extraction of resources, industry, the burning of fossil fuels, consumer's culture that makes sure that people are addicted to brands, and goods, and luxuries, that have created a society where we have to live in denial of things like this, because, otherwise, we have to make large, aggressive changes.

[00:15:18] **NICK HAUSELMAN - HOST, THE MUCKRAKE PODCAST:** You kind of beat need to my big question to you was going to be, "Why do the powers that be continue to ignore these issues?" And what you just said, I can say with the one word: "Money!" They think it costs too much to deal with the... it's not worth it. The cost analysts, and the risk reward, whatever, it looks to them like I will not make as much money as I can if I have to invest in green technology and energy, or making my business more conducive to the environment. That is the cynical and the real answer. That is only what it is.

And it makes sense in the-- we can expand this out in a little bit, and as far as the conversation goes-- it makes sense. And it boils down to the ideologies that we're dealing with, from left and right, and it leads to me being as despondent about the possibility of those two sides ever coming together, in the same sense of, "Are we ever going to get the climate under control?" As well. The same despondent feeling for both of those things.

[00:16:17] **JARED YATES SEXTON - HOST, THE MUKRAKE PODCAST:** Yeah. So I'm going to go ahead and start with what you just brought up, which is the Borg. The companies that are profiting, and let's be very explicit about this, they are profiting off of the destruction of the planet. Like so many things that we talk about on this show, there are different types of

people involved in this. Some of them have managed to convince themselves, through delusion or denial, that they're not part of it, or the climate change doesn't exist. There are others that simply worry about the bottom line.

One thing that we've noticed over the past couple of years is that, you start seeing these energy companies, the ones who have destroyed the environment and created this problem, they have come out and said, they're part of the solution. They're going to make clean energy. They're going to create these alternatives. We... we're even seeing this push right now. Biden is particularly pushing electric vehicles and different emissions standards, all of this. So eventually there's going to be a tipping point where the people who have made money off of this are going to see that they can make more money off of being a part of the solution.

The problem is that by that point, we'll probably have blown through whatever line that we needed to cross, because it's profit. It's a matter of the bottom line, and simply moving away from this is not only going to be a matter of companies not making money, but you want to talk about macro, capitalism says that it constantly has to expand, it always has to grow, and it's all about exploiting resources. There is no emergency break on capitalism outside of a market collapsing. There's no global climate change emergency brake to pull where all of a sudden we change everything.

I talked about this with Bezner a little bit in the interview: the United States military is one of the largest polluters, and has one of the largest carbon footprints, of any entity in the world. What do you do, one day you just simply say, "We're not going to carry out the business of American empire anymore?" It is a fundamental feature of capitalism and imperialism that has gotten us here, and in order to take this on, it's going to take something that is antithetical to that.

Why humans are so bad at thinking about climate change - Vox - Air Date 4-19-17

[00:18:26] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** We are hurdling toward the day when climate change could be irreversible...

and levels already altering this nation's coast...

China's capital is choking in its worst pollution of the year...

5% of species will become extinct...

levels rising, glaciers melting.

[00:18:42] **M. SANJAYAN:** Okay. Enough. I get it. It's not like I don't care about polar bears and melting ice caps.

I'm a conservation scientist. So of course I care. I've dedicated my entire career to this. But over the years, one thing has really become clear to me. We need to change the way we talk about climate change.

This doom and gloom messaging, just isn't working. We seem to want to tune it out.

[00:19:09] **PER ESPEN STOKNES:** And this fear, this guilt we know from psychology is not conducive to engagement. It's really the opposite. It makes people passive. Because when I feel fearful or guilt full, I will withdraw from the issue, and will try to think about something else that makes me feel better.

[00:19:27] **M. SANJAYAN:** And with a problem this overwhelming, it's pretty easy to just turn away and kick the can down the road. Somebody else can deal with it. So it's no wonder that scientists and policymakers have been struggling with this issue too.

[00:19:41] **ANTHONY LEISEROWITZ:** So I like to say that climate change is the policy problem from hell. You almost couldn't design a worse problem as a fit with our underlying psychology or the way our institutions make decisions.

Many Americans continue to think of climate change as a distant problem -- distant in time that the impacts won't be felt for a generation or more, and distant in space that this is about polar bears or maybe some developing countries.

[00:20:06] **M. SANJAYAN:** Again, it's not like we don't care about these things. It's just such a complicated problem.

But the thing is, we've faced enormous, scary climate issues before. Remember the hole in the ozone layer? As insurmountable that seemed in the 1970s and eighties, we were able to wrap our heads around that and take action.

[00:20:27] **ANTHONY LEISEROWITZ:** People got this very simple, easy to understand concrete image of this protective layer around the earth. Kind of like a roof protecting us, in this case from ultraviolet light, which by the way, has the direct health consequences of potentially giving you skin cancer. Okay. And so that now you got my attention. And so then they came up with this fabulous term: the ozone hole. Terrible problem, great term.

[00:20:51] **M. SANJAYAN:** People also got a concrete image of how we even ended up with this problem. For decades, chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs, with a main ingredient in a lot of products like aerosol spray cans. Then scientists discovered that CFCs were actually destroying the atmospheric ozone.

[00:21:11] **ANTHONY LEISEROWITZ:** People could look at their own hairspray and say, do I want to destroy the planet because of my hairspray? I mean, God, no. And so what's interesting is that sales of hairspray and those kinds of products and, you know, underarm aerosols started dropping quite dramatically.

[00:21:27] **M. SANJAYAN:** People listened to scientists and took action.

Now, scientists predict that the hole in the ozone layer will be healed by around 2050. That's actually pretty amazing. And while stopping the use of one product is actually pretty easy, climate change caused by greenhouse gases though, that's much, much trickier. Because the sources are more complicated, and for the most part they're totally invisible.

[00:21:52] **ANTHONY LEISEROWITZ:** Right now, there is CO₂ pouring out of tailpipes. There's CO₂ pouring out of buildings. There's CO₂ pouring out of smokestacks. But you can't see it. The fundamental cause of this problem is largely invisible to most of us. I mean, if CO₂ was black, we would have dealt with this issue a long time ago.

[00:22:10] **M. SANJAYAN:** So CO2 touches every part of our lives: our cars, the places we work, the food we eat. For now, let's just focus on one thing: our energy use. How do we make that visible?

That was the initial goal of UCLA's ENGAGE project, one of the nation's largest behavioral experiments in energy conservation.

[00:22:33] **MAGALI DELMAS:** What we're trying to do is to figure out how to frame information about electricity usage so that people save energy and conserve. The idea is that electricity is relatively invisible to people.

[00:22:49] **M. SANJAYAN:** The research team outfitted part of a student housing complex with meters that tracked real-time usage of appliances and then sent them weekly reports. So you can see how much energy the stove used versus the dishwasher or the fridge.

[00:23:05] **VICTOR PINTO:** We realized because of this project, that the fridge was like the monster.

[00:23:11] **M. SANJAYAN:** So lucky for them, their landlord upgraded their fridge to an energy efficient one. They also learned other energy saving tips, like unplugging the dishwasher when not in use and air drying their clothes during the summer months. And researchers in turn discovered where people were willing to cut back. The ENGAGE project wanted to know what types of messaging could motivate people to change their behavior.

[00:23:37] **MAGALI DELMAS:** We wanted to see over time over a year, and with repeated messages, how do people behave? How does that impact the consumer behavior? And what we found is that it's very different.

[00:23:51] **M. SANJAYAN:** Some households were sent personalized emails with their energy bill about how they could save money. Others learned how the energy use impacted the environment and children's health.

Those who received messages about saving money did nothing. It was totally ineffective, because electricity is relatively cheap. But emails sent that link the amount of pollutants produced to rates of childhood asthma and cancer, well, those led to an 8% drop in energy use, and 19% in households with kids.

Now in a separate study, researchers brought social competition to the mix. First, they hung posters around the dorm building to publicly showcase how students were really doing. Red dots for energy wasters, green for those doing a good job, and a shiny gold star for those going above and beyond. This social pressure approach led to a 20% reduction in energy use. This strategy was also used at Paulina's complex and it definitely brought out her competitive streak.

[00:24:53] **PAULINA MORALES:** For me, the competition was what motivated me, because seeing your apartment number, and telling you that you are doing at the average, but you are not the best was like, why, I'm doing everything that you are telling me to do. I always wanted the gold star because it's like, oh my God, I want to be the less consumption of energy in the whole village.

[00:25:19] **M. SANJAYAN:** And psychology studies have actually proved this.

We are social creatures. And as individualistic as we can be, turns out, we do care about how we compare with others. And yes, we do like to be the best.

Report confirms the effect of climate change happening today, spurs action - @greennewsreport - Air Date 5-6-14

[00:25:33] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** I have been whining for the last several weeks, last several months, out here in California, where we are in the middle of the worst drought on record; that it has been so hot this winter, and over the past week, in the 90s, pushing 100 degrees in April.

Well, it's not just out here in California, by a long shot. Oklahoma and Kansas this week hit 100 degrees, their earliest moment on record hitting those high temperatures. And now the White House has a report that speaks exactly about these problems facing this country right now when it comes to global warming.

[00:26:08] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Yep. That is the upshot of the report. Climate change is here and it's happening now. That's what scientists from the landmark US Climate Assessment Report say. It's a congressionally mandated assessment of the impacts of climate change here and in the future. It's led by the National Academies of Sciences, 13 federal agencies, and the Department of Defense. And it shows unequivocally that climate change is impacting every corner of the US right now.

Dr. Jerry Malillo co-chair of the report.

[00:26:36] **DR. JERRY MALILLO:** It is affecting us in our pocketbooks and on our land in every region of the United States. It is changing the lives of farmers, mayors, engineers, town planners, truckers, and foresters.

[00:26:50] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** The report breaks down these impacts by region and by economic sector to help public officials, planners, businesses, and individuals prepare. It says we're already seeing stronger deluges, more record floods, a longer wildfire season, deeper droughts, and heat waves are longer and more intense, just like Texas in 2011, Oklahoma over the weekend, and here in California, spiking our food prices.

[00:27:15] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And just as I've been whining about for months.

[00:27:17] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And it paints a grim picture of what's to come, warning that these impacts will accelerate unless we act swiftly on cutting emissions of greenhouse gases. Predicting temperatures potentially could soar by as much as 10 degrees by 2100, melting Alaska, and raising sea levels by two to four feet, threatening a trillion dollars worth of US coastal real estate and infrastructure.

[00:27:39] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And yet, I was listening to Rush Limbaugh today, and he says, not only is none of this happening, there is absolutely no

science to support it, that everything you're talking about, Desi Doyen, is based on computer model predictions for far, far out in the future. It's based on nothing that's actually happening today.

[00:27:56] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And of course he's absolutely, completely, 100% wrong. The report also details actions that we can take right now to reduce emissions, but the political climate for action is a problem. The climate change denial industry and Republicans are already forcefully dismissing the new scientific assessment, but White House senior advisor John Podesta says they'll fail.

[00:28:17] **JOHN PODESTA:** They'll find various ways, particularly in the House, to try to stop us from using the authority we have under the Clean Air Act. All I would say is, that those have 0% chance of working.

[00:28:28] **BRAD FRIEDMAN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** So, if Congress wants to try to stop the president from taking action here, Podesta is saying he's going to use his executive authority to take action anyway.

[00:28:36] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** Yes, and President Obama already has done so, and he is also going to issue landmark new rules for the nation's dirtiest power plants coming up in June. And EPA administrator Gina McCarthy tells MSNBC there is good news.

[00:28:49] **GINA MCCARTHY:** The bright spot here is that we know that states and local communities across the US have been taking action to reduce carbon pollution. So we can do this. That's what the president knows is our moral obligation to do.

[00:29:01] **DESI DOYEN - HOST, GREEN NEWS REPORT:** And the clean tech sector is booming, and already all over this. They're using the new report to focus on innovation and which tech sectors are positioned for rapid growth by addressing climate change.

When Republicans believed in climate change - @allinwithchris Hayes - Air Date 04-22-14

[00:29:12] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** Today is Earth Day, but don't expect to be hearing that from certain members of Congress.

[00:29:19] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** You know, if you own the land,. Every day is Earth Day.

Madam Speaker, I rise today, on Earth Day, to introduce legislation that will clean up a significant environmental problem in Southern Utah.

The fact is as we approach Earth Day and we celebrate a much cleaner environment for America...

This is... has been Earth Day this week and Earth Week, people talk about saving the environment.

[00:29:39] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** There was a time when Republicans, even ones who fought against environmental regulation, paid at least a little lip service to Earth Day.

[00:29:46] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** Let me compliment the House of Representatives on this Earth Day, 1999, on a bipartisan basis.

[00:29:53] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** Those days are over. In fact, according to a search of the congressional record by the Sunlight Foundation, Republicans in Congress, haven't uttered the words Earth Day since Senator Lamar Alexander said it in 2010.

[00:30:06] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** Mr. President, today is Earth Day.

[00:30:07] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** And that's just a small glimpse of a much larger and more dangerous trend. The Republican Party marching backwards on the environment and climate change. Because, it wasn't always this way. As far back as 1988, Republican vice presidential nominee, Dan Quayle promised a Republican ticket that would deal with the dangers of climate change.

[00:30:27] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** The Greenhouse Effect is an important environmental issue. It is important for us to get the data in, to see what alternatives we might have to the fossil fuels.

[00:30:38] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** The next year, Congressman Newt Gingrich co-sponsored the Global Warming Prevention Act that warned; "The Earth's atmosphere is being changed at an unprecedented rate by pollutants resulting from human activity."

George H. W. Bush signed the UN framework to prevent further global warming, promised US leadership.

[00:30:55] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** We all know that human activities are changing the atmosphere in unexpected and in unprecedented ways.

[00:31:03] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** In 2003, then-governor of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney, wrote that power plant pollution is harming the climate, and hailed Massachusetts as the first state to enact a cap on CO2.

Even George W. Bush said that humans were causing climate change.

[00:31:19] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** It was now recognized that the surface of the earth is warmer, and that an increase in greenhouse gases caused by humans is contributing to the problem.

[00:31:28] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** And by 2008, the GOP platform called for the party to address the risk of climate change based on sound science. John McCain dedicated an entire speech to the topic.

[00:31:38] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** The facts of global warming demand our urgent attention, especially in Washington.

[00:31:45] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** Addressing climate change was genuinely a bipartisan issue.

[00:31:48] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** We don't always see eye to eye, do we Newt?

No, but we do agree. Our country must take action to address climate change.

[00:31:57] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** And then, Barack Obama was elected, and the Republican party started running backwards: trying to override the president to speed up offshore drilling; fighting Democrats on cap and trade and basic EPA regulations; even uniting against light bulbs standards championed by George W. Bush.

[00:32:15] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** There should be some self examination from the administration on the idea that you favor a woman's right to an abortion, but you don't favor a woman or a man's right to choose what kind of light bulb...

[00:32:26] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** With Obama as president, Republicans no longer had the guts to say the very obvious truth: the world is warming because of human activity.

[00:32:35] **ARCHIVE FOOTAGE:** My view is, that we don't know what's causing climate change on this planet.

I actually don't know whether global warming is occurring. The vast majority of the National Academy of Science says it is, and minority says it is not.

Climate is always changing, that's not the fundamental question. The fundamental question is whether manmade activity is the... is what's contributing most to it.

[00:32:55] **CHRIS HAYES -HOST, ALL IN:** The question is why. There's a lot of possible answers. This 2013 headline could have something to do with it. Because as the great Upton Sinclair once said, "It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it."

Geoff Mann: Transforming and Democratizing Institutions to Address Climate Change - Economics & Beyond with Rob Johnson - Air Date 8-9-21

[00:33:12] **GEOFF MANN:** The question right now is to look hard at what needs to be done. Which, I think we have a fairly good idea about, at least in some case-- you know, on some fronts.

For example, it seems to me, that, I think, everyone who takes the problem seriously understands the fact that fossil fuels are a huge part of the problem. So we need to wind down the fossil fuel industry. Even saying that sounds laughably utopian at this moment.

And I think part of the reason that it does is, because we're in a situation where existing institutions seem either beholden to those same industries, or the parallel in other sectors, or they seem entirely inadequate to the problem.

And so, I guess I would say we have two kind of large scale political fronts that we have to take seriously.

The first is, the nature and scope of the institutions that we create to deal with these problems, because the existing ones are either inadequate or need to be tweaked so radically that we have institutions that actually have a purchase on the problem.

And we also need, I think, to think hard about the nature of the authority of those institutions and the ways in which they're managed democratically.

And I think-- and I think I can speak for Joel too, though I don't want to speak... you know, I don't want to put words in his mouth-- but I think that there is an assumption that the only way we can solve this problem is an authority that is so great that democracy is effectively in the way. We have to move it out of the way to get the technocrats, or whatever is in charge, to handle this. And this is of course what Joel and I were calling climate Leviathan.

But I think that, in fact, the real solution, if there's a solution, the real solution is actually to take multiple forms in the communities, in which people live. And that means that the response needs to be democratic.

So, in other words, what I'm saying is, that the institutions that can confront this, despite the fact that it's a global problem, will be grounded in communities where people are actually dealing with the implications of climate change that are already underway, as you've noted before-- and we were talking just before we started about Arjun and his labor to... to document what's going on in India. The Indian state and the Indian people cannot wait around for Glasgow or another cop to create a regime that will somehow help them endure what's coming down the pipe from climate in India.

And the same is true here in Northwest... North America. The same is true in New York. The same is true across the world.

And so I feel very strongly that, despite the fact that there's temptations for a centralized response, that that response needs to be democratically accountable to institutions grounded in the communities, in which people live.

We can't be handing power up to the same institutions that have failed us over and over. And the global regime itself, of course, it's, you know, has produced nothing thus far.

So the.. The faith in the next cop seems to me entirely misplaced. I'd be glad to be proven wrong, but at this point I'd rather bring it down to the ground.

[00:36:18] **ROB JOHNSON - HOST, ECONOMICS AND BEYOND:** The disparity, or the lack of trust and faith in expertise, which is probably deserved because a lot of people with credentials became marketing agents for power, rather than, what you might call seers of the global public good, and what was needed. But, we're at a place right now where the susceptibility to demagoguery is much greater, because expertise has failed.

How do we restore trust? I mean, there's some great scientists. How do.. how do we restore trust in them? You watch this craziness, in the United States and everywhere else, about dealing with the pandemic. "Oh my God. We gotta open the restaurants. Oh my God, this and that, this and that."

Using the New Zealand example, We could have shut this thing down months ago, and saved trillions of dollars. And we didn't do it. That's a failure on the scorecard of expertise, of political power, that is etched into everyone's mind.

So, you know, leading a bit here, but how do we restore, not only the faith in, and the trust in, but the power of common-good expertise to prevail?

[00:37:48] **GEOFF MANN:** I think one of the challenges of working through this problem, because you are right, there... and there is a tendency, I think, on the part of folks like me, and I don't want to speak for you, but maybe folk like you too, you know, who... who are embedded enough in existing institutions of expertise, that we have a tendency to trust those experts. Maybe some people even think of us as experts ourselves, whether we merit it or not.

And... and so, it's a suspicion that seems outlandish or irrational to us. Do you know what I mean? To... to look at a climate scientist and say, "It's all a hoax driven by China's effort to stymie American growth," or things like, you know... those seem like absolute and complete absurdities.

And so, how could we possibly even fathom a conversation that begins from that point?

And part of the problem, I think is the fact that, for most folks-- and I speak for myself here as well, it's just, I don't think about it often enough-- the problem of expertise is inseparable from, and embedded in, the problem of the institutions themselves.

It's not like we mistrust the expertise, and the institutions themselves are fine, or the other way around; those two things are the same. It's the institutions that implement the expertise. The way that people experience expert knowledge and expertise is through institutions, if that makes any sense.

And right now, as you've said many times before in our conversations, those institutions-- the principle ways in which expertise gets communicated-- those institutions have lost a lot of legitimacy, both at the global scale, certainly; particularly, I would argue, the American institutions have lost a lot of global trust. The idea that at one point the U S might lead the planet-- if that makes the right... if that makes any sense-- Has very, very little purchase outside the United States anymore.

Those kinds of... but... but the institutional mechanisms through which expertise gets, kind of, played out through policy, and all that other stuff are... Have not adjusted to this new reality, if that's what it is.

And, and so, I guess I would say, part of the... part of the task is that, because of the lack of legitimacy of existing institutions, especially in their capacity to deal with something like climate, and especially to deal with something like climate change in anything like a just manner, is that we've built... those institutions now have built into how we understand the future, a series of expectations of breakdown, decay, collapse, crumbling. And in so far as we expect that to be the way that our institutions manage, or help us cope with coming changes, insofar as that's what we expect, we have a much greater chance of that being true.

What we need is institutions in which people expect to find support; expect to find some forms of stability, some forms of provisioning. Right now, those don't exist.

And I think that... So, managing the people's expect-- not The People's, people's expectations, and thinking hard about what needs to be done, is all about the re-legitimation of those institutions. And if that's possible, then expertise will come along with it, I think.

Climate crisis and jobs with Naomi Klein - What Comes After What Comes Next - Air Date 6-11-20

[00:40:57] **JAMES SHAW - HOST, WHAT COMES AFTER WHAT COMES NEXT:** It's a very human instinct, in a moment like this, to say, "Look, I just want things to go back to the way they were before."

Right? You know, even though I might be able to imagine that there is a, you know, a better cleaner, greener, brighter future, you know, that actually, what's familiar the world that I knew, you know, particularly if you're in the middle class and, you know, like you might not be, kind of, super well-off or anything, but you're, you know, you're getting by, um, and I don't know if you enjoyed your job or anything like that, but you had a roof over your head and, you know, that kind of thing. It's just like, oh, can we just get back to normal, whatever normal was.

So on the one hand you've got that. On the other, you know, like you're saying, you know, this realization that there... there is no going back. So we, you know, we simply have to choose what of... of the new futures is... is there in front of us.

But I think there's that.... there's that tension, of course, that the vast majority of people, they just want to know that they've got a job, and that they're not going to lose the house, and that their kids are going to be looked after.

[00:42:00] **NAOMI KLEIN:** And the Green New Deal should cover all of that. Right?

And right now, people don't have jobs. Right now, we have a massive unemployment crisis. Right now, I mean, where I am, there's a massive homelessness crisis. Um, and... and just rampant economic insecurity that predates this crisis, and has been massively deepened by it.

Um, so, you know, the whole framing of a Green New Deal is about saying to people, "You don't need to choose between caring about a habitable future for our kids and for the planet, um, and the need for those bread and butter issues; a job, a home, healthcare, um: it bundles it all together, because it isn't a singular carbon based climate... climate policy, it is a plan for a functioning economy based on caring for each other and the planet.

And, and so, I think we need to talk about what it is that we miss. You know, when we say we want things to go back, um. We want things to change. This is untenable. Um, but do people miss their cities being choked with pollution, and cars, and noise. Do people miss that? Because I'm seeing a lot of people who are enjoying walking right down the middle of the street, you know?

And... and... and... and... do we miss... do we miss shopping? Is that the thing we miss most? Or is it each other? What is it that we are missing? And, um, And who are we... and who and what are we appreciating most in this moment? I mean, the outpouring of love, right? For nurses; um, all healthcare workers; everybody in the care sector; for the people who are delivering the food that we need; who are growing it; who, uh, are delivering the mail; the... the essential workers who are so invisibilized for the most part. Um... uh... uh... and... and...

and whose... whose labor is so discounted for the most part? Um, there's huge appreciation for them.

I mean, I think, like a lot of parents of small kids, I have a huge amount of appreciation for my son's teachers, who I miss very, very much. And as I try and fail to homeschool my seven-year-old, um, uh, I certainly, uh, don't like this idea that, uh, remote learning is the new normal, right?

Um, so I think what we need to do is learn from this, right? And really pry it apart. What is it that we want to take from this? What do we want to build from it? Because talking about re-imagining how we move ourselves around and rethinking something like air travel. It's a hell of a lot harder to do when... when our skies are filled with planes. Right? And we're saying, "Okay, which of those planes are we going to say, shouldn't be flying," than a moment like we're in now, when there are almost no planes in the air, and it's a discussion that we're having, "Okay, which planes should be in the air? What is essential travel, right? How do we, how do we rationally use our remaining carbon budget, which is vanishingly small." Right? That's a... that's a much different conversation.

I think the reason why so many cities are, you know, rapidly creating bike lanes in this moment and... and... and saying, "Well, maybe we won't open every single street to car traffic, you know, when this is... when we return back to whatever... whatever it is, we're going to call it," um, it's just simply because there is, as you know... you're in government, I mean the power of... the inertia power of existing profitable industry, um, it's hard to... it's very hard to stop things that are happening, and especially when those things are profitable.

But right now things are paused, um, and we have to figure out how we are going to stimulate a new kind of economy. And I think that that gives us all kinds of... of options and possibilities that we... that we didn't have before.

Extreme Heat in the News, Naming Heat Waves, Thermal Equity and more with Dr. Ladd Keith - America Adapts the Climate Change Podcast - Air Date 7-5-21

[00:46:15] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** Why is heat in the news much?

[00:46:17] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah. So heat's really been in the news, June, 2021, due to the two heat domes that resulted in a really strong heat wave for the Southwest of the United States. And then another one in the Pacific Northwest.

[00:46:28] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** You shared something on Twitter yesterday, which blew my mind, and I've been following the news pretty closely: Canada actually broke an all-time temperature record, which broke our record here in Tucson. Do I have that right?.

[00:46:39] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah, that's correct. So Lytton, in British Columbia, Canada, actually broke their national heat record three days in a row. So consecutively, and they got up to 121 degrees Fahrenheit on June 29th. And, to put that into perspective, both Tucson, Arizona, and Las Vegas, Nevada, have only gotten as high as 117 degrees Fahrenheit.

[00:46:59] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** That is shocking. You can just imagine what those people "up there" are thinking; that they're used to temperatures probably in the seventies, and some of the maps that I've seen, and hitting 121 must be shocking to them. What do you think they're doing? I mean, even though their public health system is probably not adjusted to what's going on up there, right?

[00:47:16] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah. So that's one of the big concerns, that heat affects places differently, as we talked about before. Across the United States, and across the world, and some of these more temperate regions that have these really strong heat waves, they have lower use of air conditioning and their public health systems just aren't currently equipped to deal with some of these extreme heat events.

[00:47:34] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** Dr. Ladd, you've been in high demand. It seems like every day I'm hearing from you, and there's a new interview that you're doing, local news, maybe NPR. Tell me a bit about who you're talking to, and why are they reaching out to you right now?

[00:47:46] **DR. LADD KEITH:** So, it seems like there's a lot of increasing interest in heat risk, which is a good thing because we do need more awareness about it.

We do govern it less, like we talked about previously. And so kind of any chance that I can get out there and talk about extreme heat risk, and spread some awareness about it, I feel really fortunate to be able to do that.

[00:48:03] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** So, what are these news outfits typically asking you?

[00:48:07] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah, so it depends on the audience. And so, the more national ones typically have like science journalists who ask some more specific questions about the contributors and impacts of extreme heat. And then I do get some media requests from the local news that tend to be more for a general audience.

And so, kind of everything, from what's causing these extreme heat events to how cities and people can adapt to them.

[00:48:27] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** You're an expert, you're this interface with the news media, desperate to get some accurate information out there; you must have your own, sort of, in your head, talking points that you really want to get across, even it doesn't even really matter who it is. Right? I mean, what are you thinking?

[00:48:42] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah, usually I try to make sure that I talk both about the urban heat island effect, and climate changes contributors, and give those kinds of equal weights. I'm just, if they get into the story. And then of course talking about equity.

But I think a really important thing is that in academic literature, we focus almost specifically on equity and, kind of, vulnerable populations, and marginalized populations, which is a really good thing. But I think, especially for a general media audience, it's important to, kind of, broaden that out, and let them know how everyone's affected by heat, and not just the most vulnerable population.

[00:49:12] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** Extreme heat is the number one killer when it comes to impacts of climate change at the moment. And it's a serious thing. But when I see the media coverage, it's all over the map. And I'm just curious, your own sort of experiences, not just talking to it, but you and I, both, we...

We follow Twitter pretty closely. There are some certain Twitter voices out there that there's this emergency quality to some of the things that they're saying. And I find myself wondering, even with these extreme heat events, is this the right kind of tone we want to take? And I'm just curious, your thoughts, is... I want to pick your brain on how the media has responded to this most recent heat wave in the Pacific Northwest, but there's this notion of, "Okay, this is the future. It's going to get bad." But then there's the doom and gloom, "it's just, it's out of control," quality to some of the rhetoric too. What are your thoughts on that? Those approaches?

[00:50:03] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah, that's a good question. I think it mirrors other, kind of, climate journalism in a lot of ways, and so there's questions about, "Will certain places become uninhabitable due to extreme heat?" And it kind of mirrors the questions about places like Miami with sea level rise.

And they think, always going back to the answer that it's not going to become uninhabitable for everyone, but the question is really, that they should be asking, "Who will it be less habitable for?"

So, kind of, who's going to be impacted the most, and who will the climate-- who will the impacts affect the most.

Just some other things specific to heat: I understand that heat is incredibly different-- difficult to visualize in the media. And that's something that I've struggled with too, with presentations. And so, there's a lot of images out there right now, for the Pacific Northwest, of, kind of, kids playing in splash pads, and families at the beach, which makes it almost look like a good thing.

And I think finding other ways to visualize extreme heat. And so, there were stories of families-- and I have friends and colleagues in Portland who were hiding in the basement with their families, you know, for a full day, because they didn't have sufficient air conditioning.

You know, the peoples experiencing homelessness, and what they're going through, whether or not they can get to a cooling center and, kind of, safe location.

So, so I think kind of visualizing extreme heat in different ways, so that it just doesn't depict people, kind of, having fun at a... at a water park would be a really important part of that too.

And then I think the... specifically with the Pacific Northwest heat wave, there's been some really interesting framing. But I think we could do a better job at... where it's framing, I've seen a lot of stories that are framing climate change as, "This heat wave, kind of, confirms that this is the future of climate change." And it's very focused on language about, "The future of climate change looks like this."

And the thing I think I would want to get across is, "This is the present of climate change. This isn't the future, this is the present of climate change. And it's actually going to get worse unless we really mitigate those greenhouse gas emissions."

[00:51:50] **DOUG PARSON - HOST, AMERICA ADAPTS:** Where I get tripped up and maybe some of the coverage... and some of the people... we've mentioned Eric Holthouse before, you know, he, he has a distinct voice when it comes to climate change, and I think his tagline now is, "This isn't a climate emergency." I think he uses that on every we one now.

And yet, when I hear, I guess, more proactive response as to what's going on, "Okay, so these heat waves, what are we going to do? How are we going to adapt to these things?" And then you hear a conversations about planting more trees, or you need to do these in these urban areas. There's such a contrast there, and I'm not even necessarily disagreeing with Eric in the seriousness of the matter, but you go from this climate emergency, talking more broadly about climate change to, "Well, you need to change your... your... your tree ordinances in this particular town to help mitigate against heat waves."

You see what I'm saying? There's just this spectrum of urgency to these kinds of issues.

[00:52:44] **DR. LADD KEITH:** Yeah, I think that's a good point to him. Heat really is both a chronic and an acute risk. And so, what I mean by that is, heat, those gradual temperature rises, do have significant impacts to people, everyday people, vulnerable populations, marginalized populations. Those stories aren't as interesting for the media to cover, because that's just, you know, the summer was a little bit hotter than last year again.

And I think that story, unfortunately, is almost, kind of old, you know? We are breaking records every single year at this point. So, I think the chronic heat risk, focusing on that is really important.

And then we do have these acute heat events on these extreme heat waves that are occurring that do get most of the attention.

And so I think we do have kind of a disparity in how chronic risk versus the acute risk is being covered. And it's really easy to ignore the chronic temperature rises that again, really do have significant impacts to energy and water use, people's comfort in their homes, the health and safety of the public.

Putting the Freeze on Global Warming - @BillMoyersHQ And Company - Air Date 4-25-14

[00:53:37] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** But I've heard foundation executives say, "You know, we get it, Ellen we-- and Tom-- you're asking us to take the high road, but to do the Lord's work, we need to get the highest return on our investments. And those fossil fuel companies deliver it. Should they take the high road at the risk of doing less of the Lord's work, less of their mission?"

[00:53:59] **ELLEN DORSEY:** I don't think that is the right framing because I don't think they sacrifice returns.

[00:54:05] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** So if you look back in time, all the information that's out there, it doesn't support the fact that you have to give up a return return. It's something that they're hiding behind as opposed to acting, and that's part of the problem. For years they've said that if you do socially responsible investing, you're gonna have to give return But in fact having strong environment social and governance practices as a management team is actually best business practices is what it is

[00:54:32] **ELLEN DORSEY:** But I would argue something else If you're a foundation And your actually whatever your mission but particularly if your mission is human rights or environment how is it possible that you can have your investments undercutting the work of your grantees If your investments are driving the problem that you're asking your grantees to solve that's a problem Those should be aligned your investments and your grant

[00:54:59] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** Here's Here's what one foundation executive would say to that I've talked to him last week and he said, ask them how anyone's hands can be completely clean in a society as capitalist as ours.

[00:55:14] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:**

I think that's a fair question. Society is addicted to oil and we need to get off of it, and we need to start moving aggressively in that way.

[00:55:21] **ELLEN DORSEY:** There is nothing that would stop the fossil fuel industry from using the capital expenditures that it's currently, the amounts of capital being expended for new fossil fuel energy, it's nothing that would stop them from instead shifting that to clean and safe energy sources. There's nothing stopping them from doing that. However, they're not. That says that we need to take action.

[00:55:48] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** Fossil fuel companies receive \$1.9 trillion in subsidies globally on an annual basis. So here's this very, very profitable industry being funded by governments around the world to the tune of \$1.9 trillion to basically drill more oil. So they're saying nothing's going to stop us, we have the regulators in our pocket, they're not going to make us change.

[00:56:09] **ELLEN DORSEY:** We don't have a choice. We don't have a choice and it's not really a question of what the fossil fuel industry is going to do with their reserves, it's a question of what we as a global society are going to do to orchestrate the energy transition that we need.

If they burn those reserves, we cook the planet -- irreparably that can't happen. And what is so powerful about this movement is that it is a true alignment between ethical and financial interest because not only must, we act to stop the worst excesses of climate change, but financially it's the smart thing to do. We have to deflate that bubble before it bursts

[00:56:50] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** I saw research recently from the University of Oxford that studied divestment movements, earlier divestment movements, against the arms industry, the pornography industry, the gambling industry, that concluded that their direct financial impact on price shares was small. What makes you think this time is different and how many billions of dollars would it take for you to nuke the energy business, I mean, to really make them hurt?

[00:57:20] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** Making them and making society realize that we have to get off of our addiction to oil is really the key. That we have to remove oil, or limit oil, or use it much more responsibly than we do today. It can be measured in billions of dollars, but really what it is, it's say, look, take your capital expenditures and invest them in something in clean technology broadly defined.

Now, I don't want to just take, not just solar and wind, but very broadly across the entire economy. If the oil companies took their excess capital and did it, that would be a good thing. If the governments would take their subsidies, \$1.9 trillion, and move it from fossil fuels and give it to clean technology, energy efficiency, buildings, LED lighting, promoting that you could get catalytic.

change significant innovation, job creation, and you wouldn't be effecting people who are generally economically disadvantaged.

So I think that it's not just about measuring how much the company drops it's access to capital. These are very, very wealthy companies, which is one of the reasons why we're trying to turn them into a moral pariah, because yes, we all do use oil for now, but we need to start using it much more wisely and we have to make some choices.

We need to spur, that type of innovation, like we did under Kennedy to go to the moon, we need to spur the same innovation to create a sustainable economy that's based on the energy of the future, not on the energy of the past.

[00:58:43] **ELLEN DORSEY:** And Bill that's Ultimately what we need is to put a price on carbon and we need to have a policy process that can be successful and is not captured by the influence of the fossil fuel industry. And that's, I think the big play at stake.

[00:58:59] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** Do you ever stop to think, why are we having to do this? Why do we have to pressure corporations to be good stewards of the earth, and in this case of the future? Shouldn't this be happening from within them?

[00:59:13] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** Yes. And it is happening from within some corporations. So for example, the corporations that are using lots of electricity right? now they can go out and get a power purchase agreement for 20 years on renewable power, solar or wind And they can lock in a price If I have a huge electrical costs that's volatile it's bouncing all over the place because of natural gas I can't go out and lock in natural gas for 20 years Right now at 6 cents a kilowatt I can lock in solar and wind between 6 and 10 cents a kilowatt but I can't lock in natural gas So my cost line goes all over the place If I'm a business what I care about is certainty What I don't like is risk Tell me what the price is Tell me what it's going to be for a long long time And I can model that put a tax on carbon make it twenty-five bucks a ton increase it \$10 a ton a year for 20 years. That'll push it to \$225 a ton. If that happens, I can model that, I can model my expenses. What I don't want is uncertainty If you give me certainty I can model that and allocate capital accordingly in investments that can make a difference.

[01:00:16] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** And climate change is nothing but unstable and uncertain.

[01:00:19] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** That's right. It creates more uncertainty, which drives corporations crazy. And the innovators, the best businesses are already realizing if they use the resources more efficiently, more productively, more sustainably that they'll beat their competition within the very same industries and They're outperforming Best business, is ultimately best business.

[01:00:39] **ELLEN DORSEY:** It's another reason why I'm so excited. This is a corporate accountability movement, truly, in its purpose. And if you meet with the leaders, the student leaders of this movement, some are business students, some are political science students they are extremely sophisticated. They can sit down and talk to you about everything related to the climate science, to market trends for renewable energy, and they are part of a movement that is bringing about change, but will also be moving forward as corporate heads in the future. They are going to be our elected officials. They're going to run NGOs and foundations, and they will have cut their teeth on this movement and they will believe that corporations can do it differently.

So I am optimistic, when you meet with these students, you can't help but be inspired when you think that they're going to be the ones that will run the energy companies of the future.

[01:01:41] **BILL MOYERS - HOST, BILL MOYERS HQ AND COMPANY:** But isn't it terribly hard to get people to act on what they don't see, and we can't see?

[01:01:46] **THOMAS VAN DYKE:** Well that's the challenge. That's the challenge. And as Desmond Tutu said, I think it's true, custodians of creation And this is where I think the religious do play a role in this as custodians of creation That is not an empty title We are stewards of God's Eden here And interestingly enough God has showed us through the powers of nature how we can actually create power through using the sun and wind and things that are ubiquitous that we can tap it through our innovation by using our mind to figure that out doing it cleanly efficiently, and sustainably rather than owning a commodity, drilling it up, charging people for, and ending society as we know it. That's the juxtaposition and the students are like, this is cleaner, creates more jobs, it's more sustainable, it doesn't exploit the poor and the underdeveloped countries, and actually you can get solar and wind at a much cheaper price than you can some of oil... and it doesn't pollute.

[01:02:42] **ELLEN DORSEY:** And if we can't get our government to lead, and to take effective action, then we do need the universities, the faith groups, the foundations, the pension funds, to take catalytic action. And that's really what calling for divestment from fossil fuels, and investment in climate solutions, the energy sources of the future, is what this is about.

Final comments on the benefits of taking pride in work and country

[01:03:05] **JAY TOMLINSON - HOST, BEST OF THE LEFT:** We've just heard clips today, starting with the Green News Report from 2014 and 2021, raising the alarm about the IPCC reports; the David Pakman Show, in 2014, warned about the coming water wars; The Muckrake Political Podcasts from this year explained that the only response to the climate crisis is to fully oppose the systems that perpetuate it; Vox, back in 2017, explained why humans are so bad at combating climate change; The Green News Report, way back in 2014, complained of

the heat waves they were experiencing and warned of how they would only get worse; All In with Chris Hayes, in 2014, highlighted the era when Republicans actually believed in climate change, and what made them switch away from that thinking; Economics And Beyond with Rob Johnson from this year discussed the crisis of legitimacy in our institutions that is fueling the anti-scientific perspective on the climate; and What Comes After What Comes Next from last year spoke with Naomi Klein about charting a path forward.

That's what everyone heard, but members also heard bonus clips from America Adapts, from this year, discussing productive messaging for combating climate change; and Bill Moyers and Company, from 2014, when they were speaking about the then newly launched divestment campaign against fossil fuel companies.

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And normally this is when we would be hearing from you from those people who call into our voicemail line at 202 999 3991, or write in messages to jay@bestofleft.com.

But today, I'm just going to get right into the few thoughts I have. I mentioned in the previous episode that I had to sort of a B-side to the discussion about airing dirty laundry. We were discussing pride in one's country, and patriotism, being... being used as a political cudgel, basically. There was one piece I... I, sort of, almost mentioned, but forgot to mention, I wanted to add in. I... I mentioned the Proud Boys, and how they are particularly susceptible to this idea of identifying one's nation with oneself, almost, and vice versa. It's sort of a, you know, "Replace your own identity with that of your country," usually in the case of people who don't particularly like their own lives, and have, perhaps, precious little to be genuinely proud of in their own lives.

And so when they take, particularly, an idealized view of their own country, and then adopt their perception of their country as their identity, that's when you end up with the instinct to never say anything bad about your country, in the same way that you wouldn't want to say anything bad about yourself, or your family.

And the... and the bit about the Proud Boys that really drives this home, is, actually, during the pledge that they have to say to join the group, it talks about being proud to be what they describe as "Western chauvinists." So, that, it's not just sort of a general, "I like where I'm from, and I enjoy it." It's a, "No, we are the best. We are the best race of people. We are the best country, and I'm not going to be ashamed of being proud to be a descendant of the best people on the planet, Western chauvinist.

So the... the idea that, to take the step from there, to, "We'd better defend the country at all costs, and never be open to any discussions of what the country might have done wrong, or what we might be able to do better." It makes perfect sense.

But, the B side of this discussion has to do with what I did on my vacation, a little bit.

So my parents live down in Alabama, and last week when we were on vacation, we came down to visit, and went to the Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. And this is

where space camp is; you've probably heard of space camp, even if you didn't know exactly where it was.

And this is where a lot of scientists worked on the Apollo program, and where they actually build rockets. I mean, it's still active today. They still have offices and... and, you know, rocket construction happening here. So it's... so it's a big science town with, obviously, a big legacy of dealing with rockets in the space program, uh, particularly going back to Apollo.

And so the Space and Rocket Center is a big sort of museum and informational and amusement complex, where families go. So we did that.

And, by far, the most interesting thing that we experienced there was, the opportunity to speak with a scientist and engineer who worked on the Apollo program. So he was, you know, sort of getting up there in age. He was probably a, you know, young man working on the project at the time; and they have these volunteers, sort of, all over around where they have the, uh, the Saturn 5 rocket inside their museum. And so these guys, sort of, walk around in white lab coats and... and talk about their experience.

So we went up to one of them, and the best question I could think to ask this gentleman was, what stories are his favorite stories to tell? And, he was a little kooky, you know, I asked that question, and he, kind of, looked around behind him, and said, "Oh, I have stories?" And, he was, you know, he was looking for his stories to tell. So, you know, like, funny guy, obviously enjoyed talking to people.

And I would say that he... he perfectly walked the balance between humble-- like really, really not wanting to toot his own horn, or make himself out to be bigger, or more important, than he was-- and also trying to convey his sense that the Apollo program was the greatest achievement in the history of mankind, and the immense amount of pride he had in being part of it.

So, it was an interesting line for him to try to walk. But the biggest takeaway from all of it was the pride he took in the work. And it wasn't just the pride that he had; he really emphasized that it was important that everyone had pride in the work. And he talked about how much they were able to accomplish specifically because of the pride they had in the work that they were doing.

And so, to contrast these two ideas that were, sort of, happening in my life at the same time, Dave from Olympia calls in, and he's talking about, you know, "Pride in one's country being used as a political cudgel," but at the same time, in a very real world experience, speaking with someone who was a part of a program, the pride in the work, the pride in the science, uh, the pride in how they worked together.

Werner Von Braun is the guy who, I would hasten to mention, was an ex Nazi, and was brought to the U S after World War II because of his rocketeering expertise, and he was, sort of, the driving force behind the US-based program. And, everyone... I mean, some people say he was an asshole and hard to work with, but even the people who say that, will also say, he was very good at what he did, and he was an amazingly inspirational character. And people saw him as a person to be, basically, revered in the space program back in the sixties.

And so, you know, this guy was telling his own story, and his own perspective on the importance of pride, and I thought, "This is exactly what we're talking about, right? This is why patriotism exists. It is taking pride in one's country because it can be used for good. Ostensibly. If you want to refer to the space program as good, and getting to the moon, and all of that, without getting into any messy details.

The point is, it doesn't have to be toxic. It doesn't have to be, uh, you know, something that tears a country apart between two sides. It's sort of a necessary, but volatile element of being a citizen of a country. It can help make the country better by taking pride in it. It can help make your work better if you take pride in it.

Taking it to a dangerous extreme is what makes it toxic and ends up with dangerous nationalism. So, that's the line that is always there to be walked.

Now, obviously, we could talk about how the space race was tied in intricately with the Cold War, and the demonizing and dehumanizing of an entire country of people, because of their political structure; I know, I get all of that. But in general, the pursuit of science, and having that be driven by pride, with a big healthy dose of toxic nationalism... Sure, it's messy. No... no stories aren't messy; but this guy's life, this guy's perspective, was, more or less, as pure as... as you could hope. You know, he did his work. He helped test the rockets. He loved his team. He loved his job. He loved Verna Von Braun. And, 50 years later, he's still telling the story about it. And, you know, practically getting choked up with the memories.

So, as all this relates to pride, and nationalism, and patriotism, take whatever lessons you think is worthwhile.

And as always, let me know what you think. Keep the comments coming in at 202 999 3991, or by emailing me to jay@bestoftheleft.com.

That's going to be it for today. Thanks to everyone for listening; thanks to Deon Clark and Erin Clayton for their research work for the show and participation in our bonus episodes; thanks to the Monosyllabic Transcriptionist Trio, Ben, Ken, and Scott for their volunteer work, helping put our transcripts together; thanks to Amanda Hoffman for all of her work on our social media outlets, activism segments, graphic designing,, web mastering, and bonus show co-hosting; and thanks, of course, to those who support the show by becoming members, or purchasing gift memberships at bestoftheleft.com/support or from right inside the Apple Podcast app.

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So, coming to you from far outside the conventional wisdom of Washington DC, my name is Jay, and this has been the Best of the Left podcast coming to you twice weekly, thanks entirely to the members, the show from bestoftheleft.com.