This Month:
Capital & Climate Catastrophe
Call for Boycott of Citybikes
Capitalism Getting you Down? Then Ride Your Fucking Bike
Timeline: History of Environmental Struggles
Capitalism is changing the weather. More fundamentally, it is changing the climate. This is the byproduct of an economic system that relies primarily on burning oil and coal to fuel production and enable the transportation of people and goods. In looking at capitalists’ responsibility for the climate crisis, a central question is whether capitalism must impact the environment in this way, or if it is capable of changing its mode of production so its continued operation does not change the climate.

A new report estimates that before the year 2030, 100 million people will die as a result of the changing climate. Ninety percent of these deaths will occur in poor countries. The ‘climate crisis’ should now be spoken of as the climate catastrophe, because this is what it is for the majority of the peoples of the earth. The droughts, melting icecaps, tropical storms, and bizarre weather we have been experiencing is just the beginning.

The dominant economic system is the driving force of climate change. It is based upon the exploitation of oil and coal, which contributes greenhouse gases to the environment, resulting in increasing global temperatures. The innermost logic of this economic system is the accumulation of capital. Whatever serves profit thrives. Currently a large part of the capitalist machine is fueled by oil and coal. The vast majority of scientific investigation points directly to the burning of oil and coal as having already raised the temperature of the Earth by 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit, with the possibility of raising it over ten degrees by the end of this century. To do this would make life on earth unrecognizable, like something out of a science fiction movie. This may happen by the time today’s infants enter old age.

At one time reformists called for a Green Capitalism, for developing Green technologies and the like. Major unions, who have reconciled themselves with capital, call for Green Jobs. Reformists and unions suggest that capitalism could be ecological, that it does not have to do things like pollute the air and water and change the climate. This may be true. It may be possible to have an exploitative economic system like capitalism, based upon renewable, alternative energy. After all, the slave trade and early colonial conquest were based upon wind-powered ships and mills. A central question then is whether the logic of capitalism is inherently ecologically destructive; will capitalism continue to play chicken with our future, or will it revolutionize its mode of production to not change the nature of the environment so much that the future of civilization is put into question?

There is a debate amongst members of the ruling class, the so-called 1%, about which way to go. Some argue for the development of “carbon markets,” in which the right to put carbon into the environment is bought and sold, thus continuing to profit from the emission of greenhouse gases, while slowly decreasing them. They argue for developing alternative energy, such as wind and solar, to replace coal and gas. They promote ‘lifestyle changes’ and taxing coal and oil companies for their emissions. Right now, this section of the ruling class is losing. No real change is coming from above to respond to climate catastrophe.

It seems that if the fundamental driving force of capitalism is the further accumulation of capital, it would make sense not to change the ecology so much that you severely reduce the number of producers and consumers, threaten food production, and endanger the future of humanity. Without civilization, how can capitalism continue? Right now, the most potent anti-civilizational force on the planet is capitalism.

The same recent study that predicts 100 million dead in less than twenty years also estimates that future global economic growth will be cut by 3.2 percent of gross domestic product, which is about two and half trillion dollars. One would think this would get capitalists’ attention.

Instead, capitalists confront us by driving the rate of destruction ever upward, while becoming increasingly irrational in seeking out the remaining oil, coal and gas supplies. The tar sands extraction process in Canada, ‘fracking’ to get at natural gas reserves (which is causing earthquakes), mountain-top removal in Appalachia, oil drilling off the coasts and efforts to do so in pristine parts of Alaska, all for a form of energy which is literally killing millions of people, is simple madness. To say that capitalism is irrational is an understatement. Much of this

Call to Contribute

The Portland Radicle is an anarchist-without-adjectives project that is looking for articles from anarchists of all backgrounds for consideration. We like writing that is accessible, but not simplistic. We are looking for articles between 500 and 1500 words. To submit please contact us at: portlandradicle.wordpress.com theportlandradicle@riseup.net
Global warming is the terrifying new math, Bill McKibben

The scientific community and global political leadership have come to the conclusion that it is both inevitable and acceptable for the Earth’s temperature to rise by two degrees Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit. To put this in context, with the current rise in temperatures being less than half this amount, we have already seen a third of the summer sea ice in the Arctic disappear, with all of it possibly gone in several years, and 400,000 people die a year. With an increase of 3.6 degrees, over a third of all species would become extinct. Putting this amount of carbon into the atmosphere will make the oceans, which act as carbon sinks, so acidic as to be largely inhospitable for marine life. These are some of the dimensions of the best-case scenario that the powers-that-be find acceptable.

In order to keep temperatures to a 3.6-degree increase (2 degrees Celsius), the economies of the world can only put another 565 gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. At the current rate we will reach that limit in 16 years, about the same time the planet’s dominant economies will have one hundred million more dead on their hands. So this show can go on for another 16 years, then all bets are off. And even then, things will not be pretty and the ecology of the planet will be drastically changed.

Perhaps members of the ruling class simply do not care about the future of civilization, or what kind of future their children or grandchildren will have. Perhaps they think they will be dead before things get too bad. Perhaps today’s continued profit is more important than the future disintegration of society, and the end of civilization as we know it. Perhaps they think they have enough money that the devastation that awaits will not really affect them. Or perhaps they just think they will adapt to a changing environment.

Rex Tillerson, the Chairman, President, and CEO of Exxon Mobile Corporation, and a true criminal, best expresses this last view. Tillerson “told a New York audience that global warming is real, but dismissed it as an ‘engineering problem’ that has ‘engineering solutions.’” In response to the objection that changes to weather patterns will severely affect crop production, he said “… we’ll adapt to that.” Most telling, Tillerson says, “The fear factor that people want to throw out there to say, ‘We just have to stop this,’ I do not accept (that).”

So for Tillerson, and presumably other members of the 1% who control the huge oil and coal corporations, we will simply adapt to a much hotter, less hospitable planet.

Regardless of the thinking of capitalists and the ruling class, and whatever debates they may be having about how to respond, we must confront the realities of the climate catastrophe and develop a movement to create a society that does not change the weather. It is really up to us, and what we do in the next decade. To not act is to allow millions of people, primarily poor people of color in impoverished nations, to suffer and die.

The climate crisis offers damning evidence that capitalism is madness. The situation offers the opportunity for us to argue for the fundamental transformation of society as the only alternative to a barbarous future. Almost every aspect of modern life is contributing to the changing climate, from air transportation, to how goods are produced and transported, how our food is grown, and how we light and heat our homes. The common theme that runs through all these things, and what must be changed, is that they are all aspects of a capitalist economy and ideology.

The majority of the people of the US understand the necessity of drastically reducing carbon emissions. We need to take this further and talk about how if we maintain capitalist and statist control, we are truly doomed and that the directly democratic control of the economy, organized along ecological lines, can slow, and begin to reverse, climate catastrophe. By fundamentally reorganizing society we can avert further catastrophe and create a world worth living in. We need a ‘movement from below’ and a social revolution to do this. And we need it soon.

Further Information: parasolpdx.wordpress.com

Further Reading:
- Late Victorian Holocausts: El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World, Mike Davis (New York: Verso, 2001)
- Six Degrees: Our Future on a Hotter Planet, Mark Lynas (Washington, D.C., National Geographic, 2008)

Paul works with the Institute for Anarchist Studies, the editorial collective of Perspectives on Anarchist Theory, the Parasol Climate Collective, the Hella 503 Collective, and the IWW. He wrote the Foreword to Imperiled Life: Revolution Against Climate Catastrophe (AK Press/Institute for Anarchist Studies, 2012) and “Between Social Ecology and Deep Ecology: Gary Snyder’s Ecological Philosophy,” in The Philosophy of the Beats (University Press of Kentucky, 2012). He is a bicycle enthusiast, an avid softballer, and a community acupuncturist.

3 Six Degrees: Our Future on a Hotter Planet, Mark Lynas (Washington, D.C., National Geographic, 2008); Two Degrees chapter.
4 Global Warming’s Terrifying New Math, Bill McKibben
5 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rex_Tillerson
6 http://americablog.com/2012/10/climate-criminal-number-one-exxon-ceo-rex-tillerson.html
Call For Boycott Of Citybikes

The Portland Radicle Editorial Collective has joined the call to boycott Citybikes Workers’ Cooperative in response to the continued racist organizing Citybikes’ President Tim Calvert. We believe that the anti-Semitic agitation of Calvert promotes hate, furthers right-wing organizing in the midst of the progressive community, and undermines the global movement against occupation and apartheid in Israel and Palestine. Our decision was made after careful review of the evidence presented by the Rose City Antifascists and the Red & Black Cafe Collective and we have published their statements below. Statements by the Editorial Collective only represent the views of collective members. They do not represent the views of article contributors or other partners featured in the paper.

Red & Black Statement

It is with a great sense of sadness and disappointment that the workers at the Red & Black Cafe announce that we have joined the call to boycott Citybikes, a worker co-operative bike shop just a few blocks from us in Portland. We are calling for the boycott because we oppose Citybikes worker Tim Calvert’s racist organizing and now Citybikes for their inability to effectively oppose it. We have tried dialogue and educational efforts to no avail. Despite this we remain steadfast in our commitment to fighting anti-semitism and other forms of bigotry wherever they appear. As part of this commitment we want to draw attention to a major blind spot when it comes to dealing with organized bigotry in our midst.

Three years ago Citybikes founder and worker owner Tim Calvert was accused of anti-semitic organizing by Rose City Antifascists. Cafe workers took the time to review the evidence and to talk to folks from Citybikes & Laughing Horse. By this point, we learned, Tim had been forced to leave the Laughing Horse collective, largely for organizing bigoted speakers in the bookstore. It was concluded that Tim had been organizing and attending racist speaking engagements with the Portland 9-11 Truth Alliance for several years at that point. These events, and the organizations and ideology behind them, are completely at odds with an anti-oppression centered co-op movement that is truly for all people.

We want to emphasize: these organizations and racist ideologies are far from harmless. In a small example of the danger involved the window of a worker at the Red & Black was smashed with a rock. This rock had a warning written on it, “fuck off RCA” (Rose City Antifa). This occurred the morning after we decided to endorse the Citybikes boycott.

When we first learned about this in 2009 it was hoped that Citybikes, with community support, would convince Tim to stop hosting racist speakers at Portland 9/11 Truth Alliance events. In order to share our perspective and offer support to Citybikes, a few workers from the Red & Black and other concerned folks formed an ad-hoc committee. A mediated discussion was arranged.

The discussion was difficult, and nothing really came from it. At the end of the meeting we agreed to follow up talks; these never occurred. Later attempts to address this issue, first at the Western Worker Co-op Conference, and then at the US Federation of Worker Co-ops Conference, met mostly with silence or hostility by fellow attendees. Although we succeeded in alerting

History of Environmental Struggles

1792: In Ludhiana, India, hundreds of multicolored Khejri trees in an attempt to protect the trees from foresters. Hoping to use the trees in the construction of a state palace, a senior officer orders the killing of all 363 protesters, whose religion bans the cutting of any green tree.

1811: The Luddites movement arises in the Manchester-Leech industrial region of England, as mill workers sabotage new steam-powered machinery that is killing them jobless and hungry. The violent response by government and industrialists eventually leads to the Luddites forming an underground guerrilla army in the region.

1854: Henry David Thoreau publishes Walden, his meditation on nature: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.”

1927: Internacionales magazine begins publishing in Spain. Vegetarian, free love, anti-technology, and anti-nuclear currents are formulated alongside the rising syndicalist movement, forging alliances between ideologies and compañerismo when the Spanish Revolution starts in 1936.


1955: Japanese peace groups convene to form the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs. With widespread Japanese opposition to Pacific nuclear tests, an estimated 35 million signatures calling for bans on nuclear weapons.
some folks in the worker co-op movement about the situation, in the end nothing was done with the information or the request that Tim step down from the Board of Director of the WWCC.

In the intervening years we grew increasingly concerned as a trickle of Citybikes workers (we heard) quit when it became clear there would be not be a meaningful resolution. [3] This process seems to have accelerated in recent weeks as workers have left in the wake of Portland 9-11 truth Alliance’s latest event.

This latest event was a Portland 9/11 Truth picnic featuring Fritz Springmeier, a white separatist and convicted bomber with ties to the Army of God. The Army of God is a militant anti-choice group who have killed abortion providers and bombed clinics as well as queer bars. This fits a pattern of Calvert’s group; bringing an array of racist speakers and almost no one else.

Asking people to boycott a fellow worker co-op is not something we take lightly. We recognize and respect Citybikes’ role as a pioneering business in Portland on several fronts: bike advocacy, co-operation among co-ops and workplace diversity. Tim shares responsibility for much of this work. These laudable achievements, however, don’t let Tim or Citybikes off the hook. On the contrary; maintaining and building on these achievements requires that we unequivocally reject racism and other forms of oppression. Please take the time to read and reflect on this information. Let us know if you have any questions or you’d like to talk. Finally, please help us send a message that racism is unacceptable and stop shopping at Citybikes.

Signed,
The Red & Black Collective

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**Rose City Antifascists Statement**

Since 2009, Citybikes Workers’ Cooperative in Portland, Oregon has known about the deep involvement of a key figure of their co-op in antisemitic organizing-political work done in collaboration with white supremacists, Holocaust-deniers, and others on the extreme-Right. Tim Calvert, the Citybikes President at the time of writing, is defended and promoted by the rest of the co-op, who attempt to maintain a progressive image while propping up their antisemitic President. Anti-racists first raised the issue of Calvert’s antisemitic organizing in 2009, after Calvert and his cohorts in the Portland 9/11 Truth Alliance hosted a speech by Valdas Anelauskas, a racist organizer who proclaims that evidence for the Holocaust is “shaky.” Citybikes mishandled its response during 2009, making excuses for Calvert and declaring that no problem existed after Calvert issued a bogus apology, even though Calvert’s organizing against Jewish people continued unabated. In September of this year, anti-racists again drew attention to Calvert’s antisemitic organizing. In particular, we noted that Calvert twice gained venues for Fritz Springmeier, an antisemitic author convicted of bank robbery charges alongside a white supremacist accomplice. (Springmeier’s 1997 robbery plot also involved detonating a bomb at an adult video store as a diversion.) Footage of the Citybikes President giving an extreme antisemitic speech was also pointed to at this time, and Rose City Antifascists provided an extensive chronology of organizing by Calvert and his Portland 9/11 Truth Alliance organization. Now, Citybikes having discussed their President’s organizing yet again, the co-op has refused to take substantive action on this escalating community problem.

On the morning of Monday, September 24, 2012, Citybikes held a meeting regarding the latest revelations concerning their President’s antisemitic organizing. A representative of Rose City Antifascists contacted Citybikes later that day, asking for clarification about any plan of action the Citybikes co-op may have to finally address Calvert’s bigoted activism. Citybikes refused to give any clarification regarding the co-op’s position, despite having several years ago made an empty statement that it “recognize[s] the need for communication” on this matter. Silence from this business is unsurprising, given that Citybikes has already spent three years being negligent on this issue and supporting its antisemitic President. Citybikes’ refusal to take any action (even in the face of much new information on Calvert’s political work and associates) now compels an anti-racist response.

When we first alerted the community to Tim Calvert’s extreme-
Right organizing back in 2009, the initial response of the Citybikes Board of Directors was not only to side with and praise Calvert, but to label our organization as “fascist” for criticizing Calvert’s antisemitic activism. This Citybikes statement accused anti-racists of “shutting down disparate voices” by mentioning and speaking out against Calvert’s work with a white supremacist. Ironically, it was the Citybikes collective who shut down disparate voices: their business later retracted its first statement because it was “not released with consensus from all members of the Board, nor did it pass through the hands of each and every worker.” Citybikes also insisted that it would be illegal to fire Calvert, a clear misrepresentation of Oregon as well as federal law for the business’ own purposes. The Citybikes business later issued a vague and noncommittal statement about “the need for communication”. Citybikes proceeded to stand by Calvert as he publicly complained that his critics were on a “Stalinist” (later also described as “Zionist”) crusade against him.

Some critics of Rose City Antifascists defend Tim Calvert’s antisemitic organizing as a free speech issue. The First Amendment and related free speech laws protect citizens from state interference, not from criticism by the public. Our organization has always been clear that we do not call for any sort of government intervention regarding hateful speech, by Calvert or anyone else. We aim to address issues of racist and extreme-Right organizing within communities, not to trust or engage the courts, or to ask for government action. We oppose calls to fight fascist movements through increases of state power, as this firstly treats the state as an allegedly neutral tool and conceals institutional racism. Furthermore, increases in state investigative and prosecutorial power against alleged “extremism” can facilitate crackdowns on protest and social change movements in general, which we oppose.

Our organization believes that communities should unite in opposition when white supremacist, fascist, or antisemitic organizers attempt to target sections of the population. We believe that when white supremacists and fascists organize, they inevitably try to exert their strength against those they perceive as enemies--people of color, Jewish people, workplace organizers, sexual minorities, Leftists, and other groups. Watchfulness on the part of communities is therefore appropriate, including strong responses to antisemitic agitation--such agitation has historically tended to explode into sudden and extreme violence when allowed to spread. Organizing such as Tim Calvert’s, in spreading lies about Jewish people, creates favorable conditions for such violence. Tim Calvert, who twice secured meeting locations for an extreme-Right bomber, should not play innocent about the climate he is creating and its consequences.

Our organization is a militant one and we believe that force may at times be a necessary component in resisting fascist and white power organizing. If the alternative is simply to stand by and allow assaults, organized persecution, bombings or killings to take place unopposed. Our campaign in documenting and drawing attention to Tim Calvert’s activism, howev-er, has been one of ideological confrontation. Through his Jew-hating activism Tim Calvert made himself a public figure, and thus became subject to public scrutiny and criticism. Calvert should expect antifascist criticism to be loud and unrelenting.

Rose City Antifascists asked Citybikes—a business with a progressive and community-oriented image—to say that antisemitic agitation and racist propaganda do not serve their community. We requested that the business take a concrete stand against such agitation, when a central co-op member worked for years spreading antisemitic lies and hosted a white supremacist. Calvert gains activist prestige and political credibility from his co-op work, because his workplace is falsely viewed as a progressive institution. This prestige and power is then used by Calvert to promote hatred of Jewish people, and to organize with racists and anti-gay bigots. If Citybikes is unhappy about the antisem-itic organizing of their President, then it should certainly take action about this.

In Rose City Antifa’s first discussion of Calvert’s organizing, we argued that “If a collective or co-op can’t deal properly with an anti-Semitic activist within its ranks, then it does not deserve to be supported.” We stand by these words over three years later. We have seen that quietude and tacit acceptance only allow antisemitic organizing to continue, escalate, and grow even more extreme. Silence and denial are not the answers. We call for a complete boycott of Citybikes.

Some Things You Can Do to Support the Citybikes Boycott

1. Remove any links to Citybikes on your website or Facebook page. If you have been giving advertising to Citybikes, tell them why you are stopping.

2. Discuss problems of antisemitism in your community group. Antisemitism thrives when concealed, excused, or treated as “not an issue.” Make a commitment to educating yourself and others in your community.

3. Tell your friends why you are supporting other Portland bike shops, and mention this when making purchases at these other establishments.

4. Organize in the co-op community to oppose racist, antisemetic, anti-gay, transphobic, and anti-women politics. Realize that these problems affect participation within the co-op movement, and erode any claims of equitable workplace involve-ment.

5. Keep an eye out for updates and share them with your friends, community organizations, as well as bike-related social groups.

6. Contact Rose City Antifascists about any responses from Citybikes, or updates on Calvert’s bigoted organizing. Our voicemail number is 971-533-7832 and our email is fight_them_back@riseup.net.
Capitalism Getting You Down? Then Ride Your Fucking Bike

by Hart Noecker

The Earth is dying and our societal sense of self along with it. We have an ever growing human population and ever diminishing resources. We don’t need smart growth, we need smart decline. We don’t need the pursuit of wealth, we need an economy of well-being.

The burning of fossil fuels for energy and transportation is increasing the levels of carbon and methane in Earth’s atmosphere and oceans. This accumulation is causing the planet to heat, ice caps to melt, desertification of farmland, and ocean acidification, which in turn kills phytoplankton, the very basis of the entire food chain. Quite literally, the Earth is dying.

And all the energy efficient light bulbs and hybrid cars and short showers aren’t going to do a damn thing. We scream holy Hell about the corruption on Wall Street, but seem ignorant of the fact that 8 of the 10 richest corporations on Earth drill for oil or destroy mountains for coal. This is capitalism; a terminal system of raping the planet in pursuit of profit. And they’re at no loss for profits because our energy use is continually increasing alongside exponential expansion of the world’s human populations. The oil cartels and auto-manufacturers know they have us addicted.

Or do they?

It’s estimated that car ownership costs between $6,000 to $10,000 annually for gas, maintenance, insurance, payments and such. Today, tens of millions of Americans can barely afford housing, let alone a vehicle. It’s a simple recipe for oppression: build communities and roads so that the only way to get around is by car, make the only career opportunities available minimum wage drive-thru McJobs, then make owning a car so expensive your entire work force is enslaved just to afford their means to get to work. The automobile is the greatest weapon of class war the 1% ever devised. Petroleum is killing our planet and car culture is killing our souls. This capitalist circle of death has imprisoned us, and it’s time to liberate ourselves. In an age when the automobile is literally destroying our way of life, simply riding your bicycle becomes a revolutionary act of resistance.

More and more, young people are moving closer to urban areas where cars are obsolete, connecting with one another in positive social ways, creating and sharing ideas in the kinds of public spaces that simply don’t exist where the automobile reigns. And overwhelmingly, they’re choosing bicycles and public transportation as their method of movement within these spaces. A new culture is taking form via events like Critical Mass and ciclovia-style Sunday Parkways events and via groups centered around actions involving bicycles like Food Not Bombs, Portland and London’s respective Bike Swarm brigades, Seattle’s bike bloc, the San Francisco Bike Calvary; all are signs that bicycles are fundamentally changing the way we think about activism and living our daily lives.

And it has never been easier to get on a bike. I can guarantee you know several people with old bikes in their garage that could be road-worthy with less than 50 bucks maintenance. The diversity and range of different types of bikes accommodates a wide range of body types and physical abilities. You’ve probably seen legendary Portland activist Brian Wilson riding around town on his hand-crank bike, as his legs were lost while he blocked a train carrying military weapons headed for South America. If you are concerned about finding the right sized frame, or have what you consider to be a physical barrier to riding, there are a wealth of people...
in your community ready to help you out of your car and onto a bike.

Recent studies have shown that new car ownership among the prized consumer demographic of 16 to 34 year olds has decreased over the last ten years by a jaw-dropping TWENTY-FIVE percent! That’s real money we’re talking about, and the collective marketing genius of the auto-industry and Wall Street are scrambling to rebrand this massive youth revolt as merely a passing phase. Recently, Ford Motor Company chief sales analyst Erich Merkle made a comically desperate prediction to CNN: “They might be able to hold off for a period of time, but at some point they will have families, move to the suburbs, and they are going to purchase many, many new cars.” What generation does this guy think he’s talking about?

This isn’t a phase, this isn’t a market trend, it’s a radical shift away from the oppression of the land and our lives that the petroleum paradigm has wrought. As Portland’s own Community Cycling Center’s motto so perfectly articulates: ‘The bicycle is a tool of empowerment and a vehicle for social change.’

Remember that the next time you choose to drive a car in the city. Remember where the profits for filling up at the gas station are going, and remember the damage to the Earth your pollution and carbon are causing. And the next time you choose to ride your bicycle, remember whose profits you’re cutting into, and rejoice at the positive changes you are generating socially and ecologically. It may seem like a small, simple action, but commuting via bicycle is most certainly making a serious fucking difference.

See you in the streets.

Action link:
www.communitycyclingcenter.org
www.bikeportland.org
www.takingthelane.com

Radicle /raedIkel/[rad-i-kuhl] n.
(Botany) The rudimentary shoot of a plant that first emerges from the seed during the process of germination, often the embryonic root of the plant.