



Justice Rising

Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Domination Corporate Destruction of Nature & Grassroots Solutions to Save the Planet

by Jim Tarbell

The bull has taken earth by its horn. Wall Street's infamous bull has gored our natural world and its environment for profits. Corporations have reaped billions by taking advantage of marketplace failures to account for environmental costs of corporate activities. Impaled on the charging lance of our money-as-power system, we and world's natural systems are paying the price. Every day the list of costs and calamities grows. Persistent organic pollutants have spread throughout the food chain. Destruction of our soils and other natural systems have led to extensive species decimation. Cataclysmic alterations of the biosphere are spreading cancer and threatening to cook us all.

Our corporate-funded political system has installed a government that ignores the fact that hundreds of years of industrial production and consumption are responsible for creating the problem. As a result, they refuse to comply with global environmental agreements on the excuse that the Third World is not sharing a fair portion of the burden. But the burden should be borne by those that created the problem in the first place.

As the Greenland ice shelf melts, the petroleum corporations see opportunities to extract long hidden oil supplies beneath its surface. This will inevitably add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere and speed up global warming. One wonders if we are not really just a mutant of lemmings headed off the cliff.

On the bright side, awareness is growing, but are the right measures being considered? Pundits for corporate profit, who loathe to see the end of our high-consumption lifestyle, claim we only need to go nuclear or drive a hydrogen car to save the planet.

Too often, these solutions only generate environmental costs elsewhere; often onto the backs of poor and politically disempowered communities. Fortunately, an environmental justice movement is mobilizing those constituencies to fight

back against the unfair distribution of environmental burdens.

Such a realization has led the common people in Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela to exert their political power and demand that their leaders not enter into free trade pacts that just expand corporate-driven and environmentally devastating development. In the end, nothing is free in "free" trade except the environmental and cultural costs that global investors are able to avoid.

In this issue of *Justice Rising*, we look at who is doing the hard work in this country to address these problems. Ruth Caplan points to the Pennsylvania farmers who have begun a drive that could put the rights of nature into our constitution. Lou Hammann recounts the tale of self-reliant Hundredfold Farm, which had to fight entrenched powers to come into being.

We have to join them and stop the charge of the imperial bull. It is our responsibility to insure that we have healthy and environmentally sound trade policies. Models of self reliance and consumption control need to be adopted. Finally, we have to realize that we are part of nature. As it thrives we thrive. All of these stories are in this issue of *Justice Rising*. Enjoy.



Rainforest Action network added a painfully skewered earth to The Wall Street Bull, several blocks from the New York Stock Exchange. photo: RAN

Why isn't the environmental movement about driving the rights of nature into the Constitution?

Ruth Caplan, page 2

As a result of agricultural pollution there is now a dead zone in the Gulf the size of New Jersey.

Bob St. Peter, page 3

ExxonMobil has supported 29 groups generating fraudulent information about global warming.

Mary White, page 5

As usual, what to do is being decided by giant corporations.

Jan Edwards, page 13

A Publication of the Alliance for Democracy