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– working to meet urgent social needs instead of quarterly earnings targets. And so Lucas gradually disintegrated, some bits sold off to other companies, and most of the operations simply shut down.

The bosses lack the imagination and the sense of urgency needed to resolve this crisis. Leaving them in charge can only lead to mass unemployment, ecological catastrophe, abandoned facilities, and a landscape littered with toxic waste.

We need rapid action to slash greenhouse gases and remediate (to the extent possible) the damage that has already been done. Climate action shouldn't mean lost jobs – done right, with unions and community organizations in the lead, it can mean better work for most people than what's on offer today. A just transition to a sustainable economy would transform work more broadly, increasing the power of all workers.

We would decide what work needs to be done, drawing upon our experience and our knowledge of our workplaces and our communities to create solutions that slash pollution and waste – enriching our lives and our communities in the process.

But this will only happen if workers fight for it. The future that the bosses and politicians are stumbling toward is bleak indeed.

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improved facilities, and adequate school funding. Nurses have campaigned for safe staffing levels in the face of speed-ups that endanger hospital staff and patients alike. Public transit and other service workers have fought privatization schemes and service cutbacks, pointing out that these are an attack on the entire working class.

There is no reason that this approach could not be expanded. Coal miners and steelworkers have been ill-served by alliances with the bosses to preserve profits under the guise of protecting jobs. The jobs are vanishing, the workers have been stiffed, the number of black lung victims is rising, local communities are dying, and so are the rest of us. Would it not make more sense to negotiate for a rapid transition – one that would phase out coal production, secure and remediate the mines, support retirees and black lung victims, and help workers and their communities build sustainable local economies?

Instead of taking whatever work is on offer, no matter how destructive, building trades unions could demand that new construction be more sustainable and campaign for policies requiring environmental retrofitting of existing facilities. They could actively campaign for solar and other renewable energy projects, and organize those who are doing this work, often for significantly lower wages.

Just as Lucas Aerospace workers developed plans in the 1970s and 1980s to convert their facilities from manufacturing weapons to socially useful production, so too could workers engaged in manufacturing gas guzzling vehicles that destroy our planet while clogging our streets.

The Lucas workers developed their plans through their unions' coordination committee, based on suggestions from the rank and file. They were not implemented because the company was unwilling to negotiate such matters, and the workers lacked the will (and likely the broader public support that would have been needed) to seize their factories, show the managers the door, and start running them themselves

commitments to workers' pensions and health care (and, increasingly, even their wages). Coal miners have fought for a host of measures to protect themselves and their communities from the coal barons, and this is no time to be toadying to the bosses to keep them afloat.

In the 1980s, Tony Mazzocchi, a leader in the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, argued for winding down industries that harmed workers, environment and society while taking steps to safeguard their workers – proposing a revived GI Bill for atomic workers who would be left unemployed by nuclear disarmament and a Superfund for fossil fuel workers. The Labor Network for Sustainability and others are pressing unions to take up these issues once again, but too many union officials are so accustomed to accepting "managerial rights" in all spheres of our existence that they can not even conceive of demanding a different kind of economy – one in which we are no longer offered a bitter choice between eating today or breathing tomorrow.

Solidarity for our Future

There have been countless examples over the years of workers honoring picket lines in solidarity with workers on strike or who were being denied the right to organize. Millions of workers have refused unsafe work, individually and through their unions. Logging workers have demanded sustainable forestry methods (which mean more jobs, as well as protecting ecosystems), farmworkers have fought agains pesticides which poison our food and the land (and the workers). Before pollution is spewed into the environment it is poisoning workers on the job.

In recent years there has been an upsurge in unions raising demands that not only benefit their own members, but also the broader public. Teachers have demanded support systems,

Global warming is big business. Twenty giant oil companies are directly responsible for one-third of all carbon emissions since 1965. The U.S.'s largest banks have financed $1.9 trillion in fossil fuel projects since 2016. Those who run the global economy are not ignoring climate change – they are actively working to make it worse. Why? Because there are quick profits to be made, and the long-term costs will fall to the rest of us.

It's not that nothing is being done. Wind turbines, solar panels and electric vehicles (the latter hardly harbingers of a green economy) are spreading quickly. But this growth in clean energy isn't nearly fast enough to limit global warming according to the International Energy Agency's annual World Energy Outlook. Despite the growth of renewables, the burning of fossil fuels is growing even faster and global greenhouse gas emissions are on track to continue rising for the next 20 years.

Ultimately the climate crisis is a workers' issue. It is workers the whole world over who will pay the price if we allow the bosses to destroy our planet, and at least as importantly it is workers who have the ability to take decisive action to address the crisis.

Too often the business unions have bought into a false debate between saving the environment and saving jobs, instead of asking what sort of jobs we want and what sort of world we want to live in. It is true, of course, that there are in the short term jobs to be had clear cutting the world's forests, strip mining the earth for coal, and burning fossil fuels. But once the devastation is complete these jobs will be gone, and only the profits will remain.

There could also be jobs in reforesting, converting to renewable energy, retrofitting inefficient buildings and industrial practices, rebuilding public transit systems, and cleaning up the industrial wastelands that litter the world. Unlike the jobs to be had destroying the planet, these jobs are not only useful – they have a future. (Of course, there would also be new jobs if we allow the planet wreckers to proceed on their merry way

– jobs building dikes to hold the seas back, as mercenaries protecting the fat cats trying to hold the desperate hordes at bay, scavenging the submerged wreckage, fighting fires and cleaning up toxic debris.)

The politicians hold fancy conventions around the world while the planet burns. Meanwhile, the plutocrats plunder the planet as quickly as they can, raking in the profits while the looting is good. What do they care if they kill off millions and consign the rest of us to misery and privation for generations to come, so long as they can keep accumulating their blood-soaked money?

The question is not whether this vandalism of ecosystems across the planet will eventually be brought to a halt. It will. The question is how much destruction we will allow to be done in the meantime. There is still time to limit the scope of global warming and rising sea levels. Even if we are unsuccessful in winning the full decarbonization that is so urgently needed, we could still mitigate the devastation. We can afford neither to succumb to despair, nor to the hope (against the evidence of decades of dithering) that our rulers will act before it is too late.

What can workers do in the face of bosses and politicians determined to speed climate change? On the one hand, they rely on us to carry out the destruction from which they profit. They are only able to strip-mine the mountains, lay pipelines across our waterways, replace vibrant ecosystems with dying monocultures, and pollute our skies and water because workers not only carry out this destructive labor at their behest, but also supply a wide array of support services to make it possible. Power workers could refuse not only to operate facilities that worsen the climate emergency, they could refuse service to particularly egregious polluters. Transport workers could refuse to haul the means of mass destruction. Construction workers could refuse the demolition and building activity that makes this destruction possible. Workers could refuse to manufacture

or service equipment that does not meet environmental standards or is destined for those who are destroying our future.

There are precedents for this sort of conscientious refusal of planet-killing and anti-social work. Building laborers in Melbourne implemented a series of Green Bans in the 1970s to prevent the destruction of wilderness areas and affordable housing. For many years Australian dockworkers refused to handle US warships that might be carrying nuclear weapons. British mechanics refused to repair aircraft engines for the Chilean military junta, grounding most of its air force. Just this year furniture workers in the United States engaged in a short strike to protest their employer's sale of furniture to the ICE concentration camps. In Europe, dockworkers have refused to handle shipments of military equipment to Saudi Arabia for use in its brutal war in Yemen. As workers, we have enormous power in our hands, should we organize and resolve to use it.

We are told that we cannot address the climate crisis because it would hurt coal workers. (It's hard to drum up sympathy for the coal barons.) But the coal miners have quite different interests than their bosses, who have proven time and again that they do not care whether the miners live or die.

In 1968, after a mine disaster that killed 78 coal miners, rank-and-file miner Jock Yablonski decided to challenge United Mine Workers President Tony Boyle. As Yablonski asked, "What good is a union that reduces coal dust in the mines only to have miners and their families breathe pollutants in the air, drink pollutants in the water, and eat contaminated commodities?" Yablonski lost a close election, and was murdered by Boyle's hit men. A year later, tens of thousands of miners joined wildcat strikes for better safety and marched to demand protections against black lung disease.

Miners continue to be killed by coal mine collapses and explosions, and new cases of Black Lung Disease have skyrocketed in recent years. As coal consumption has declines, the mine owners have looted their companies, abandoning their