



# THE RED DEAL

## INDIGENOUS ACTION TO SAVE OUR EARTH

PART THREE  
HEAL OUR PLANET

THE RED NATION  
[THEREDNATION.ORG](http://THEREDNATION.ORG)





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## PART THREE

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# WHO IS THE RED NATION?

## PRINCIPLES OF UNITY

We are Indigenous revolutionaries. We are comrades and relatives first and foremost. We practice radical democracy and compassion for all relatives. Despite differences in organizational role or affiliation, we are equals in struggle. We are anti-capitalist and anti-colonial.

We are Indigenous feminists who believe in radical relationality. We do not seek a milder form of capitalism or colonialism—we demand an entirely new system premised on peace, cooperation, and justice. For our Earth and relatives to live, capitalism and colonialism must die.

We belong to long traditions of Indigenous resistance. We claim our rightful place among all freedom fighters around the world. We are not the first, nor will we be the last. We are the ancestors from the before and the already forthcoming. By carrying this history forward, we actively create the world in which we want to live.

We seek to not just challenge power, but to build power. We are not simply a negation of the nightmarish colonial present—colonialism, capitalism, heteropatriarchy, imperialism, and white supremacy—we are the embodiment and affirmation of a coming Indigenous future, a future in which many worlds fit.

We believe that all oppressed nations have the right to self-determination—to decide their own destinies. We, The Red Nation, are self-determining peoples. We enact the principles of freedom and integrity in how we seek to live as good people of the earth.

We organize through education and agitation for revolutionary change. We encourage our relatives and comrades to believe in revolutionary change. We advocate for global decolonization. We agitate among the poor, the working classes, the colonized, and the dispossessed to instill the confidence to fight back and take control of our destinies.

We believe in pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will. We remain accountable to our people and our nations. We do not have “perfect” politics. We do not believe in factionalism or rigid ideology. We can die having had the “correct positions” but having accomplished nothing and freed no one. The desire to be “right” or “perfect” is the highest form of cynicism. Our role as revolutionaries is to cheerlead the movement at all turns. Above all else, we desire to be free and believe we will win. Optimism will thrive so long as we struggle for freedom.

We believe in correct ideas, which only come through revolutionary praxis and struggle. Our power and judgement comes from the labor of our struggle.

We are not “above” the people. When the people move, we move with them. We are the “permanent persuaders” who believe revolutionary change is not only possible but inevitable. Like our hearts, our politics are down and to the left. And because we are the “five-fingered ones,” our fists are the size of our hearts. We raise our fists to lift the hearts of our people. We give everything and take nothing for ourselves.

We uphold personal and organizational integrity at all turns of the movement. Change is dialectical and full of contradictions. It often comes without notice or without being noticed. Reactionary tendencies and contradictions will seek to destroy our momentum, diminish our optimism, and test our integrity. They will come in many, and oftentimes unexpected, forms. Even when in doubt, we pledge to remain faithful to our political principles and steadfast in our commitment to revolutionary struggle and optimism.

We are The Red Nation.



## MISSION

The Red Nation is dedicated to the liberation of Native peoples from capitalism and colonialism. We center Native political agendas and struggles through direct action, advocacy, mobilization, and education.

## WHO WE ARE

We are a coalition of Native and non-Native activists, educators, students, and community organizers advocating Native liberation. We formed to address the invisibility and marginalization of Native struggles within mainstream social justice organizing, and to foreground the targeted destruction and violence towards Native life and land.

## AREAS OF STRUGGLE

**Indigeneity:** We struggle for the defense and livelihood of Native peoples and lands. Indigeneity is a political condition that challenges the existence and domination of colonial nation-states.

**Liberation:** We struggle for the repatriation of Native lives and land. Liberation is not about 'healing' or 'getting-over-it.' It is a struggle for material and structural transformation.

**Resistance:** We continue the long history of Native anti-colonial resistance by reviving active resistance as fundamental to liberation.

**Coalition:** We mobilize for widespread action and community engagement for Native struggles for liberation.

"OUR FISTS ARE THE SIZE  
OF OUR HEARTS. WE  
RAISE OUR FISTS TO LIFT  
THE HEARTS OF OUR  
PEOPLE."

## 10-POINT PROGRAM

WE DEMAND AN END TO VIOLENCE  
AGAINST NATIVE PEOPLES AND OUR  
NONHUMAN RELATIVES THROUGH

### 1) The Re-Instatement of Treaty Rights

From 1776 to 1871, the U.S. Congress ratified more than 300 treaties with Native Nations. A provision in the 1871 Indian Appropriations Act withdrew federal recognition of Native Nations as separate political entities, contracted through treaties made with the United States. As a result, treaty-making was abolished; and it was established that “no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty.”

*We demand the reinstatement of treaty-making and the acknowledgement of Native independence. We demand Native Nations assume their rightful place as independent Nations guaranteed the fundamental right to self-determination for their people, communities, land bases, and political and economic systems.*

### 2) The Full Rights and Equal Protection for Native People

Centuries of forced relocation and land dispossession have resulted in the mass displacement of Native Nations and peoples from their original and ancestral homelands. Today in the United States four of five Native people do not live within reservation or federal trust land. Many were and are forced to leave reservation and trust lands as economic and political refugees due to high unemployment, government policies, loss of land, lack of infrastructure, and social violence. Yet, off-reservation Native peoples encounter equally high rates of sexual and physical violence, homelessness, incarceration, poverty, discrimination, and economic exploitation in cities and rural border towns.

*We demand that treaty rights and Indigenous rights be applied and upheld both on- and off-reservation and federal trust land. All of North America, the Western Hemisphere, and the Pacific is Indigenous land. Our rights do not begin or end at imposed imperial borders we did not create nor give our consent to. Rights shall be enforced pursuant to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the historical and political doctrines of specific Tribes.*



### **3) The End to Disciplinary Violence Against Native Peoples and All Oppressed Peoples**

In the United States, more than three million people are incarcerated in the largest prison system in the world. Native peoples and oppressed peoples are disproportionately incarcerated and persecuted by law enforcement. Within this system, Native people are the group most likely to be murdered and harassed by law enforcement and to experience high rates of incarceration. This proves that the system is inherently racist and disciplines politically-disenfranchised people to keep them oppressed and prevent them from challenging racist institutions like prisons, police, and laws that maintain the status quo. Racist disciplinary institutions contribute to the continued dispossession and death of Native peoples and lifeways in North America.

*We demand an end to the racist and violent policing of Native peoples on- and off-reservation and federal trust lands. We demand an end to the racist state institutions that unjustly target and imprison Native peoples and all oppressed peoples.*

### **4) The End to Discrimination Against the Native Silent Majority: Youth and The Poor**

Native youth and Native poor and unsheltered experience oppression and violence at rates higher than other classes and groups of Native peoples. Native people experience poverty and homelessness at rates higher than other groups. Native youth suicide and criminalization rates continue to soar. Native youth now comprise as much as 70% of the Native population and experience rates of physical and sexual violence and PTSD higher than other groups. Native poor and unsheltered experience rates of criminalization, alcoholism, and violence at higher rates than other groups. Because many Native youth and poor and unsheltered live off reservation and trust lands, they are treated as inauthentic and without rights. Native youth and Native poor continue to be marginalized and ignored within Native nations, dominant political systems, and mainstream social justice organizing.

*We demand an end to the silencing and blaming of Native youth and Native poor and unsheltered. We demand an end to the unjust violence and policing they experience. Native youth and Native poor and unsheltered are relatives who deserve support and representation. We demand they be at the center of Native struggles for liberation.*

## **5) The End to the Discrimination, Persecution, Killing, Torture, and Rape of Native Women**

Native women are the targets of legal, political, and extra-legal persecution, killing, rape, torture, discrimination, and disenfranchisement in North America. This is part of the ongoing process of eliminating women's political and customary roles as leaders in Native societies. In the United States more than one in three Native women will be raped in their lifetime, often as children. Since 1980, about 1,200 Native women have gone missing or been murdered in Canada; many are young girls. Native women are at higher risk of being targeted for human trafficking and sexual exploitation than other groups. Native women continue to experience sexism and marginalization within Native and dominant political systems, and within mainstream social justice approaches.

*We demand the end to the legal, political, and extra-legal discrimination, persecution, killing, torture, and rape of Native women. Women are the backbone of our political and customary government systems. They give and represent life and vitality. We demand that Native women be at the center of Native struggles for liberation.*

## **6) The End to the Discrimination, Persecution, Killing, Torture, and Rape of Native Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Two-Spirit People (LGBTQ2+)**

Native LGBTQ2+ people experience persecution, killing, torture, and rape within Native Nations and within dominant society. The processes of colonization and heteropatriarchy impose binary gender roles, nuclear family structures, and male-dominated hierarchies that are fundamentally at odds with Native customary laws and social organization, where LGBTQ2+ people historically held positions of privilege and esteem. The effect of this system for Native LGBTQ2+ is violent. Native LGBTQ2+ experience rates of murder, sexual exploitation, hate crimes, discrimination, substance abuse, and homelessness at high rates. Like Native youth, poor, homeless, and women, Native LGBTQ2+ continue to be marginalized and ignored within Native and dominant political systems, and within metropolitan-based social justice approaches that ignore the mostly rural-based issues of Native LGBTQ2+.

*We demand an end to the legal, political, and extra-legal discrimination, persecution, killing, torture, and rape of Native LGBTQ2+ in Native societies and dominant society. Native LGBTQ2+ are relatives who deserve representation and dignity. We demand that they be at the center of Native struggles for liberation.*



## **7) The End to the Dehumanization of Native Peoples**

The appropriation of Native imagery and culture for entertainment, such as sports mascots and other racist portrayals, and the celebration of genocide for holidays and amusement, such as Columbus Day and Thanksgiving, dehumanize Native people and attempt to whitewash ongoing histories of genocide and dispossession. These appropriations contribute to the ongoing erasure of Native peoples and seek to minimize the harsh realities and histories of colonization. These appropriations are crimes against history.

*We demand an end to the dehumanization of Native peoples through cultural appropriation, racist imagery, and the celebrations of genocide and colonization. Condemning symbolic and representational violence is an essential part of any material struggle for liberation.*

## **8) Access to Appropriate Education, Healthcare, Social Services, Employment, and Housing**

Access to quality education, healthcare, social services, and housing are fundamental human rights. However, in almost every quality of life standard, Native people have the worst access to adequate educational opportunities, health care, social services, and housing in North America. Native people also have higher rates of unemployment on- and off-reservation than any other group in the United States. Access to meaningful standards of living is historically guaranteed under many treaty rights, but have been consistently ignored and unevenly applied across geography and region.

*We demand the universal enforcement and application of services to improve the standard of living for Native peoples pursuant to provisions in treaties and the UNDRIP, whether such peoples reside on- or off-reservation and trust lands. North America is our home and we demand more than mere survival. We demand conditions to thrive.*

## 9) The Repatriation of Native Lands and Lives and the Protection of Nonhuman Relatives

The ethical treatment of the land and nonhuman relatives begins with how we act. We must first be afforded dignified lives as Native peoples who are free to perform our purpose as stewards of life if we are to protect and respect our nonhuman relatives—the land, the water, the air, the plants, and the animals. We must have the freedom and health necessary to make just, ethical and thoughtful decisions to uphold life. We experience the destruction and violation of our nonhuman relatives wrought by militarization, toxic dumping and contamination, and resource extraction as violence. Humans perpetrate this violence against our nonhuman relatives. We will be unable to live on our lands and continue on as relatives recognized by the ancestors if this violence is allowed to continue.

*We demand an end to all corporate and U.S. control of Native land and resources. We demand an end to Tribal collusion with such practices. We demand that Points 1-8 be enforced so as to allow Native peoples to live in accordance with their purpose as human beings who protect and respect life. Humans have created this crisis and continue to wage horrific violence against our nonhuman relatives. It is our responsibility to change this.*

## 10) The End to Capitalism-Colonialism

Native people are under constant assault by a capitalist-colonial logic that seeks the erasure of non-capitalist ways of life. Colonial economies interrupt cooperation and association and force people instead into hierarchical relations with agents of colonial authority who function as a permanent occupying force on Native lands. These agents are in place to control and discipline Native peoples to ensure that we comply with capitalist-colonial logics. There are many methods and agents of enforcement and discipline. There are the police. There are corporations. There are also so-called ‘normal’ social and cultural practices like male dominance, heterosexuality, and individualism that encourage us to conform to the common sense of capitalism-colonialism. These are all violent forms of social control and invasion that extract life from Natives and other oppressed peoples in order to increase profit margins and consolidate power in the hands of wealthy nation-states like the United States. The whole system depends on violence to facilitate the accumulation of wealth and power and to suppress other, non-capitalist ways of life that might challenge dominant modes of power. Political possibilities for Native liberation therefore cannot emerge from forms of economic or institutional development, even if these are Tribally controlled under the guise of ‘self-



determination' or 'culture.' They can only emerge from directly challenging the capitalist-colonial system of power through collective struggle and resistance.

*We demand the end to capitalism-colonialism on a global level. Native peoples, youth, poor and unsheltered, women, LGBTQ2 and nonhuman relatives experience extreme and regular forms of violence because the whole system relies on our death. Capitalism-colonialism means death for Native peoples. For Native peoples to live, capitalism and colonialism must die.*

"THE PROCESSES OF COLONIZATION AND HETEROPATRIARCHY IMPOSE BINARY GENDER ROLES, NUCLEAR FAMILY STRUCTURES, AND MALE-DOMINATED HIERARCHIES THAT ARE AT ODDS WITH NATIVE CUSTOMARY LAWS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, WHERE LGBTQ2+ PEOPLE HISTORICALLY HELD POSITIONS OF PRIVILEGE AND ESTEEM."

#SEIZETHEBANKSNOTTHELAND  
#ALLSTRUGGLEISCLIMATESTRUGGLE  
#BUILDCOMMONSTRUGGLE  
#FROMTHEBOTTOMUP  
#DEFEATFOSSILFUELS  
#INTHEWAYHERETOSTAY  
#SAMEOLDDEAL  
#BEYONDTHEGND  
#PROTECTTHELAND  
#PROTECTTHEPEOPLE  
#NOGREENCAPITALISM





# WHAT IS THE RED DEAL?

## INTRODUCTION

The Red Nation (TRN) invites allied movements, comrades, and relatives to implement the Red Deal, a movement-oriented document for climate justice and grassroots reform and revolution. This is not a region- or nation-specific platform, but one that encompasses the entirety of Indigenous America, including our non-Indigenous comrades and relatives who live here. This is a platform so that our planet may live. We cannot expect politicians to do what only mass movements can do. Join us as we build this movement! No skirts required. All are welcome. Skoden!

## BACKGROUND

The proposed Green New Deal (GND) legislation is a step in the right direction to combat climate change and to hold corporate polluters responsible. A mass mobilization, one like we've never seen before in history, is required to save this planet. Indigenous movements have always been at the forefront of these struggles.

Democratic socialist congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the main proponent of the GND, is herself a water protector who began her successful congressional run while she was at Standing Rock protesting the construction of the Dakota Access

Pipeline. Thus, the GND and the climate justice movement in North America trace their origins to Indigenous frontline struggles.

With this background in mind, TRN is proposing a Red Deal. It's not the "Red New Deal" because it's the same "Old Deal"—the fulfillment of treaty rights, land restoration, sovereignty, self-determination, decolonization, and liberation. Ours is the oldest class struggle in the Americas: centuries-long resistance for a world in which many worlds fit. Indigenous peoples are best suited to lead this important movement. But it must come from the ground-up.

The Red Deal is not a counter program to the GND. It's a call for action beyond the scope of the U.S. colonial state. It's a program for Indigenous liberation, life, and land—an affirmation that colonialism and capitalism must be overturned for this planet to be habitable for human and non-human relatives to live dignified lives.

The Red Deal is not a "deal" or "bargain" with the elite and powerful. It's a deal with the humble people of the earth; a pact that we shall strive for peace and justice and that movements for justice must come from below and to the left. We do not speak truth to the powerful. Our shared truth makes us powerful. And this people's truth includes those excluded from the realms of power and policy-making.

In the spirit of being good relatives, the Red Deal is a platform that calls for demilitarization, police and prison abolition, abolishing ICE, tearing down all border walls, Indigenous liberation, decolonization, land restoration, treaty rights, free healthcare, free education, free housing, full citizenship, equal protection for undocumented relatives, a complete moratorium on oil, gas, coal, and carbon extraction and emissions, a transition to an economy that benefits everyone and that ends the exploitation of the Global South and Indigenous nations for resources, safe and free public transportation, restoration of Indigenous agriculture, food sovereignty, restoration of watersheds and waterways, denuclearization, Black self-determination and autonomy, gender and sexual equality, Two-Spirit, trans\*, and queer liberation, and the restoration of sacred sites.

Thus the Red Deal is "Red" because it prioritizes Indigenous liberation, on the one hand, and a revolutionary left position, on the other. It is simultaneously particular and universal, because Indigenous liberation is for everybody.

Where will we get the resources to achieve these monumental tasks? We call for a divestment away from police, prisons, military, and fossil fuels (four of the biggest drains on public spending) and reinvestment in common humanity for everyone, including health, dignity,

and wellbeing, as well as the restoration of Indigenous lands, waters, airs, and nations.

"WE WILL BUILD A NEW  
WORLD FROM THE  
ASHES OF EMPIRE, A  
WORLD WHERE MANY  
WORLDS FIT."

## PRINCIPLES

### 1) What Creates Crisis Cannot Solve It

We've all heard the term 'divestment.' During the NoDAPL uprising in 2016, Water Protectors called upon the masses to divest from financial institutions investing in the pipeline as a strategy to reduce harm to people and the planet and, specifically, Indigenous peoples. The Red Deal continues this call for divestment from fossil fuel industries, but we go one step further. We draw from Black abolitionist traditions to call for divestment away from the caging, criminalizing, and harming of human beings and from the exploitative and extractive violence of fossil fuels.

But divestment is only half of the equation. What will we do with the resources that will become available once we divest from prisons, military, the detention industry, and fossil fuels? As of 2015, military spending accounted for upwards of 54% of all discretionary spending at the federal level. Proposed discretionary spending for "national security" in 2020 comes in at \$750 billion, \$718.3 billion of which is slotted specifically for the US military. In a given year, the US provides \$3.8 billion in military aid to Israel. \$182 billion is spent each year on cops and prisons. And eight white dudes—all except one an American citizen—own over half the world's wealth. This doesn't even include the revenues from the fossil fuel industry.

Compare these figures to the \$68 billion allocated for education in 2016 and the \$186 billion allocated for mental health services in 2014. And only \$66 billion of discretionary funds are spent on healthcare each year, with \$5.4 billion allocated to Indian Health Services. Despite this allocation of resources, healthcare is still unaffordable for almost half of Americans. Despite treaty and federal obligations, Native people (especially those living in urban locations) experience the worst healthcare of any demographic, and industries like pharmaceuticals control public services through lobbying and getting millions of people hooked on opioids.



Yet these already-low allocations for health and human services aren't low enough for the ruling class and their elite friends in government office. The U.S. government is threatening to cut spending on education, healthcare, food stamps, and other crucial health and human services in order to further inflate military spending. Imagine if the U.S. military had to hold a bake sale to keep its doors open instead of preschools, domestic violence shelters, art and language programs, and family planning clinics?

This is what the Red Deal proposes. Instead of scraping pennies together to salvage a barely livable life, imagine if we had over a trillion dollars to invest in healthcare for everyone? To increase teachers' pay so they can provide quality, free education to everyone? To repair roads and provide safe and accessible public transportation for everyone? To invest in large-scale language revitalization programs in every Indigenous nation on the continent? There is an overabundance of resources that go into demonizing Indigenous water protectors and land defenders, Muslims, Black people, Mexicans, women, LGBTQ2+, and poor people, while the health of the earth and human beings receives barely a sliver of attention or resources. With the resources we gain from divestment, we could end world hunger, illiteracy, child hunger, homelessness, and build renewable energy tomorrow. Literally.

## **2) Change From Below And to The Left**

Several states have passed anti-protest laws in the wake of Black Lives Matter and NoDAPL, with twenty more currently considering similar laws. This backlash proves that people who demand a dignified life threaten the powerful. It has been forgotten that the current GND legislation was only possible because its main advocate, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, was inspired by the NoDAPL uprising. Indigenous people are, and have always been, at the forefront of the struggle for climate justice.

While politicians withdraw from the social justice demands of the GND like healthcare, housing, and education, we embrace them. But we know that we must go further. We must throw the full weight of people power behind these demands for a dignified life. People power is the organized force of the masses; a movement to reclaim our humanity and rightful relations with our earth. With this, not only will we topple power, but we will build a new world from the ashes of empire, a world where many worlds fit.

There can be no rich people without poor people; the rich depend upon the poor. But the poor don't need the rich. This is our power: people power. Although Indigenous peoples live in a capitalist society, we continue to

practice people power. For example, Pueblo communities feed for nearly every ceremonial event. The original purpose of this was to pry surplus from those who held more wealth and redistribute it amongst those who didn't so that neither a poor class nor a ruling class could form. Everyone's material needs were met; there was no starvation, no homelessness, no alienation. Everyone was a relative, and everyone had relatives. Capitalism destroyed this world. We must destroy capitalism to bring it back.

People power is the most direct form of democracy. Everyday people decide what's best for themselves, not the elite and powerful. The wealthiest in the world have refused to pay taxes for more than a century while Indigenous people starve and die of preventable diseases. We believe that crying on the shoulder of the man who stole your land is the opposite of people power. You can't smudge the murder out of capitalism, nor can you expect the powerful to give up their wealth out of the kindness of their hearts. So how do we get things to change? Lobby Congress and politicians? No. We reach out directly to our people, hitting the streets and galvanizing the support of the community. Once community support is established, politicians will follow. Our leverage is people. Leverage comes from a movement behind you. Only when people move do we build enough power to force concessions and eventually win.

### **3) Politicians Can't Do What Only Mass Movements Do**

Everyone has heard the term 'reform.' Politicians use it all the time when they're describing their plans for social change. We believe in reform, too. But we're proposing a different kind of reform. Reform typically means asking the powerful to implement gradual changes that we hope will eventually improve our lives. This approach attempts to treat the symptoms of crisis, rather than the structures of power that create crisis in the first place. For example, in March 2016, white police officer Austin Shipley had a mandatory lapel camera on his uniform when he murdered 27-year old Navajo mother Loreal Tsingine in broad daylight in Winslow, Arizona. Lapel cameras are often cited by police reformers as a necessary deterrent to police violence and killing, yet Shipley murdered Tsingine with impunity and faced no charges. Cops in Winslow continue to harass and harm our relatives.

In the same year that Tsingine was murdered, police arrested over 800 water protectors and brutalized and traumatized countless others at Standing Rock. That same year, police killed Native people at higher rates than any other group and killed Native women at six times the rate of white women. Yet, when proponents call for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) reform, the solution is more police to address the

killing, rape, imprisonment, and torture of Native women.

In 2018 and 2019, we saw an increase in deaths of Indigenous children in migrant detention along the U.S.-México border. We witnessed the shooting by US border patrol of Claudia Patricia Gómez González, an Indigenous woman from Guatemala. And we mourned the death of trans Indigenous woman Roxana Hernández in an ICE detention facility. Immigration reformers have called for border patrol to keep families together and have also filed lawsuits to call for the construction of “more humane” cages for these families and individuals.

The question these reformers ask is: How can we improve the police with “cultural sensitivity” training? Which politician should we lobby to make these improvements? Instead, we ask: Why are police considered the solution to the crisis of Indigenous life? Why do we even need the police? “Chinga La Migra,” “Abolish ICE,” and “No Ban on Stolen Land” are not mere slogans. They are demands for a dignified life. The police, military, and border patrol exist to protect the interests and wealth of the elite. Instead of providing homes, healthcare, and food, all we get are more cops, more soldiers, more walls, more poisoned water, and more cages. The interests of the few always outweigh the needs of the many. This

is how power works in a world structured by capitalism.

Reformists misunderstand this fundamental truth about capitalist states: states protect capital and the ruling class, not life. This is true for police who protect private property while caging and murdering people. This is true for U.S. military campaigns that protect the interests of multinational corporations by bombing villages, schools, and mosques. Reformists who appeal to the state for change compromise our future. We refuse to compromise. Our philosophy of reform is to reallocate social wealth back to those who actually produce it: workers, the poor, Indigenous peoples, the Global South, women, migrants, caretakers of the land, and the land itself. The types of reform we seek include the complete moratorium on oil, gas, and coal extraction; the restoration of Indigenous land, water, and air to a healthy state; and special protections for workers and the land. These “non-reformist reforms” are crucial to achieving abolition, decolonization, and liberation.

Where will we get the money to fulfill these reforms? We will dispossess the wealth from corporate polluters and settler governments and redistribute it to the masses, restoring dignity and creating jobs to caretake and heal the planet and build our collective future.

#### 4) From Theory to Action

Bosses run the world, from the White House to the highest executives of the multinational corporations that plunder the earth. Yet, there is no unified left that poses a real threat to the bosses. We have witnessed massive grassroots rebellions against the fossil fuel industry, police violence, racist immigration policies, and labor exploitation, yet nothing has coalesced into a unified mass movement. We believe that struggling for these reforms to restore the health of our bodies and the earth will serve as the most powerful vehicle for building a mass movement. We cannot simply be against something; we must be for something.

We will make recommendations that can be used at any level of governance, from the grassroots to the tribal council to the city council. We cannot turn away from the state because the state has its sights set on us at all times. Indigenous people know that every moment of our existence is mediated by the state: it is illegal to give birth in our traditional homes without state permits and we aren't even allowed to visit our sacred sites that lie within federal lands without proof of identity. The state harasses us wherever we go because we are not supposed to exist; we are supposed to be gone, erased off the lands the U.S. so desperately wants to exploit for profit. However, we do not appeal to the state to right these wrongs. Instead

we must organize and agitate wherever the state has set its sights—amongst urban Indigenous youth, women, migrants, Black people, LGBTQ2+, our sacred mountains and waters. We cannot simply build isolated utopias while the rest of the world burns, nor can we wait for the slow process of reformist reform to kick in. We cannot simply heal our individual trauma, nor can we consume better to save the environment. We cannot vote harder and place all our hope in a few individuals in Congress. Climate change will kill us before any of these strategies liberate the planet from capitalism.

By fighting for non-reformist reforms in and with our most vulnerable communities, we will drain power and resources from state surveillance and harm and reinvest these resources in the wellbeing of all. We will regain our collective power. We will be inspired by a vision for the future that will outpace the state at every turn. We will be disciplined and organized to capture the momentum of the next rebellion and catapult it into a full-blown mass movement. We will fight for the redistribution of the wealth stolen from us, whether it's land, water, air, or labor. We will carry each other's dreams and dignity in our hearts. We will remain steadfast in our commitment to each other. We will seek peace and right relations between all life. We will do this in such a way that adheres to the principles of abolition, anti-capitalism, and decolonization. Join us in this struggle!



## **AREAS OF STRUGGLE**

### **1) End the Occupation: divest from the following police and military institutions**

- Defund Police/La Migra/Child Protective Services
- End bordertown violence
- Abolish incarceration (prisons, juvenile detention facilities, jails, border security)
- End the U.S. Military occupation everywhere
- Abolish imperial borders

### **2) Heal Our Bodies: reinvest in the following institutions and services**

- Citizenship and equal rights for everyone
- Free and sustainable housing for everyone
- Free education for everyone
- Free healthcare for everyone
- Free and accessible public transportation for everyone
- Suicide prevention and non-carceral mental health services
- Healthy, Indigenous and abundant food for everyone
- Clean water and air
- Sexual/domestic violence services and reproductive justice
- End MMIWG2

### **3) Heal Our Planet: create jobs by reinvesting in the following**

- Clean sustainable energy
- Traditional and sustainable agriculture
- Land, water, air, and animal restoration (above and below ground)
- Protection and restoration of sacred sites
- Enforcement of treaty rights and other agreements

"WE CANNOT SIMPLY BUILD ISOLATED UTOPIAS WHILE THE REST OF THE WORLD BURNS, NOR CAN WE WAIT FOR THE SLOW PROCESS OF REFORMIST REFORM TO KICK IN. WE CANNOT SIMPLY HEAL OUR INDIVIDUAL TRAUMA, NOR CAN WE CONSUME BETTER TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. WE CANNOT VOTE HARDER AND PLACE ALL OUR HOPE IN A FEW INDIVIDUALS IN CONGRESS. CLIMATE CHANGE WILL KILL US BEFORE ANY OF THESE STRATEGIES LIBERATE THE PLANET FROM CAPITALISM."



# CREATE JOBS: HEAL OUR PLANET

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is no hope for restoring the planet's fragile and dying ecosystems without Indigenous liberation. This isn't an exaggeration; it's simply the truth. Indigenous people understand the choice that confronts us: decolonization or extinction. We have unapologetically renewed our bonds with the earth by implementing our intellectual traditions in our movements for decolonization. There is no turning back; these bonds are sacred and will never be broken. This is why Indigenous water protectors and land defenders throughout the world are criminalized and assassinated on a daily basis. We have chosen life,

therefore we've been marked for death.

Despite this grim reality, Indigenous people continue to caretake the land even under threat of daily attack. Like mothers, nurses, and educators, Indigenous water protectors and land defenders perform one of the most important types of labor we depend upon as a species for social and biological reproduction: caretaking. Humanity would not exist without caretakers. But caretaking is labor. It takes work to plant crops. It takes work to hunt. It takes work to raise children. It takes work to clean homes. It takes work to break down a buffalo. It takes work to learn the properties of medicines.

Healing the planet is ultimately about creating infrastructures of caretaking that will replace infrastructures of capitalism. Capitalism is contrary to life. Caretaking promotes life. As we note throughout the Red Deal, caretaking is at the center of contemporary Indigenous movements for decolonization and liberation. We therefore look to these movements for guidance on building infrastructures of caretaking that have the potential to produce caretaking economies and caretaking jobs now and in the future. We also look to the infrastructure of caretaking that is currently emerging where capitalist nation-states have failed to save lives from COVID-19. Under the current system of global capitalism, caretaking is undervalued and often unrecognized as a form of labor. Caretakers like mothers and water protectors make up a huge percentage of workers who produce the social and material means by which we live, yet they're not paid. In a world shaped by pandemic, caretakers have become the most important sector of workers, saving people's lives and keeping whole families and communities afloat. Mutual aid networks populated by caretakers are proliferating, providing relief to the most vulnerable and paving the way for robust caretaking economies to potentially replace the crumbling system of global capitalism. Current mutual aid efforts are neither state-sanctioned nor state-funded; they are entirely people-led and the result of

working class solidarity between nurses, service providers, students, domestic workers, migrant farmers, and families. Mutual aid networks affirm life by caretaking humanity rather than denying life by abandoning and exploiting humanity. However, the monumental challenge that confronts us is how to turn caretaking labor into life-affirming mass movements that can topple global capitalism once the emergency conditions of the pandemic lift. Only when we are able to mount a real threat to the hegemony of global capitalism through such movements will we be able to heal the planet.

Like the development of mass movements, restoring our relationship with the land is not optional if we wish to avoid extinction. But this isn't some mystical vision where we go out and hug trees. This is a serious agenda for decolonization that requires comprehensive land return programs and funding for mass Indigenous-led land restoration projects. Healthy reciprocity with the environment also depends upon Indigenous peoples having unrestricted access to land, unencumbered by colonial borders and free of harassment from agents of the state. We understand that the land is our means of production as Indigenous people; this is why decolonization and land return are not metaphors. Land is also the means of production for settler economies, which require property as a basic building block (often called primitive accumulation by Marxists) for



the accumulation of capital and power. We cannot successfully wage class war until Indigenous land repatriation is taken seriously as a precursor to seizing the means of production more broadly. And US imperialism--the greatest threat to the future of the planet--will never end if land remains in the hands of First World settler capitalists. The collective future of us all depends upon the ability of Indigenous caretakers to work with the land, restore its health, and re-establish balance with our relations.

With threats like radioactive contamination, wildfires, chemical pollution, and biodiversity loss, we will also need to seek new and alternative technologies, something Native people embrace because we have always been technological innovators, scientists and engineers. But as we know, capitalists have a monopoly on technology, with the majority of the most advanced technology being used for war efforts. Scientists are denied funding for projects that are not considered profitable or that directly disrupt the flow of capital to the already-wealthy. What if technology was created for the benefit of all life on Earth? In order to answer this question, we must turn to Indigenous knowledge. The following pages prove that our traditions of science, technology, and diplomacy are key to ensuring a future for all living beings on this planet.

What does it mean to take up healing

as a revolutionary concept, one that transcends the neoliberal realm of individual trauma and allows us to imagine a world that prioritizes collective well-being and healthy relationships? Many of us in the United States--especially Indian Country--have spent the better part of 40 years accepting our status as injured subjects stuck in endless cycles of trauma that make it seemingly impossible to transform our own DNA, let alone our social conditions. Trauma-informed thinking has taken over Indigenous governments, institutions, nonprofits, revenue streams and even movements. Like electoral politics, trauma-based healing sucks all the political and emotional energy out of the room, leaving little space for other possibilities and visions for change. The narrowing of our collective energies into trauma has come at the expense of building vibrant and militant struggles for liberation with other colonized and oppressed peoples of the world. Rather than allying with revolutionary movements in the Global South to overturn US imperialism once and for all, we argue on social media and academic panels about injury: who is more injured and who injures more. This is entirely a First World discourse. Movements outside the United States rarely traffic in the language of trauma and injury to develop political positions or tactics of organizing. In this time of global pandemic, we must reclaim healing from the First World (neoliberal) jargon of trauma and injury and instead

globalize our efforts. Healing is real and possible--and necessary. The Red Deal advocates for healing our bodies and the planet, but not from trauma. We must heal from colonialism and capitalism--together. COVID-19 is a harsh but crucial lesson about the need for collective healing, which will require militant movements to liberate the planet from systems and structures that target whole nations and species. Although there are many points-of-entry into this global struggle, there can be no doubt that Indigenous movements for decolonization and liberation must be at the center of our collective efforts.

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EXTINCTION."

## AREA 1: CLEAN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

### Why is this important?

The world is transitioning from fossil fuels to clean and renewable energies, but not fast enough. Resource extraction is still ravaging Indigenous, Black, migrant, and other-than-human communities. The Amazon forest fire of 2019 resulted in the burning of over 2,000,000 acres and the assassination of Guajajara Indigenous leader and land defender, Paulo Paulino, all in the name of mining and logging. In early 2020 Canada invaded sovereign Wet'suwet'en territory to remove Unist'ot'en land defenders who had successfully stopped construction of the Coastal GasLink Pipeline for close to a decade. And the Navajo Nation is still one of the largest resource colonies in the United States, supplying energy through coal and natural gas conversion to some of the largest cities in the American West while many of its own citizens live without basic infrastructure like clean water and electricity.

For Indigenous and poor communities throughout Turtle Island, the fracking revolution of the past decade has been particularly violent. Fracking is a type of drilling that injects chemicals and water into the ground to break up underlying shale rock, releasing the oil and natural gas contained within it. Fracking produces more natural gas than crude oil for the US economy; two-thirds of natural gas in the United States comes

from fracking, while approximately fifty percent of the nation's crude oil is procured through the same method. Corporations like TC Energy--formerly TransCanada, the corporation that built the Dakota Access Pipeline--claim that natural gas is one of the world's cleanest and safest energy sources. Natural gas is often called 'clean' because it emits 50 percent less carbon than coal when you burn it.

Governments like the state of New Mexico have partnered with fracking corporations to create shiny PR campaigns about the benefits of natural gas as a bridge fuel that will help the planet transition from dirty fuel sources like coal into zero-net-carbon renewables like solar. Native people know the truth about this so-called 'clean' energy source. While the natural gas boom has created billions in profits for extractive corporations, governments, and investors, the fracking required to extract natural gas from below the earth's surface has devastated Indigenous communities in eastern Navajo. Infrastructure like the Coastal GasLink Pipeline that carries natural gas from fracking fields to ports for sale violate Wet'suwet'en sovereignty. And the explosion of temporary fracking labor in the Bakken Oil Shale region has increased rape and human trafficking by oil workers of Indigenous women and girls from nations like the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara.

Meanwhile, extractive corporations are

investing billions in renewable energy technologies to ensure they have a new source of profit once 'dirty' energy is phased out in favor of 'clean' sources. Renewable energy corporations and start-ups proliferate, creating a new class of millionaires and billionaires who invest in green technology to make a buck and proclaim they are saving the planet. The United States backs right-wing coups in Indigenous nations like Bolivia to access green energy sources like lithium. Whether extractive capitalism or green capitalism, profit is all the ruling class cares about. Not the future of humanity. Not Indigenous sovereignty. Not the health of the earth.

It is thus crucial that we imagine and organize for new sustainable energy alternatives led by Indigenous people. Indigenous people have lived sustainably since time immemorial, and can continue to live in reciprocity with all those we share the earth with. But sustainable does not mean primitive. We must reclaim Indigenous intellectual traditions of the Western Hemisphere, which have some of the most advanced technology in human history. We have millennia-old mathematical and scientific theories that allow us to track the movement of the solar system, map out stars and galaxies, and create functional plumbing and aqueduct systems. We had these technologies long before Europeans discovered such things. Science and technology have never

been at odds with Indigenous life ways; it is only because of capitalism's monopoly on technology that science is used to destroy the planet. Today the most advanced technology in the world is used to create military weapons that kill millions rather than harnessed to save life. Because of their total control by private corporations, the health sciences are incapable of saving human lives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Imagine if technology was developed by the humble people of the earth for the humble people of the earth? Capitalism can never be compatible with clean, sustainable energy. Capitalism kills the earth. For the earth to live, capitalism must die.

### **What needs our urgent attention?**

- Green energy jobs are often touted as the rationale for promoting renewable energy projects. However, if we look at renewable energy projects like Kayenta Solar Project, Moapa Southern Paiute Solar Project, and the Tsilhqot'in Solar Farm, the majority of employment for tribal members is temporary and only comes from construction and planning. The maintenance is done by outside contractors. From vision to completion, solar jobs are not a sustainable source of jobs for local communities unless maintenance, monitoring, and remediation are taken into account. Saying that renewable energy will "create more jobs" simply isn't enough. We must



have a clear understanding of the spectrum of labor that goes into green energy and demand that local communities--not private contractors--work these jobs.

- The materials that are used in solar panel systems are extremely important to consider. Lithium-ion batteries, according to the US Department of Energy, are and will be the main storage of renewable energies. Lithium-ion batteries are made from two main minerals, cobalt and lithium. The Democratic Republic of Congo holds 60% of the world's cobalt, while Bolivia holds 70% of the world's lithium. Both countries face heavy exploitation from the world's economic powers like the US, China, Canada, France, and India. While these countries are supplying the Global North with green energy for the future, they remain some of the poorest nations in the world. We must not replicate the injustices and inequalities between the Global North and Global South that exist under our current structure of global capitalism by simply replacing fossil fuel extraction with renewable energy extraction. Even with the transition to green energy, the capitalist (and colonial) relation remains intact. This is called imperialism, whereby the wealth and power of Global North nations depends entirely upon the poverty and exploitation of Global South nations. We must fight against a system that deems the world's poor and Indigenous expendable for the sake of progress and profit.

## **What can you do about it?**

- We demand that all corporate polluters be held accountable and pay for full remediation of the land and reparations to the people who have felt the impacts of extraction for generations. This can look like boycotts and divestment campaigns, or urging tribal leaders to break contracts with corporate polluters.
- Educate tribal communities on the histories of resource extraction. Regardless of how clean and green the technology is, the process by which corporations extract value from Indigenous life for the benefit of settler colonialism remains the same. Organize to stop all forms of energy extraction from Native communities and lands, whether it is coal mining, fracking, or solar farms.
- Now more than ever we need people to understand that we have to actively create the world we want to live in. Man-made disasters like climate change and the unnecessary spread of COVID-19 are not manifestations of "the earth healing itself." Such deadly events are a direct result of the actions of those who pillage the earth: the ruling class. These capitalists view the earth as a resource to be exploited instead of a relative to be protected. Wherever you are, create campaigns that pinpoint the central role of capitalism in creating this suffering, and the need to dismantle capitalism for the sake of our common future.

## **AREA 2: TRADITIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

### **Why is this important?**

Indigenous people have always adjusted our life ways to maintain sustainability. For example, when Pueblo peoples left Chaco Canyon, it was realized that irrigation farming alone was unsustainable in times of severe drought, and dry farming methods were developed. Simultaneously, areas were nurtured where natural food systems already existed in addition to continuing the use of ditch systems. Forest management was crucial in maintaining healthy watersheds, minimizing fire damage, and promoting healthy game and grasslands. Scientific racism works to invalidate and exclude land-based knowledge and wisdom. Modern science is only now recognizing the benefits of Indigenous knowledge that has been known for centuries, while refusing to restore lands to these same Indigenous experts.

Extractivism and militarization on Native lands disrupted our land-based economies, which have always allowed for sustainable food production. One of the first weapons of colonial violence was to destroy crops and food systems to weaken people, often coinciding with the forced adoption of non-native diets and the outlawing of growing traditional foods. An example of this is

how the Spanish outlawed the Mayan and Aztec Peoples from growing amaranth, even going as far as to cut off the hands of anyone caught growing it. Later, in Pueblo communities, a tithe of the best of a family's crops needed to be turned over to the Spanish missionaries at the end of each season or face harsh punishment. They were required to fill up the length of a manta (dress) with food that was then seized. Imperial borders are also sites of militarization that have inhibited the flow of the seed trade and knowledge sharing amongst Native people throughout Turtle Island. Historically, Native communities have preserved seeds by sharing them with other communities so that they wouldn't go extinct, and have actively worked to strengthen crop diversity.

The forced relocation and displacement of First Nations separated us from our lands, medicines, spiritual sites, and food sources. Native people experience the highest rates of food scarcity. Despite the fact that so much Native land has been stolen by big agricultural companies for mass food production, Native people continue to live in food deserts. In these food deserts, up to 85% of food is processed, and fresh fruits and vegetables are rarely available. On average Native people living on reservations pay seven dollars more per basket of food and travel three times further than the average person to access groceries. This can be especially difficult for elders

who often do not have access to reliable transportation. One in four Native homes does not have enough food regardless of whether they live on or off the reservation. It is unrealistic to expect the most marginalized to make a full return to land-based agriculture as a primary means of sustenance. We know the crushing weight of capitalism and land theft has forced us into the wage economy. Oftentimes, the jobs available force a separation of people from their lands. We know that we cannot heal lands and the substance they provide until capitalism and colonialism no longer exist.

The blatant theft of Native lands for resource extraction, settlement, big agriculture, military projects, etc. is directly to blame for this epidemic of food scarcity. Projects of extraction and militarization prevent people from living off the land, and long after they're gone they leave the land poisoned. Radioactive contamination of our lands leaves them unusable for centuries. Seed sovereignty is constantly threatened by commodity culture through big agricultural seed patents, cross-pollination with genetically engineered contaminants, and laws catering to agricultural companies that make traditional seeds illegal to grow and possess. Seeds also have very specific ties to the birthwork movement. The experiences and environmental exposures impact three generations in one pregnancy. Seeds have cultural connotations related to

birth, belonging to a place, and ceremonies around how we claim our kin. Food is quite literally medicine and a cultural foundation for a community to thrive.

## **What needs our urgent attention?**

### Seed Sovereignty

- Traditionally, seed sovereignty has a direct tie to reproductive health and body sovereignty. Promoting reproductive justice promotes seed sovereignty.
- Imperial borders directly affect our trade and seed sharing with relatives internationally that we traditionally traded with in the past.
- Big agriculture actively suppresses and kills the varieties of sacred foods and plants in favor of mass produced GMOs.
- Monsanto, a food monopoly tycoon, is trying to patent Indigenous seeds that we have grown since time immemorial, therefore stealing and monopolizing sacred and life sustaining plants.
- Many genetically engineered crops such as corn and wheat cannot be grown without the use of the cancer causing herbicide Roundup (a byproduct of Agent Orange). Roundup creates widespread environmental and waterway degradation and is being used in combination with toxic pesticides that are also just as harmful to life and the environment.

- The introduction of big agricultural crops into small Indigenous economies across Turtle Island is systematically destroying local economies, as they cannot compete with price differentials. In Mexico, the birthplace of corn, GMO seed companies drastically reduced the price of corn so much that local markets crashed, causing an uprising to ban GMO seeds across regions.
- worldview and practices, such as cap and cover, excessive soil removal, less protective standards of clean up, and the production of waste dumps adjacent to poor communities.
- Federal food programs, such as commodity distribution programs, try to compensate for the destruction capitalism and colonialism have caused to Native food systems. However, distributing foods that are not Indigenous has a negative impact on health and wellness in the long term, creating issues like unhealthy bodies, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other health impacts.

## Food Deserts

- Indigenous people, on and off the reservation, need foods that are whole, healthy and Indigenous to their diet. Children, elders, and birth givers are the most marginalized groups for food security.
- Accessibility. Capitalism is why only the cheapest foods, and not a variety of healthy foods, are able to make it to the most rural areas. It is also the reason why healthy foods are inaccessible for low income families. In rural and urban communities this translates into having to travel great distances (and therefore spend more income) to get to a grocery store that sells healthy food at affordable prices.
- Resource extraction depletes and pollutes the soil, making the land unusable for generations and minimizing available land for growing food. This creates the need for expensive, long-term environmental restoration, usually siloed into Western/European

## Land Return

- Our land, air and waterways are polluted from capitalist endeavors, government mismanagement, and militarization. Traditional caregiving and sustainability does not disrespect or cut kinship with our land, water, air, and other-than-human relatives.
- Our mountain relatives are under military control and have been contaminated with nuclear waste and radiation. This has affected every corner of life and our ability to sustain our relatives, from contaminated water to contaminated animals and plants, and even the clay we use. This is a catastrophic offense and will take years beyond our generations' lifetimes to clean and restore.



- Having control over our ancestral territories is vital to our ability to care for them, and is a generations-long pathway to true sustainability.
- Only when land is restored and returned can we begin to rebuild our economies and our nations with true sovereignty.

### **What can you do about it?**

- We can incorporate hydroponic and aquaponic food systems into our life ways while the land is in remediation from extractive, and military projects that have caused immense devastation.
- For Indigenous people, we can decolonize and restore balance and harmony to our food security and sovereignty through planting community gardens using our planting, harvesting, and ditch work songs. We can use our knowledge of waterways, seed storage, seed exchange, dry farming, and waffle gardens to revive our gardening traditions. We can do this in a way that is culturally and spiritually grounded so our prayers support the health and well being of our communities.
- Everyone can help to restore Indigenous seed economies by trading with Indigenous folks around the world. We can disregard imperial borders imposed upon us by reinvigorating non-capitalist, ancestral trade networks. We can revive and reintegrate traditional ways of harvest management through cooperating and exchange with others, thereby strengthening traditional and sustainable economies.
- In order to survive current challenges and any future challenges to our food sources, we suggest remaining flexible, open, and willing to learn new ways to be healthy. These ways include how food is prepared and handled. Having direct contact from seed planting to harvest honors traditional food sovereignty. We suggest reviving old recipes and creating new recipes in which nutrient-rich foods are centered, where fruits and vegetables are our main source of vitamins.
- The widespread labeling of foods containing genetically engineered and transgenic ingredients must be mandated for food justice, allowing people the option of informed consent for what they are consuming. We must be in solidarity with Indigenous communities globally in shared resistance to banning GMO and transgenic seeds, and work towards creating genetically engineered free zones across Nations. We look to the work that has already been done to preserve traditional and sustainable agriculture by the The New Mexico Food & Seed Sovereignty Alliance, which created A Declaration of Seed Sovereignty: A Living Document for New Mexico on March 11, 2006. The document offers 30 points highlighting the devastation

of land and agriculture and lays out a framework for restoration. A link to the Declaration of Seed Sovereignty can be found [here](#).

- We can pressure our tribal governments to cut ties with corporate polluters who aid the devastation of land in the name of economic development. We can divest from big banks that fund extractive projects both as individuals and Native nations. We can stand against continued land devastation by organizing and participating in protests, blockades and encampments. We can urge our tribal governments to assert their sovereignty and rebuild our relationships with Native peoples beyond US borders to restore knowledge and trade that can allow us to heal land and rebuild our own economic frameworks to end dependence on the settler state.

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## **AREA 3: LAND, WATER, AIR, AND ANIMAL RESTORATION**

### **Why is this important?**

Recent studies show that although the world's 370 million Indigenous peoples make up less than five percent of the total human population, traditional Indigenous territories encompass between 22-25% of the world's land surface and they coincide with areas that hold 80-90% percent of the planet's biodiversity. Also, the greatest diversity of Indigenous groups coincides with the world's largest tropical forest wilderness areas in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, and eleven percent of world's forest lands are legally "owned" by Indigenous peoples and communities. These forests--like the Amazon--are the world's lungs.

Climate research shows that the most serious aspect of our current environmental crisis is the loss of biodiversity, which affects human survival by interfering with crucial ecosystem services such as crop pollination and water purification while also threatening the land, air, and water, relatives with whom we share this world.

Of the four billion or so species that have evolved over the last 3.5 billion years, some 99% have gone extinct. Over time, the rate of extinction has been balanced by the evolution of new species. But there have been five

exceptions to this pattern--periods of mass extinction when the rate of species loss was so great that the biodiversity of the earth was substantially reduced.

The number of species on earth at this point in time is estimated to be 8.7 million, with perhaps another million or so yet to be identified. Knowing how many species there are on the planet means we also know how fast they are going extinct. A 2015 study in *Science Advances* shows that there has been an exceptionally rapid rate of species loss over the last few centuries when compared to "normal" background rate of species extinctions. Findings show that species are going extinct at a rate of up to 100 times the background rate, or to put it bluntly: extinction rates have reached levels unparalleled since dinosaurs died out 66 million years ago. There is no longer any doubt: we have entered the sixth mass extinction in earth's history. The last mass extinction event occurred 65 million years ago and it took hundreds of thousands of years for species biodiversity to recover.

A key difference between this extinction event and previous events is that all of the past mass extinctions have been caused by sudden cataclysmic events such as a series of massive volcanic outbursts, major asteroid impacts, or dramatic sea-level change. Today, mass extinctions are being driven by the effects of just one single species: human beings. Certainly, not all human beings

are responsible for the mass extinction, but rather those who uphold the institutions that destroy the earth: capitalism, settler colonialism, and imperialism. A small minority of rich humans benefits from the constant pillaging of the earth for profit while the majority of the world's species struggle to survive or simply die because of these human-created systems of greed and exploitation.

There is a reason why the mass reduction of biodiversity via multi-species extinction is related to land restoration: in places where the health of the land has been destroyed through pollution and hyper-exploitation, biodiversity disappears. Yet, where Indigenous people have freedom to caretake the land, biodiversity flourishes. This is because, as opposed to capitalism, Indigenous people around the world do not see ourselves as separate from the land. For us, land, plants, animals, and water are our relatives. The soil is alive and interacting with the air, waterways and all other-than-human creatures. The Indigenous perspective looks forward to the future of our children, our children's children, and to the wellbeing of all living things. It also looks back to the wisdom of our ancestors. This intimate relationship between past, present, and future allows for close observation of the interactions and interdependencies between species across time and

space. It allows for reverence of the land in which humans live in balance with all other beings. Water, air, animal, and human restoration depends upon the health of the land. Restoring the land, and our commitment to living in balance with our relatives, is thus key to securing a future for all. Current statistics about mass extinction, biodiversity, and air quality show irrefutably that land cannot simply be "restored" through technological fixes or environmental protections adjudicated in settler institutions. Land restoration must center Indigenous land stewardship and multi-species caretaking--and thus the mass return of land to Indigenous nations and the implementation of true Indigenous self-determination--if we are to have any hope of a future on this planet.

### **What needs our urgent attention?**

- Soil degradation has global ramifications on resource sustainability. Capitalism, in its unrelenting demand for profit, uses and destroys the land with no consideration for those ramifications. Through its myopic lens, capitalism has no regard for future generations. It does not see the land as a living thing to be cared for and respected. For capitalism, the land is simply another tool with which to satisfy greed and gratification. We must understand that capitalism is the enemy of the future.



- Extractive industries: logging, encroaching infrastructure, deforestation and improper agricultural practices such as monocropping and overgrazing, all contribute to a decline in soil structure. Soil degradation, in the form of salt and water imbalances, is often caused by waste disposal, chemical pollutants, and leaking pipelines. The compression of soil, which decreases air and water retention, is the result of compaction brought on by heavy equipment, floods, and building structures. Excessive irrigation and fertilizers induce soil fertility depletion, while logging and deforestation lead to accelerated erosion.
- Healthy soil is essential for the production of vegetation. A diversity of vegetation attracts insects, birds and other animals that serve important functions in the maintenance of ecosystems. Land restoration is imperative to restoring biodiversity. Biodiversity is the key to a vibrant and thriving planet.

### **What can you do about it?**

- Design ecological restoration projects in your area. Traditional practices for ecological restoration include re-vegetation by combining native, domestic and wild plant species, crop rotation, agroforestry, burning practices as utilized by the Aboriginal people of Australia, intercropping and water harvesting.

These practices are designed to increase the health of the soil, protect crops and create biodiversity.

- Promote food sovereignty in your local context by gardening on a small or large scale. Stewardship of the land ensures food security, which is increasingly important in these times of global pandemic.
- Find, join, and help a local organization that is pushing back against pollution or contamination caused by industry and resource extraction. Ending all forms of toxic capitalism will take us a long way in restoring the land to health.
- Indigenous peoples have played a key role in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The territories of Indigenous groups in Brazil, Colombia, Nicaragua and elsewhere who have been given the rights to their lands have been better conserved than adjacent lands. Promote the return of land to Indigenous people wherever you are. Popular tactics for Indigenous land return include land trust campaigns and honor taxes. It is easy to see that Indigenous people are the most suited and knowledgeable caretakers of the land. Giving land back to Indigenous people is the first step in land restoration.
- The two greatest threats faced by Indigenous peoples are the loss of land and the loss of ancestral knowledge. This is as serious a threat as the massive extinction of species on Earth. Ancestral wisdom and

- Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) must be preserved and protected. Gatherings of elders where they share their knowledge with tribal members and other Indigenous groups can be an effective mechanism for ensuring that knowledge is not lost, especially if Indigenous youth are active participants. Support for Indigenous women's networks is also needed, as they are the carriers of ancestral knowledge.

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## **AREA 4: PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF SACRED SITES**

The United States is an empire, bringing death and destruction to those within its grasp. According to imperial logic, the land is a source of profit to be consumed. Those who try to protect the land from imperial violence are cast as obstacles and deemed expendable and criminal. In 2016 we saw the brutalization of water protectors at Standing Rock by militarized police. Oil and gas industries continually target Chaco Canyon and mark the surrounding communities as sacrifice zones. In 2019, 38 elders were arrested for blocking access to the Thirty Meter Telescope atop Mauna Kea. Tohono O'odham relatives face daily harassment and restriction of movement in their own homelands by the US Border Patrol. Police demand consent (How can you 'demand' consent?) at gunpoint, yet it is the Wet'suwet'en who are criminalized for protecting their territory. Indigenous land defenders of the Amazon are murdered for protecting forests that sustain life for the entire planet.

The criminalization of land defenders and water protectors is a tactic to eliminate and uproot Indigenous Peoples and other-than-human relatives. Indigenous Peoples will always resist imperialism and capitalist development because we recognize the United States as an invader. We

understand that protecting our relatives--land, water, air, ancestors, women, two-spirit, animals, medicines, children, and others--is at the heart of our customary forms of governance; it is what makes us who we are. While phrases that emphasize the sacred, including "sacred sites," "women are sacred," and "we are sacred" are now common for describing why we should practice the art of protection, protecting is, at its base, simply about being a good relative. Given the violence and destruction that US imperialism forces upon us, protecting our relatives is a direct rejection of capitalism and empire. We demand the liberation of all our relatives. We demand a future.

The Red Deal extends solidarity to Indigenous peoples across the world who are fighting to protect our relatives from the ongoing ravages of imperialism. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples explicitly states in Article 25 that "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard." We recognize the need for international leaders to hold imperial nations accountable for their attacks on Indigenous lands and bodies. Locally,

the continued violation of our relatives stems directly from colonial land loss policies and genocidal attacks by the US government. For as long as the settler occupation of our lands exists, our relatives will continue to bear the brunt of capitalism. Therefore, capitalism (and imperialism) must die to protect the sacred.

### **What needs our urgent attention?**

- The criminalization and brutalization of water protectors and land defenders.
- We must understand that what happens to the land, happens to the people (and vice versa). The protection of relatives must include all relatives. No one is free unless we're all free.
- Public land is stolen land. Outdoor recreation is often on land that has been stolen and converted into public land. Conservationists and nature lovers who participate in progressive causes must respect the sacred, even if this means they can no longer use land for recreational activities.
- Mass movements must be willing to educate about what is sacred and why it is important to respect and protect what is sacred.
- Stolen lands must be returned. Ba whyea--or Blue Lake--is an area which is sacred and only used by the Indigenous people of Taos Pueblo. Blue Lake was returned to Taos Pueblo in 1970, ending the

termination era, which devastated Indigenous nations and caused the loss of a further 1.4 million acres of tribal land. The Blue Lake example shows how the protection of sacred sites is key to the retention, return and restoration of stolen land.

### **What can you do about it?**

- Greater Chaco Canyon: support people and communities directly dealing with oil and gas infrastructure; stop government-initiated lease sales for fracking operations; protest at Bureau of Land Management offices; raise concern about MMIWG2 and "man camps;" go to local organizing events and meetings to end fracking in your area.
- Mauna Kea: Protest to stop the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope; offer solidarity; support the struggle through writing.
- Support international movements and grassroots organizing through education, solidarity events, film screenings, teach-ins, protests and rallies.
- Provide free legal work and services for water protectors and land defenders.
- Donate to legal funds like Unist'ot'en Camp [here](#) and Water Protectors Legal Collective [here](#).

## **AREA 5: ENFORCEMENT OF TREATY RIGHTS AND OTHER AGREEMENTS**

### **Why is this important?**

Colonial presidents, congresses, and courts see treaties as business transactions to open up Indigenous territory for the expansion of plantation slavery, agriculture, commerce, trade, and resource extraction. It is as common for politicians to pledge to 'honor the treaties' as it is for them to break or ignore treaties. To do otherwise would be contrary to the intention of invaders, which is to secure permanent white settlement by eliminating Indigenous nationhood. The colonial approach to treaties has resulted in nothing less than theft and genocide for Indigenous peoples. But it is arrogant for invaders to think their systems of diplomacy and trade are the only traditions that matter. Indigenous diplomacy proliferated before European invasion and continues to this day. For example, Anishnaabe intellectual Leanne Betasamosake Simpson considers the Gdoo-naaganinaa a precolonial treaty for sharing territory between the Nishnaabeg nation and Haudenosaunee Confederacy in what is today southern Ontario. Lakota historian Nick Estes notes that Wolakota (meaning "peace" or "treaty") originated from the Pte Sa Win, the White Buffalo Woman, who brought the Lakota nation into to correct relations with the animal and plant nations. Both of these examples show that discord is resolved

through creating permanent political relations between parties (including other-than-human nations) based on moral responsibility and good-faith pledges.

The consequences for violating these Indigenous covenants extends far beyond the human world. Global warming and the sixth mass extinction event are the apocalyptic results of this cascading unbalance. While those most responsible for climate change--imperial nations--have proposed remedies through capitalist markets and techno-fixes, none so far have sought to rectify their own responsibility. Their failure to act holds the entire future hostage.

Original instructions, which emphasize peaceful and mutual relations between humans and between humans and other-than-humans, inform the way Indigenous people have historically entered into relations with European nations. Even if original instructions are not reciprocated, each party to a treaty has equal power to interpret the meaning of the agreement. While colonizers have chosen to interpret treaties to advance their own genocidal interests, Indigenous people have never surrendered the moral authority, responsibility, or sense of justice that original instructions mandate. One of the most important expressions of this commitment is the People's Accords, which were ratified in 2010 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The accords



proposed not only just relations with the other-than-human world, but also upending the cause of unequal relations between entire nations and humans themselves: imperialism and capitalism. Under the Indigenous leadership of the Movement Toward Socialism, the People's Accords infused traditional ecological knowledge with eco-feminism, eco-socialism, and anti-imperialism.

The Indigenous Andean cosmovision of Vivir Bien, or "Living Well," and Pachamama, or "Mother Earth," are central to understanding the People's Accords. Living well is not anthropocentric, or focused solely on human relations; it is earth-centric, focusing on the whole. It understands that capitalist domination over nature is patriarchal, and that over-consumption, which is driven by the First World, is not the solution but the problem. If all of humanity consumed as much as the average US citizen, we would need four earths to sustain it. We only have one planet to share, and just relations with the natural world are impossible without just, equitable relations among humanity first.

Like the Red Deal, the People's Accords are an Indigenous treaty — a covenant — with the earth and its people. The US-backed rightwing military coup that deposed MAS leader and Bolivian president Evo Morales in 2019 was also a coup against this eco-covenant and

Indigenous socialism. It is necessary now more than ever to re-establish correct relations by enforcing the original covenant, a living document or treaty with the earth. This begins by upholding the Indigenous interpretation and authority over all treaties and agreements made with colonial powers, whether these agreements were struck three hundred years ago or yesterday. There are also hundreds of multilateral agreements and treaties with social movements and the humble people of the earth that require enforcement. We can't and won't wait for colonizers. The power is in our hands to enact natural law and restore balance in accordance with Indigenous principles.

### **What needs our urgent attention?**

- Decolonize the atmosphere: Restore to oppressed nations and the developing countries the atmospheric space that is occupied by First World greenhouse gas emissions. This means the decolonization of the atmosphere through the reduction and absorption of their emissions.
- Transfer technology: First World countries must assume all the costs and technology transfer needs of oppressed nations who have lost development opportunities due to living under the boot of US imperialism or in a restricted atmospheric space.

- Open the borders. First World countries must assume all responsibility for the hundreds of millions of people that will be forced to migrate due to capitalist-driven climate change. They must eliminate their restrictive immigration policies and instead offer migrants a decent life with full human rights guarantees in their countries.
- Pay climate debt. First World countries must assume all adaptation debt related to the impacts of climate change on developing countries by providing the means to prevent, minimize, and deal with damages arising from their excessive emissions.
- Mass land return. Return land to its original caretakers: Indigenous nations. Billions of acres of territory have been taken out of Indigenous ecological stewardship, resulting in mass extinction. Restoring land to Indigenous caretakers is a necessary step towards ensuring any kind of future on this planet.
- Adopt and implement a plurinational governance structure or constitution that recognizes, upholds, and defends Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood.
- Adopt and implement the 2011 Mother Earth Accords (read them [here](#)).
- Adopt and implement the Indigenous Principles of Just Transition (read them [here](#)).
- Adopt and implement the 2013 Treaty to Protect the Sacred from Tar Sands Projects (read it [here](#)).
- Adopt and implement the United Nations Universal Rights of Mother Earth (read them [here](#)).

## **What can you do about it?**

- Restore treaty-making with Indigenous nations.
- Respect and uphold Indigenous treaties as international agreements and the supreme law of the land.
- Adopt and implement the 2007 United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Rights (read it [here](#)).
- Adopt and implement the 2010 People's Accords (read them [here](#)).

THE RED DEAL

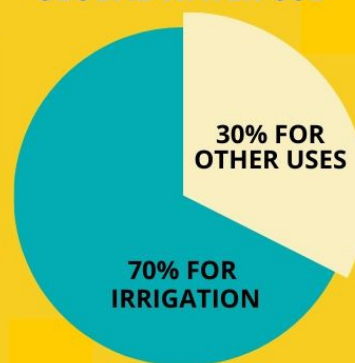
# HEAL OUR PLANET

## REINVESTING IN OUR COMMON FUTURE

- / Clean & sustainable energy
- / Traditional and sustainable agriculture
- / Land, water, air, and animal restoration
- / Protection and restoration of sacred sites
- / Multi-species caretaking
- / Enforcement of treaty rights and other agreements

Indigenous people make up 5% of the world's population but protect 80% of the world's biodiversity and 11% of the world's forests.

### GLOBAL WATER USE



**“**As opposed to capitalism, Indigenous people around the world do not see ourselves as separate from the land. Water, air, animal, and human restoration depends upon the health of the land. Restoring the land is the key to securing a future for all. **”**



"Only by developing ... loving relationships can we as humans heal ... from the damage done to us by an economic and political system bent on creating wealth at the expense of all living things. Through healing ourselves and our communities we can enable ourselves to stop reacting to oppression and begin the process of projecting healthier, more human alternatives that don't benefit us at the expense of the rest of the world."

- Grace Lee Boggs, *Organization Means Commitment*

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