



# Earth Manifesto

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Revolutionary Earth Manifesto Published - Speaking Truth to Power**

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Humanity faces a sea of troubles. The tree of life is under aggravated assault as our human numbers approach eight billion needy people -- and way too many excessively greedy ones. It is of overarching importance for us to come together to honestly, honorably, mindfully, responsibly and effectively address the titanic challenges that confront us. Our prosperity and ultimately our survival depend on this. We should choose to no longer "suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," as William Shakespeare put it in his famous tragic soliloquy, for it is a vastly better plan to take arms against our sea of troubles, "and by opposing end them." Let's do it! Let's pay forward more providential outcomes.

Good solutions abound to our existential problems, and dozens of them are set forth in Dr. Tiffany B. Twain's elaborate Twelve Books of the Earth Manifesto, which are all available right now from the on demand publisher Lulu Publishing. All of these ideas can also be found online on the Earth Manifesto website, with solutions summarized in *PART FOUR: Overarching Considerations - Transformational Ideas and Enlightened Proposals*.

It makes me as mad as a moose, ruefully reports Tiffany Twain, to see humanity mindlessly sacrificing the natural world and adversely impacting biological ecosystems and heedlessly diminishing their carrying capacity for our kind. My passionate umbrage is particularly acute because much more equitable and sane solutions to economic, environmental and social problems would measurably mitigate the harmful impacts we are leaving as a lousy legacy to our heirs in the future. These solutions should be informed by precautionary principles, and they should be facilitated through reasonable compromises that give overarching respect to utilitarian understandings like those articulated by Gifford Pinchot, the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, back in 1905: "Where conflicting interests must be reconciled, the question shall always be answered from the standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."

Today's "conservatives" present a deeply dishonorable contrast to farsighted understandings and fair-minded stances, for they clearly want to run roughshod over everyone who opposes their narrow agenda, and they seem to be committed to the greatest good for the Few, and only in the short term -- at a terrible price to the Many. It would be immeasurably less costly in the long run for us to take responsible steps to prevent economic crises, revolutionary discord, the rash depletion of resources, climate disruption, and tragedy-of-the-commons ruin.

Jane Goodall, the commendable primatologist, anthropologist and world's foremost expert on chimpanzees, shares her wisdom with people worldwide, expressing this provocative insight: "We haven't inherited this planet from our parents, we've borrowed it from our children. We have not borrowed our children's future -- we have stolen it, and we're still stealing it now, and it's time we get together, whatever our religion, whatever our culture, get together and start changing the way" we are living to ensure that we can leave a better legacy for our children. Now 86 years old, in the spring of 2020, Jane has indicated that the power people currently have to "leave a better world for our children" involves making ethical decisions. "You, as an individual, just have to remember that in your life, you matter, you have a role to play, and that every single day you live, you make some impact and you get a choice as to what kind of impact you're going to make."

It is deeply wrong to trash the planet while borrowing it from our children, and theirs forevermore. This is a real sacrilege against the common good, and it is made much worse by having leaders who leverage the harms being done by borrowing trillions of dollars to stimulate the economy and try to gain political advantages through this expedient plan. It is becoming vitally important for us to take stronger steps to safeguard the environmental commons. It is unacceptable for us to collectively continue to sacrifice the resources, habitats, fresh water and living conditions of life on Earth to satisfy the domineering greed of irresponsibly profiteering corporations and their beneficiaries. And it is preposterously unethical from the biggest picture perspective to fulfill the short term needs of people living right now without giving greater consideration and respect to future needs.

This Press Release delves into exactly how the Few are able to achieve this consequentially harmful concatenation of negative impacts on the Many. It also seeks to set forth the best ideas for creating healthier outcomes in the world today. This requires that *We the People* succeed in choosing more responsible leaders who will seek to actualize Solon-wise compromise, and help peacefully overthrow the anti-social and harmful hegemony of the rich over the masses. We need to throw anti-environmental politicians out of office and emasculate power-abusing facilitators of anti-democratic and anti-humanitarian policies. ATTENTION HERE NOW.

The cogent words of the respect-worthy journalist Bill Moyers resonate in the interstices of my brain. Moyers noted some years ago that when he reads the news about all the things humanity is doing in the world, he concludes that it is not as if "Father, forgive us, for we know not what we do." As he looks at photos on his desk of his five grandchildren, he observes: "We do know what we are doing. We are stealing their future. Betraying their trust. Despoiling their world."

John Steinbeck and 'Doc' Ed Ricketts had debated and articulated valuably holistic worldviews during their famous voyage on the Sea of Cortez in 1940. One conclusion they reached was that seeing things clearly and with keen insight is a prerequisite to "breaking through" to understandings that are fuller and more holistic. John Steinbeck saw humankind as "a creature of earth, not a heaven-bound pilgrim", so he believed it was vitally important to see things whole, and to work purposefully to change the way things are, for the better.

--- *Huckleberry Finn, the Forty-Niner Gold Rush, and Sensational Related Reflections*

The best way to achieve existentially important objectives and providential priorities would be to demand that leaders in every nation honestly champion greater good goals, and to give fairer representation to all people's voices. In this, a special emphasis should properly be given to the best long-term interests of young people and every person to be born in the future. For good guidance, we need to foster enlightened understandings, and ratify and respect the provisions of a visionary Bill of Rights for Future Generations. A sharpened focus and more elaborate perspective on these issues is conveyed in *See Clearly: Sanity During Insane Times*. View this Book Twelve of the Earth Manifesto at [www.EarthManifesto.com](http://www.EarthManifesto.com)!

There are plenty of good win-win solutions that would be favorable to the vast majority of people. One main obstacle stands in the way: our corrupted representatives and the wealthy few. "Ay, there's the rub!" If we strive to achieve better organization, and dedicate it to much fairer purposes, providential progress could be made to help us adapt during the long emergency of converging catastrophes in an increasingly tumultuous future.

Buddhists believe in a Noble Eightfold Path, and a crucial practice along that path is Right Understanding. Most unfortunately, contrary far-right understandings afflict societies worldwide, and they do so in ways that are proving to be exceedingly harmful. Huge amounts of ill-gotten money are used to promote twisted worldviews and virulent strains of ideological propaganda, emotion-manipulating pursuits of dominating power, excessive greed and irresponsible consumerism. A better balance is needed in human affairs!

Karl Marx famously counseled "Workers of the World, Unite!" He recommended this for excellent reasons, considering that working people need a reasonable modicum of collective bargaining power to get a better deal in the face of the dominating power of giant corporations and the domineering influence of profit-maximizing capitalists and influence-abusing wealthy people. Tiffany Twain recommends an addition positive plan: "Women of the World, Unite!" This is also good advice, for every woman knows about discriminatory laws and anti-choice initiatives in our patriarchal world that compound the insult of the status quo in which females earn 20% less pay,

on average, than males for the same work. For illuminating understanding, see *A Feminine Vision of an Achievable Better World - Anima Should Reign!*

Today, we should also say "Young People of the World, Unite!" That priority would be a good way to overthrow the overweening influence of greedy conservatives and system-rigging politicians and older people. With such unifying strategies, we would be able to create much fairer, safer and healthier societies that will be sustainable for a longer period of time. More fairly shared prosperity may be the key to a more auspicious future, and this requires government policies that help ensure that more people will share in the benefits of economic activities, rather than having profits maximized for the few. And we should stop mortgaging the country to give huge tax cuts that mainly go to those at the top, at the expense of all taxpayers in every future year.

The value of honestly sensible compromise can be seen by understanding the role the wise Athenian statesman Solon played in Athens more than 2,500 years ago. At the time, disparities of wealth between the rich and the poor created risk-laden tinderbox conditions. One faction favored democracy, while another favored oligarchic rule by the wealthy few, and a third preferred a mixed form of rule with a strong constitution. Clan rivalry and many regional conflicts also played a role in the strife of Athens in the 6th century BCE. According to Will and Ariel Durant in *The Lessons of History*, the historian Plutarch wrote that, in the Athens of 594 BCE, "the disparity of fortune between the rich and the poor had reached its height, so that the city seemed to be in a dangerous condition, and no other means for freeing it from disturbances ... seemed possible but despotic power." The poor found that their status got worse every year because the government was in the hands of elite factions, and the courts were corrupt, deciding too many issues against the masses. Talk of violent revolt reverberated throughout the Athenian city-state. The jealous rich were outraged at the brazen challenge to their privileges and property and power, so they prepared to defend themselves by force.

As these conflicts escalated between various factions vying for perks, privileges, power and control, many Greeks recognized the need for a transformative leader who would find fair compromises between competing groups, and would do so in an equitable, just and peaceable manner. Somehow good sense prevailed, and moderate elements secured the selection of Solon, who became an effective lawmaker because he was able to demonstrate the wisdom to fairly mediate between concerned parties. Solon was given extraordinary legislative powers by his fellow citizens to negotiate fair compromises. He made a number of revolutionarily fair reforms of the political system and economy that saved Athens from destructive conflict. He laudably also addressed a broad agenda of consequential moral issues like slavery, debt bondage and abuses of the system of inheritance. The most important reform he made was the creation of a steeply graduated tax plan that made wealthy people pay taxes at a rate twelve times as much as the poor. This idea forms the basis for farsighted sensible proposals to reform the U.S. tax code by making it more steeply graduated. As a consequence of the eminently fair-minded nature of the reforms Solon put into effect, he is known as "the father of democracy."

The respect-worthy billionaire Nick Hanauer warned in his *Memo to My Fellow Zillionaires* that the pitchforks are going to come out for wealthy people unless reasonable steps are not soon taken to reverse trends of rising and accelerating inequality. He asserted that inaction (and wrongheaded action) "would inevitably lead to some sort of populist revolt", and he cautioned that any society which allows itself to become radically and indefensibly unequal eventually faces either an uprising or a police state -- or both." His original ideas are contained in his valuable and sensational 2014 article *The Pitchforks Are Coming ... for Us Plutocrats*.

In July 2017, Nick Hanauer wrote another compelling article, this one titled *To My Fellow Plutocrats: You Can Cure Trumpism*. Listen in: "The real threat to our republic is an alarming breakdown in social cohesion, and the cause of this breakdown is obvious: radical, rising economic inequality, and the anger and anxiety it engenders. The truth is that over the span of decades, American lawmakers (at the behest of economic elites like us!) have enacted policies that have depressed wages, stoked economic insecurity and exacerbated cultural angst and social dislocation. At the same time, a tiny minority of mostly urban elite (again, us!) have benefitted obscenely from our growing economic, political and legal power."

Hanauer provocatively continued: "Our lives of ostentatious luxury might be forgiven if all boats were rising as fast as our 200-foot yachts. But they're not. In fact, as we few continue to capture the benefits of *almost all* of

our nation's economic growth via a trillion dollar a year transfer of wealth from wages to profits, millions of American families are sinking out of the middle class. It is this winner-take-all economy, and the indefensible and obvious injustice it represents, that creates the justifiable anger that threatens our civility, our national cohesion and our democracy itself. A century ago, as communism and fascism threatened to overrun Europe, our nation struck a grand bargain: We plutocrats would continue to be tolerated -- even celebrated -- as long as broadly rising incomes meant that each new generation of Americans continued to do better than the last. But through the policies we championed in the corridors of power and through the longstanding social norms we violated in the corporate boardroom, *we broke our end of that bargain*. And now the pitchforks are coming for us, my friends, from both the right and the left."

Unfortunately, Donald Trump beat Bernie Sanders in the populist revolt, and the bell has been ominously tolling for the American people ever since. Revealingly, the future that Bernie Sanders had committed to, in the most progressive platform ever articulated in the USA, would have been vastly better for humanity than what we now are experiencing due to the reactionary and corrupt arch-villains Attorney General Bill Barr, Senator Mitch McConnell, EPA rogue Andrew Wheeler and the self-serving Deceiver-in-Chief. Jonathan Chait takes a harsh swipe at the Emperor with No Clothes in the April 2 issue of New York magazine. The cover story features a close-up photo of Trump's face with a pig's snout projecting from his nose, and the title reverberates provocatively in the imagination: *Not Collusion ... Not Incompetence ... Not Cruelty ... It's the Corruption, Stupid! — Why His Self-Dealing is His Biggest Political Liability*.

The moral good consists of those things consistent with the common good, properly understood. The Canadian-born economist John Kenneth Galbraith once declared, "The modern conservative is engaged in one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy; that is, the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness." In a similar manner, religious conservatives suspiciously push for freedoms for them to discriminate against others, using rationalizations that they occupy the high moral ground, even though they are promoting injustice-infused intolerance of others. In recent years, conservatives have been demanding religious liberty to give them what is in effect an open license to discriminate. And, sadly, they use this as a wedge issue to gain control and impose their selfish social and economic agenda on the masses.

Note that Tiffany Twain imagines herself to be a Doctor of Philosophy who is a modern day philosophic soul mate and valiantly illegitimate great-granddaughter of the highly esteemed and irreverent writer, lecturer, humorist and philosopher Mark Twain. That eminent writer, who once bragged late in his life that, as Mark Twain, he had become "the most conspicuous person on the planet", viewed imperialism from on high and sensationally wrote the following in 1901, in his essay *To the Person Sitting in Darkness*: "Extending the Blessings of Civilization to our Brother who Sits in Darkness has been a good trade and has paid well, on the whole; and there is money in it yet, if carefully worked -- but not enough, in my judgment, to make any considerable risk advisable."

Risks are mounting in the world today, and the scope of their adverse impacts is unprecedented in global import. George W. Bush revealed an insidious aspect of the ideological plan that is contributing to this sad state of affairs when he said, "See, in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of *catapult the propaganda*." It takes a lot of catapulting propaganda to succeed in pushing a superior moral justification for greed, blatant abuses of power, the undermining of democratically fair representation, betrayals of the common good, and ripping off the public treasury through fraudulent "trickle-down" debt-financed regressive tax cut schemes.

A 30 second TV ad featuring Ron Reagan proudly proclaiming his atheist views originally aired in 2014, but CBS, NBC, ABC and Discovery Channel had refused to air it. The ad was provocatively run on the Rachel Maddow Show on Good Friday 2018. Listen in to a powerful point made by Ronald Reagan's son: "Hi, I'm Ron Reagan, an unabashed atheist, and I'm alarmed by the intrusions of religion into our secular government. That's why I'm asking you to support the Freedom from Religion Foundation, the nation's largest and most effective association of atheists and agnostics, working to keep state and church separate, just like our Founding Fathers intended." Ron then gives a wry smile, signing off with the words, "Ron Reagan, lifelong atheist, not afraid of burning in hell."

An incidental and inimical side effect of the intrusion by established religions into politics is that they often help

support politicians that damage Creation, destroy habitats, detrimentally compromise the incalculably valuable services provided by natural ecosystems, and riskily diminish the carrying capacity of our home planet to provide for humankind. The prospects for sustainable survival are worsening as we continue our onslaught against the health of biotic habitats and Earth's natural ecosystems. Those who rationalize and facilitate these stark harms to the prospects of our heirs in the future are excessively and treacherously greedy, and their absolutist refusals to compromise are immoral. Let's change course, and do Mother Earth justice!

A sensible and peaceful revolution in our collective worldviews is needed to achieve Right Action, and great plans are set forth in *Common Sense Revival - Book One of the Earth Manifesto* that would dramatically improve the fate of humanity and life on Earth. Progressive plans! Just imagine. And what a colossal contrast these good plans are to the ones being imposed by current "leadership" in the USA, where treacherous sycophants abuse the privileges of their positions and power, as if they are royal eminences who deserve their right to act as despots and con men, and to jealously protect their freedoms to be cantankerous exploiters. We need new, more honest and more honorable leaders who are not beholden to polluting, climate altering, politically corrupt "rent-seeking" corporate entities intimately involved in perverting our national priorities and decision making.

Republicans are still crowing about the beneficial economic effects of their December 2017 tax cut scam, despite the folly of it being financed by more than \$1.5 trillion in borrowed money. These recklessly regressive debt-financed tax cuts will primarily give benefits to rich people and corporations, thereby making inequality consequentially worse in our society. This is stupid! Because increases in inequality and associated heightening injustices are among the biggest threats to most people's current and future well-being in the USA and around the world today. The demagogic Twitterer-in-Chief even has the arrogant temerity to tout stock market highs, setting up a classic comeuppance when the riskily irresponsible fiscal policies and protectionist trade tariffs that he is pushing result in another bubble-bursting global economic calamity.

There is plenty of culpability to go around in our political duopoly system. One glaring example of this is the \$1.3 trillion spending bill that was signed into law in March 2018, without anyone in Congress having read it before approving it and having its more than 2,000 pages of spending provisions codified into law. To better understand the really pathological nature of our political duopoly system, look into Charles Ferguson's incisive insights in his book *Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption and the Hijacking of America*.

How, pray tell, one might wonder, have we ended up with such retrograde national priorities and policies, and such a deleteriously divided populace? A main factor is that Fox News has become a State propaganda machine that is propagating disinformation as if under a totalitarian regime. Fox News speaks directly to puppet Trump, who then gullibly goes along with the whole demagogic shtick and nefariously sends out immediate barrages of toxic tweets that contain manipulative deceit, innumerable falsehoods, odd misspellings and bizarre distractions from his growing scandals. Surely the Trumpster deserves an Academy Award for diabolical brilliance in a leading role as a demagogue, con man and fool in his Apprentice President Reality Show. Now it's time for him and his Vice-President, and the Majority Leader of the Senate, to exit the stage and leave us with a brighter, more progressive Twainian future. They must go because the figurative Emperor has no clothes, and those who blindly fail to see are acting with treachery toward you and me.

*A strategic analyst for Fox News, Lt. Col. Ralph Peters, resigned in 2018 from his gig at Fox News, saying the network had become "a mere propaganda machine for a destructive and ethically ruinous administration" that is "fostering corrosive and unjustified paranoia among viewers." Jen Senko tells this story from a fascinating and compelling personal angle in her documentary film, The Brainwashing of My Dad. And Brian Stelter reveals damning details of the "incestuous relationship" between Trump and Fox in his new book Hoax: Donald Trump, Fox News, and the Dangerous Distortion of Truth.*

Fox News contributors pretend to be principled, but the highest goal of the Strict Father constellation of values they represent is to gain power and control, and to impose discipline and austerity on the masses, no matter what means are required, and despite the harms that will be associated with their facilitating of authoritarian control. A more responsible approach would be to honestly understand true discipline as a matter of respect and empathetic compassion, and not of strict obedience to overweening authority.

Another nefarious corporate actor is Sinclair Broadcasting, the largest TV broadcaster in the U.S., which owns almost 200 television stations. Sinclair has been requiring its local television stations to broadcast pro-Trump propaganda with eerily similar versions of a Trump-like speech about fake news from dozens of news anchors across the country, some of whom appeared like hostages on terrorist videos. Sinclair's propaganda was nakedly revealed in a Deadspin video that went viral over Easter weekend in 2018 that featured local TV news anchors from coast to coast, edited together reciting the same script. And Sinclair tried to increase its manipulative monopoly power by taking over Tribune Media, one of the most influential media companies in the country, in a move that would have given them ownership over 42 more stations in key markets that include New York, Washington D.C, Chicago and Los Angeles. "And that's not the only way that Sinclair is using its power to advance a radical agenda. The New York Times has reported that the company sends its stations 'must-run' news segments that are full of fear-mongering and pro-Trump rhetoric." This is dangerous to our democracy.

Some say that we live in a "post-truth" world. The editors at Oxford Dictionaries anointed "post-truth" as the 2016 international Word of the Year, defining it as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." We do live in echo chamber amplified pods in which many big lies are told, and many little lies, and there are lots of distorted partial truths and microtargeted fake news and conspiracy theories. And fear mongering, and arousing hate, for Christ's sake! We should begin to head in the right direction, instead of following leaders who fool the people and in reality make many of the things in our sea of trouble much worse.

Our best possible investments right now would be ones made on conservation measures and the development of renewable and cleaner sources of energy. This would be a smarter plan to pursue than to continue to go along with power-abusing executives of fossil fuel industries who righteously champion greed and rashly deplete resources and pollute the skies and wreak havoc on biotic habitats. One thing is certain: it is foolhardy not to be taking advantage of the last 50% of the world's oil reserves to help develop and implement the transition to cleaner and safer renewable energy alternatives. In 1973, E. F. Schumacher made a persuasive observation in his book *Small Is Beautiful*: we should be treating fossil fuels as capital resources rather than as income. The logical conclusion of such an intelligent and intuitively reasonable treatment would be that we would conserve these convenient high-energy fuels, and put some of the profits obtained from burning these irreplaceable assets "into a special fund to be devoted exclusively to the evolution of production methods and patterns of living which do not depend on fossil fuels." Let's start right away with a markedly egalitarian carbon fee-and-dividend plan! For similar great ideas, see *One Dozen Big Initiatives to Positively Make America Great Again*.

Capitalist corporatism is antithetical to democratic fairness. Corporations are highly hierarchal, and not at all fairly representative, and they are prepossessed with the pursuit of profit, so they lobby to be allowed to externalize costs at the expense of workers and communities, and to the detriment of the health of the environment that supports us. CEOs rigidly control costs of employee compensation and benefits, and limit headcount and job security, and they get their own pay raised to ever more ungodly multiples of the earnings of the average worker. The resulting inequalities constitute an existential threat to the well-being of the people.

Average compensation for working people has been largely stagnant since 1980, while CEO pay has skyrocketed and the huge benefits of increasing worker productivity have been greedily monopolized by the top dogs. Populist dissatisfactions at the harsh impacts of this sad state of affairs in the USA has allowed far-right authoritarian politicians to gain domineering influence, and a manipulative demagogue and his apologist facilitators have seized power in a triumph of skullduggery over the common good. Wedges have been driven between people to keep them from uniting in common cause to honestly improve this situation, and anti-immigrant sentiments and racial biases and fundamentalist religious fervor are being used to help the donor class thwart the greater good.

Uncompassionate conservatives use nefarious tactics to gain power and over-representation of their extreme agenda. They take ruthless advantage of people who are vulnerable and powerless, cunningly exploiting people's emotions, fears, resentments and racial prejudices. They stoke tribal antagonisms by vilifying others and blaming and scapegoating immigrants. They make shrewd use of social media outlets like Facebook, using "psychographic profiling" to micro-target potential supporters with a barrage of divisive propaganda, fake news, conspiracy theories, behavioral manipulation and ratcheted up anger toward others with regard to hot button social issues.



They act in unethical ways to stimulate profiteering by buying politicians to do their bidding. And in the process, these treacherously self-serving sycophants betray the people they should be fairly representing.

The Republican bag of dirty tricks is brimming with such swindles. They scare people and push for policies that make working people increasingly insecure. These tactics allow domineering politicians to get away with imposing austerity budgets or repressive measures on the populace. They allow the NRA to use its money and powerful influence to bribe and intimidate our representatives and to prevent the passage of even the most common sense measures to help prevent gun violence and ensure improved public safety. And they employ demagoguery and simplistic, deceitful tweets and ideological diatribes to sway people into giving them support.

These strategies are in addition to their favorite traditional ruses of gerrymandering congressional districts to give conservative politicians unwarranted power and striving to prevent millions of people from voting who are likely to be opposed to their mean-spirited elitist agenda. And they make long-game efforts to stack courts with ideological enablers for resource exploiting, harm-engendering businesses and unethical profiteers.

The Trump cabal tried to augment these tactics by pushing to have a citizenship question asked in the 2020 Census -- and then to move up the Census completion date. These are alarming attempts to prevent an accurate census count in order to benefit conservative politicians and their retrogressive causes. Conservatives are thus trying to deliberately compromise the integrity of the Census to achieve partisan political advantages. It's as if these politicians and the justices they appoint to the Supreme Court are not aware that corporations are abusing the power of their excessive influence to satisfy the compulsive drives of CEOs and shareholders to maximize profits, regardless of how dire the impacts will be that these swindles have on the vast majority of the people.

A gauge of how extremely anti-democratic the current administration is acting can be found in the fact that Trump's first Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke ignored 99% of the nearly 3 million public comments made with regard to maintaining strong protections for National Monuments. Instead, he sided with far right politicians like Senator Orrin Hatch and private interests, polluters and corporate entities that favor opening up our public lands to industrial extractive uses, including drilling for fossil fuels, mining of radioactive uranium, and destructive commercial fishing in three marine national monuments in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Scientists say we should leave 80% of known reserves of fossil fuels in the ground to prevent disastrous changes in global temperature, storm and precipitation patterns and sea level rises, but Republican operatives like Zinke have rejected such precautionary direction to benefit short-term-oriented profiteers.

Corporate entities corrupt our national decision making to benefit climate-disrupting fossil fuel corporations at terribly high costs to people today and in the future. And to benefit gun manufacturers at a terrible cost to victims of gun violence and their families. And to benefit drug profiteers at the expense of opioid drug overdose victims. And to benefit social media companies who exploit our privacy to make money off our profiles, even at the expense of allowing scheming politicians to betray the common good and give excessive influence to maniacally power-abusing politicians. Big Brother? Gadzooks!

Yes, corruption incarnate haunts the land of the free, dangerously undermining our individual and collective well-being, our security and our liberties themselves. This corruption comes in several salient forms. First, there are the slimy sycophantish swamp-monster facilitators of corporate hegemony over the people, led by the self-centered, self-serving Puppet-in-Chief, who is in league with master politicians like the dissembling Mitch McConnell and Mike Pence, God's own aspirant to the position of Master-Manipulator-In-Chief, with his look of vacuous adoration for the megalomaniac Trump. This is like a bad movie with slick performances by "bad actors" who pretend to care about regular folks while blatantly swindling them and betraying their kids and grandkids.

Another main type of corruption incarnate in the supposed land of the free and home of the brave is in the form of extremely partisan Supreme Court Justices who are appointed by Republican politicians for their partisan zeal to turn a blind eye to the corrupting influence of Big Money in politics. These narrowly-focused corporate apologists pretend they cannot clearly see how billionaires like the Koch network corrupt our national decision making when they spend huge sums of money on anti-worker and anti-environmental initiatives, or when the NRA spends tens of millions of dollars to buy the allegiance of politicians who put a much higher priority on profiteering by gun

manufacturers than on public safety or the lives of tens of thousands of people who die every year in the USA due to incidents of gun violence and mass shootings.

It is as if these unjust "conservatives" cannot see how risky it is to give domineering influence to giant fossil fuel corporations that compulsively want to pump every last drop of oil out of the land and the sea, and every possible ton of "beautiful clean coal" out of mountains blasted to smithereens, and every possible amount of natural gas that can be fracked from public lands, no matter how damaging these activities prove to be, on account of the harmful impacts of air pollution, oil spills, contaminated water supplies and climate-altering emissions of greenhouse gases. It's as if they can't see the adverse impacts on people's lives of offensive advertising by huge drug makers that repetitively market their products directly to a gullible populace -- and charge sky-high prices for drugs that are sometimes so addictive that tens of thousands of Americans die every year using them. The opioid crisis alone is estimated to have had an economic cost of a stunning \$500 billion annually in recent years, in addition to countless numbers of tragic stories about the lives of the addicted and their families and friends.

Right-wing populism that helps empower authoritarian regimes is gaining influence abroad, undesirably setting back long-term trends in the post-colonial era toward democratic governance. The vast majority of people in the USA, Russia, China, India, Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and dozens of other countries around the world are experiencing the negative effects of having the basic tenets of democracy come under concerted attack, with consequential assaults against guarantees of free and fair elections, the freedom of the press, the rule of law and such things as rights of minorities, women's reproductive choices and environmental protections.

This anti-democratic trend faces its most serious crisis in decades, reported the 2017 Freedom in the World report that ranks nations according to levels of civil liberties and political rights enjoyed by their citizens. This report is done by Freedom House, a nonpartisan organization that judges countries according to a range of relevant criteria, and then assigns a total score that places each nation in one of three categories: "Free", "Partly free" and "Not free". The overall picture is discouraging. "Seventy-one countries suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties, with only 35 registering gains. This marked the 12th consecutive year of decline in global freedom. The U.S. retreated from its traditional role as both a champion and an exemplar of democracy amid an accelerating decline in American political rights and civil liberties." LET'S REVERSE COURSE!

To improve the fate of humanity and life on Earth, we need fairer national policies that champion democratic governance, honest openness, truer justice, genuine freedom, fair-minded representation, peaceful coexistence, sensible moderation and smarter ecological sanity. Faith in reason must prevail, and we should make a passionate commitment to greater good goals. This faith must be informed by more intelligent priorities, Solon-wise compromise, empathetic understandings, good neighborliness and proportional responses to threats.

Such observations -- and many, many more far-ranging ideas -- are explored in this lengthy manifesto. Readers are urged to think for themselves about the ideas it contains, and to do their own part to contribute in some way to the improvement of conditions in the world. We can, indeed must, do better!! As Dr. Seuss' Lorax said, 'UNLESS someone like us cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not!'

----- The End -----