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زبانهای اروپایی

BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

23.10.2021

Roaming Charges: General of Deception



Powell briefing Reagan, perhaps on his plans to keep the Sandinistas from invading the US at Harlingen, Texas. Photo: White House.

Time to Pony Up!

Yes, as I hope you've noticed, we are nearing the end of the first week of our annual fundraiser. We're doing okay, thanks to opening salvos of donations from loyal CounterPunchers, but as of yet not *nearly* well enough.

CounterPunch needs your help and without it in generous measure in the next three weeks we will not survive. We make this appeal every year and please empty your mind of the sort of cynicism one develops after meeting for the fourth time in one day the same mendicant trying to raise "bus money" to get home. We are mendicants year-after-year because we have no safety net.

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Down the years we have accumulated many wonderful friends of CounterPunch, who rally each October and November. And we have also built up a formidable cadre of regular contributors whose writings you can savor week after week on our site. Here are some of their testimonials, including two of our old friends who have joined the astral counterforce, Paul Krassner and Bill Blum:

MICHAEL HUDSON: “CounterPunch is my favorite site to find the best collection of left-wing criticism of the U.S. and global economic meltdown. That’s why I write for it.”

KATHY KELLY: “CounterPunch editors and contributors won’t let us fall asleep at the wheel. Sitting up straight and paying attention never felt so good as it has since I began learning from perspectives aired on CounterPunch.”

PAUL KRASSNER: “CounterPunch lives up to its name, responding to lies with facts, to distortion with reality, and to demagoguery with insights.”

WILLIAM BLUM: “I send my monthly Anti-Empire Report directly to thousands of people on my mailing list, but each month I usually get more responses from people who see it on CounterPunch than from any other source. CounterPunch clearly has a great audience worldwide.”

There are many others. So, I leave it to you to make the right decision. Dig as deep as you can in those pockets. The cause is good and the need is great.

Please, use our secure server make [a tax-deductible donation](#) to CounterPunch today or purchase [a subscription](#) to CP+ and [a gift sub](#) for someone or one of [our delightfully subversive books](#) (or a crate of books!) as holiday presents. (We won’t call you to shake you down or sell your name to any lists.) This year, I’m reliably informed we even take [crypto, whatever the hell crypto is...](#)

To contribute by phone you can call Becky, Deva or Nichole at: 1 (707) 629-3683

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In thinking about Colin Powell on the day of his death, I kept flashing back to one of the greatest, if most opaque, novels about what we might loosely call the American project: Herman Melville’s *The Confidence Man*. The first, maybe only prerequisite, for a conman is the ability to win people’s confidence. Powell had this gift to such an elevated degree that he was able to retain public confidence even after his tricks had been exposed as lethal frauds, over and over again. It’s hard to isolate why: That he was black, that he spoke calmly, that he seemed to take responsibility, even when he actually deflected the blame onto others, who’d given him bad orders he’d been duty-bound to follow. A good conman remains elusive—hard to pin down. After lying the US into one of the most disastrous wars

in history, Powell was back eight years later as if nothing had happened playing the role of kingmaker to the accolades of the elites.

From covering up My Lai to fabricating a case for war against Iraq to defending Obama's drone strikes was there ever a more useful frontman to shield or rationalize the crimes of the modern American empire than Colin Powell? He was the Teflon General. Nothing stuck him. He continued to be courted, especially by liberals, as a voice of restraint, honesty and rationality, when he had the rare distinction of having committed war crimes in at least five different wars: Vietnam, Central America, Iraq War I, Afghanistan, Iraq War 2.

In 1963, Powell, then a captain, went to Vietnam as a "military advisor" to a South Vietnamese army unit, which torched villages up and down the A Shau Valley, war crimes which he coldly described in his memoir as a "drain-the-sea" tactic.

We tried to solve the problem by making the whole sea uninhabitable. In the hard logic of war what difference did it make if you shot your enemy or starved him to death? As for the poor Montagnards, caught in the middle, with their crops and huts ruined, they were forced to rely on the South Vietnamese for food. That explained why these nomadic people were living on the dole at base camp. The whole strategy was to win their hearts and minds by making them dependent on the government. I am sure these mountain people wished they'd never heard of the ARVN, the Viet Cong, or the Americans.

However chilling this destruction of homes and crops reads in cold print today, as a young officer, I had been conditioned to believe in the wisdom of my superiors, and to obey. I had no qualms about what we were doing. This was counterinsurgency at the cutting edge. Hack down the peasants' crop, thus denying food to the Viet Song, who were supported by the North Vietnamese, who, in turn, were backed by Moscow and Beijing, who were our mortal enemies.

Although he's known for articulating the so-called "Powell Doctrine" of using "overwhelming force," he spent most of his career supervising these kinds of "third way" operations, where US-financed and trained paramilitaries and death squads chopped and burned their way through hamlets and villages, terrorizing the local population and killing suspected dissidents and anyone who was near them.

During Powell's time in and around the Reagan White House, the CIA and its drug-running contras tried to overthrow the Sandinistas, killing more than 31,000 Nicaraguans and displacing more than 10 percent of the nation's population of 3 million people. Over roughly the same period (1981 to 1992), more than 75,000 civilians were slaughtered in El

Salvador, largely at the hands of US-financed and trained government death squads. While in Honduras, the US trained “Battalion 316” tortured and assassinated 184 of the country’s most prominent leftists, along with thousands of others. Then in Guatemala 250,000 were wiped out in what has been called a “civil war”, but was really an extermination campaign against the nation’s indigenous population. In one form or another, all of these mass killing operations came across Colin Powell’s desk. He either helped plan them, implement them, strategize them, evaluate them, rationalize them or deny them. As he lies in state, many of the murdered are still waiting to be unearthed.

Cap Weinberger was up to his neck in the criminal conspiracy known as Iran/contra. As his chief military aide, Powell knew everything that Weinberger knew and much more. In his customary role as both a strategist and clean-up man, Powell likely shielded Weinberger from the goriest of details. But he didn’t shield him well enough to keep Weinberger from being indicted by Lawrence Walsh on five felony counts of lying to Congress and obstructing its inquiry into the illegal operations. Weinberger got a last-minute pardon from Poppy Bush, while Powell escaped unscathed. DC is in perpetual need of people with Powell’s particular skill set.

One of Powell’s roles for Weinberger was to oversee the glorious invasion of Grenada in 1983, when the US killed dozens of civilians in an airstrike on a psychiatric hospital. Don’t know what kind of medal he got for that infamous expedition.

Also going under the press radar was Powell’s role as the architect of another bloody intervention designed to rid the US of one of the dictators it had installed and supported through the course of the Central American death squad wars, who had outlived his usefulness and become inconvenient to those now running the empire: the invasion of Panama and overthrow of that graduate of the School of the Americas, Manuel Noriega. Having allowed Panama to become a staging area for Reagan’s Central American operations, Noriega was well placed to know where all of the bodies, guns, drugs and drug money were buried and banked.

It’s a challenging assignment to compress Colin Powell’s villainous resumé into a single column and I had to be reminded by Andrew Cockburn of Powell’s disgusting role in misdirecting the blame for one of the most heinous war crimes of our time: the gassing of the Kurdish town of Halabja in 1988 during the waning days of the Iran/Iraq War. At the time, Powell was Reagan’s National Security Advisor and the US was covertly supporting Iraq. Almost immediately after the massacre, where 5,000 Kurds were killed and 10,000 seriously injured (nearly all of them civilians), Powell orchestrated the forces of the govt.

to finger Iran for the massacre: first the State Department, then the Defense Intelligence Agency and finally the CIA, all begin leaking specious “analyses” pointing the finger at Tehran as the culprit to the press, which duly regurgitated them, as they would similar fabrications about WMDs a little more than a decade later—this time in the service of overthrowing Saddam. All of this was done to protect the butcher of Baghdad and, more crucially, to conceal the US’s own role in abetting his atrocities.

There are two ways to look at Powell’s famous Pottery Barn Rule: “You broke it, you own it.” The first is: own it as in take responsibility for it. The second is: own it as in loot it. Since Powell broke a lot of families, communities and countries but never fixed any, it’s safe to assume he meant the latter...

One of Powell’s most obnoxious legacies is his role in launching the career of his former deputy Lawrence Wilkerson as an interpreter of US foreign policy, a man who has exploited his ubiquitous presence on cable TV over the last couple of decades to convince liberals that the ruinous wars of the post-WW 2 era were caused by problematic personalities and managerial incompetence rather than the ravenous nature of the imperial system itself and the corporate machinery that both drives and feeds off of it.

Colin Powell was wrong about almost everything, except his assurance that Obama would prove a more competent manager of US imperial interests than the unstable McCain. Powell’s crucial endorsement of Obama served as a kind imperial seal of approval, all the proof anyone should have required to realize that the Obama would prove no threat to the US war machine and the weapons makers it is designed to serve. Powell saw in Obama a system upgrade of his own persona. Obama, Powell reasoned, was the perfect politician to repair frayed international coalitions and calm domestic anxieties after 8 fraught years of Bush and Cheney, while pursuing, and in some cases, expanding the same imperial agenda. For once in his life, he was right.

+ Over the course of Colin Powell’s five decades of service to the empire, he accumulated one of the most impressive body counts (many, if not most, of them civilians) in the history of the US military:

Vietnamese deaths: >3 million

Central American deaths (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Grenada, Panama) > 500,000

Iranian and Iraqi deaths (Iran/Iraq war) > 500,000

Iraqi deaths, Gulf War (exclusive of sanctions): >200,000

Afghan deaths, Afghan War (since 9/11): > 250,000

Iraqi deaths, Iraq War: >460,000

Iraqi deaths from economic sanctions: >1.5 million

+ This sanguineous CV is sure to win Powell the highest accolades from the masters of the realm, as flags are lowered and hymns are sung in his honor.

+ Biden: “Colin embodied the highest ideals of both warrior and diplomat. He was committed to our nation’s strength and security above all. Having fought in wars, he understood better than anyone that military might alone was not enough to maintain our peace and prosperity. From his front-seat view of history, advising presidents and shaping our nation’s policies, Colin led with his personal commitment to the democratic values that make our country strong.”

+ Right on cue: “He is the first Black person, Black man to be ... chairman of the Joint Chiefs, to be national security adviser, to be secretary of state ... inspiring so many people.”

+ As Biden’s agenda disintegrates in real time, it’s clear that Kamala Harris is the most useless vice president since Dan Quayle. She doesn’t even play the role that Pence perfected of obsequious yes-woman. She’s a blank, “a nullity,” as Lincoln’s first VP, Hannibal Hamlin mordantly described the post.

+ David Swanson: “Colin Powell had vast stockpiles of integrity. I have satellite images of them, though I can’t show those to you.”

+ Joe Manchin pulled in hundreds of thousands of dollars from donors in the energy industry in the third quarter, including some from contributors who normally back Republicans, according to his latest FEC filing. Oil & Gas “donors” accounted for a quarter of his \$1.6 million haul. Manchin has now received more campaign donations from the oil, coal and gas industries than any other senator.

+ A new report from the John Muir Project and the Center for a Sustainable Economy details how provisions in Infrastructure & Reconciliation bills would increase annual CO2 emissions from logging by 48%, pushing these annual emissions well over 1 gigaton per year. So perhaps Manchin and Sinema are unwittingly doing the planet a favor by blocking this bill...

+ Doing something simple that would have almost unanimous support from fiscal conservatives and environmentalists like getting rid of the oil depletion allowance would almost certainly do more for the environment than all the “work-ready” projects stuffed into the bill.

- + David Sirota: “What stage of capitalism is it when surviving the climate crisis relies on arguing the merits of environmental policy to a coal baron who lives on a yacht?”
- + The Squid Game Stage of Capitalism?
- + The change in West Virginia’s reliance on coal-fired power in the last 10 years: 95% to 91%.
- + Once the Democrats pay for a slogan (Build Back Better), they stick to it, even if it’s not selling their product, likely because no one really knows what the product is, or if there even is a product—though most people do realize that going “back”, even it is better for someone, probably won’t be better for them.
- + The state of Louisiana alone has now wasted 224,000 doses of Covid vaccines. Meanwhile, the African countries have access to vaccines for less than 3% of the continent’s population.
- + Like the other neoliberal countries, Russia quickly developed an effective vaccine, but couldn’t find a way to widely distribute it or convince people to get the shot. Now Russia is experiencing record COVID death tolls. Perhaps Putin should have asked the Cubans for advice...
- + The WHO reported this week that more than 115,000 health care workers have died of COVID-related causes. Those deaths are not distributed equally around the globe. In most industrialized countries, more than 80% of health care workers are now fully vaccinated. But in Africa, the rate remains less than 1 in 10.
- + It’s one thing (and a very dubious thing, in my judgment) for a lawmaker to question the legitimacy of mask mandates for school kids; it’s another thing entirely for an elected official (Rep. Bob Goode of Virginia) to urge them not to wear masks given what we know about the spread of the Delta variant among young people, and it’s especially egregious is to do so while using “y’all” twice in one sentence, as in: “If I was ya’ll, I’d say none of ya’ll wear a mask. What are they gonna do? They’re still going to have school.”
- + Biden: “It’s a hard time to be a police officer in America. I just want to make sure you have the tools to be the partners and the protectors whom communities need.” Biden remains who he has always been...Frank Rizzo in shades.
- + Biden promise not to build “one more foot” of border wall; yet his Department of Homeland Security is still seizing land for the border wall easement.
- + Meanwhile, Biden’s pick to head Customs and Border Patrol, Tucson Police Chief Chris Magnus, indicated during his confirmation hearings that he supports two of Trump’s most

vile border policies: enforcement of Title 42 to deport immigrants and asylum seekers as public health risks and the completion of the border wall.

+ The wealth of America's billionaire class swelled by 70% over the pandemic. Krysten Sinema doesn't want to tax it.

+ The voting rights bill has overwhelming public support. Joe Manchin took it over, pared it down, and promised his version would pass on a bipartisan basis. He's weakened bill didn't win a single Republican vote and I don't think he really thought it would.

+ Matthew Segal (ACLU): "Not great that it takes 60 Senators to create voting rights but only 5 Justices to nullify them."

+ According to Axios, this week Manchin also told Biden that the child tax credit must be limited to one year, include a firm work requirement and family income cap around \$60,000. Manchin's demands would gut one of Biden's signature programs. Next thing you know, Manchin will be demanding urine tests for these credits, though not for the kind of drugs his daughter deals...

+ "Drinks at 6 on the yacht, Bern?"



+ A word about yachts: Speaking of yachts, the COVID pandemic has apparently launched a "yacht boom." In Los Angeles, a "yacht broker" complained to the LA Times that before COVID-19, it he usually had up to \$10 million worth of inventory on hand. Now he rarely has anything in stock.

+ I've begun to admire Manchin and Sinema, not for their odious ideologies and transparent greed, but for the tenacity of their obstructionism. This was, of course, the role Bernie promised to play, but never really has. He is now reduced to trying to engineer the passage of a bill that is shorn of nearly every provision he wanted and is a third the size of what he knows is needed. It's not that the political left is powerless. It's that it rarely, if

ever, asserts the power it has. Manchin and Sinema have no real constituents. There's no one out there saying, you're fighting for me—except, of course, those fictitious personages known as corporations and PACs. Yet, Manchin and Sinema will pay no price for their obstructionism. They won't be stripped of their committee assignments. Projects in their home states won't be defunded. The DNC won't stop raising \$\$ for them. Even if they lose their seats, they'll land a lucrative job on a corporate board or in a K Street lobby shop, working to demolish progressive legislation from the outside, like Joe Crowley. The real problem is that putative progressives who go along with these betrayals don't pay a political price either. Instead, they bemoan their own weakness, even as Sinema and Manchin have demonstrated just how thoroughly two lone wolf senators can crash the system for purely venal reasons. Imagine two progressives taking the same stand to give people health care, pull the plug on nuclear missiles or put solar panels on every rooftop in the US? People might just rally round them.

- + Instead we're treated to self-righteous blasts of political white noise from the likes of Elizabeth Warren...

- + Say this much for Biden, it sure looks like he's going to outlive his political agenda.

- + Senate defense appropriations bill is out giving the Pentagon more than \$10 billion than requested, \$725.8 billion. Neither Manchin nor Sinema are demanding any cuts...

- + Projected military spending by the US over the next decade is projected to top \$8.3 trillion, that's \$4.8 trillion more than the current reconciliation bill would cost over the same period...

- + Biden's pick as the new US ambassador to China, Nicholas Burns, declared China the "aggressor" this week. But how military bases does China have in Canada, the Aleutians, Mexico, Cuba, Greenland or Jamaica?

- + In reviewing the history of Reagan's Central American wars, where Powell played a key role, I was struck by the fact that the original Boland Amendment, outlawing the funding of military operations against Nicaragua passed the House by a vote of 411-0. The prohibition, of course, was quickly flouted by Reagan. The fact that Reagan wasn't impeached for breaching a unanimous vote of the House, proved the impotence of Congress. There would be no reclaiming the balance of power from that moment on. The theory of the unitary power of the executive was no longer a theory of government, it was a cold hard reality.

- + Speaking of Iran/contra why is Robert Gates being interviewed by anyone other than an investigator for a war crimes tribunal?

- + According to memos leaked to Isaac Scher at the Intercept, the leadership of the AFL-CIO, the largest labor organization in the country, is trying to prevent San Francisco Labor Council from even debating a resolution that endorses boycotts of Israel...
- + Reporters at the Associated Press analyzed 3,000 instances of police use of force against children under 16 over the past 11 years. Black children made up more than 50% of the juveniles who were handled forcibly, though they represent only 15% of the U.S. child population.
- + Defunding the police, city by city, county by county, state by state, one vaccine mandate at a time...
- + Harold “Hal” Uhrig, last seen representing George Zimmerman after he was charged with killing Trayvon Martin, was arrested this week, accused of pressuring a teenager who was allegedly raped when she was 9-years old to lie about the assault in court. Uhrig is defending the man accused of raping the girl.
- + Somebody rewind him!



- + The wealthiest 10% of Americans now own 89% of all U.S. stocks, a record high that spotlights the stock market’s role in increasing wealth inequality. The top 1% gained over \$6.5 trillion in corporate equities and mutual fund wealth during the pandemic, according to the latest data from the Federal Reserve.
- + God knows I’ve used the term “neoliberalism” more times than most people, but it’s such an anodyne word to describe the economic system that is eating up the planet for the benefit of a tiny fraction of the world’s population. “Market fundamentalism” isn’t much better, with its nostalgic image of shopkeepers and consumers haggling over prices. We have a word which has worked very well for 200 years. Everyone has a pretty good idea

what it means and most of us have bitter experiences of what it's like to be on its receiving end: capitalism.

+ Mark Twain at his most acrid: “The multimillionaire disciples of Jay Gould — that man who in his brief life rotted the commercial morals of this nation and left them stinking when he died — have quite completely transformed our people from a nation with pretty high and respectable ideals to just the opposite of that; that our people have no ideals now that are worthy of consideration; that our Christianity which we have always been so proud of — not to say vain of — is now nothing but a shell, a sham, a hypocrisy; that we have lost our ancient sympathy with oppressed peoples struggling for life and liberty; that when we are not coldly indifferent to such things we sneer at them, and that the sneer is about the only expression the newspapers and the nation deal in with regard to such things. Before Gould Americans loved money, but he taught them to kneel down and worship it.”
(From The Autobiography of Mark Twain.)

+ If you want to help the John Deere strikers, UAW Reform has set up a [Go FundMe page](#) to collect financial donations to help sustain the picket lines...



+ And how has John Deere responded to the strike so far? They've refused to negotiate a fair contract; announced plans to cut healthcare for 10,000 strikers and their families; withheld back wages for strikers; and went to court seeking an injunction against the workers' right to picket.

+ The number of construction cranes marring Portland's skyline has fallen more than 50 percent, which is welcome news to those of us who have been fighting the remorseless gentrification of Stumptown for the last 30 years.

+ Decatur County, Georgia finally voted to remove a "genocide cannon" from a city square where it has resided for over a century. The cannon was used in the Indian War of 1836, when more than 3,500 Natives were slaughtered, leading to the Trail of Tears death march. This is yet another monument to white supremacy erected during the height of Jim Crow by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. This particular chapter honored Agnes Lee, aka "Wiggy," fifth child of Robert E. Wiggy was born at Arlington and probably watched her father tie to a post and whip two enslaved blacks, one a young woman, who had run away from the plantation and been captured, after Lee delayed for five years in granting them the freedom they'd been promised by their former "owner," Lee's father-in-law George Custis (George and Martha Washington's grandson).



Photo: Marc Merlin, Creative Commons.

+ The usual suspects are in an uproar over the NYC council's decision to remove a statue of Thomas Jefferson from its chambers. I'm for getting rid of all idolatrous statues of politicians. They're oppressive figures of myth that memorialize the fables we tell ourselves about our country's past. There's no question Jefferson was a racist and a rapist. Problematically, he was also the most radical of the founders and wrote the language adopted in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 prohibiting slavery in the Northwest Territories...There's a pretty good discussion in Eric Foner's The Fiery Trial of

Jefferson's attitudes on slavery, relatively enlightened in theory, often utterly debased in practice. As early as 1784, he proposed that Continental Congress and the constitution ban slavery in all new territories and states, a measure which was firmly voted down. He foresaw the "fire alarm in the night" of the Missouri Compromise, that would inevitably lead to civil war. On the other hand, he could have easily freed his own slaves and didn't, even on his death—an example that was followed by many other statesmen-plantation owners in the South, with sadistic consequences, especially in Virginia, as the state's main product shifted from tobacco grown by slaves to the production and sale of human beings to the cotton plantations of the Deep South.

+ Frustrated by the slow pace of reconstruction and the violent disenfranchisement of newly emancipated blacks across the South, Grant asked the Republican-controlled Congress to expand the Supreme Court (where former slaveowners still sat in judgment), which they promptly did, without waiting to consult any commission.

+ CNN is now presenting Alberto Gonzalez as an expert on constitutional law. But they've yet ask him about the "commander in chief override" doctrine he touted in 2004. Bring back Santorum!

+ Having written a fairly scathing book about Bernie's political career and his 2016 campaign (Bernie and the Sandernistas: Field Notes From a Failed Revolution), I hardly qualify as a Sanders fan, but to say, as Greenwald does, that he was treated "like royalty" by the "non-Fox" media is not only laughable but the near opposite of what went down when Fox cynically courted Bernie and the "liberal" media vilified him, as they'd done for years, when they paid any attention to him at all.

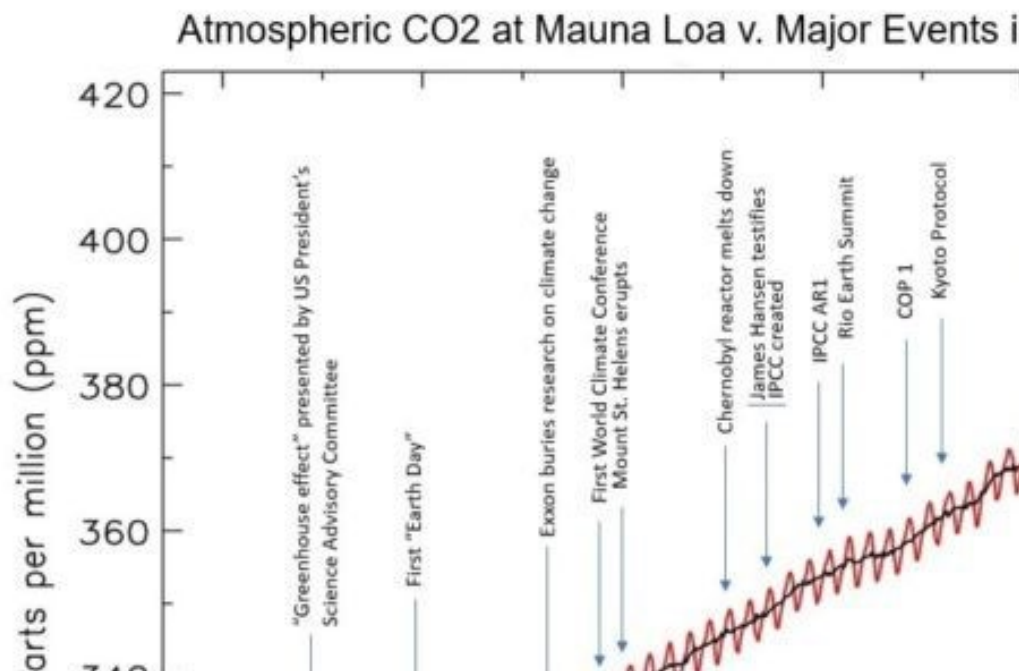


Glenn Greenwald ✓
@ggreenwald

Replying to @adamjohnsonNYC

I know it would be more fun and would institutions of power had contempt for ideology but they don't. AOC and Berr likely royalty on every non-Fox outlet. in particular dominates most key instit

- + I've never believed the Trump golden showers tale. It just doesn't fit Trump's profile. He may well have had hookers brought to his room, but he didn't pay them to piss on him. He gets off on inflicting degradation on women not being degraded by them...
- + As someone who knows him ever so slightly, "Sen. Merkley joined Paris Hilton" is not a sentence I ever expected to read...
- + A history of atmospheric CO2 since 1958 in one chart...



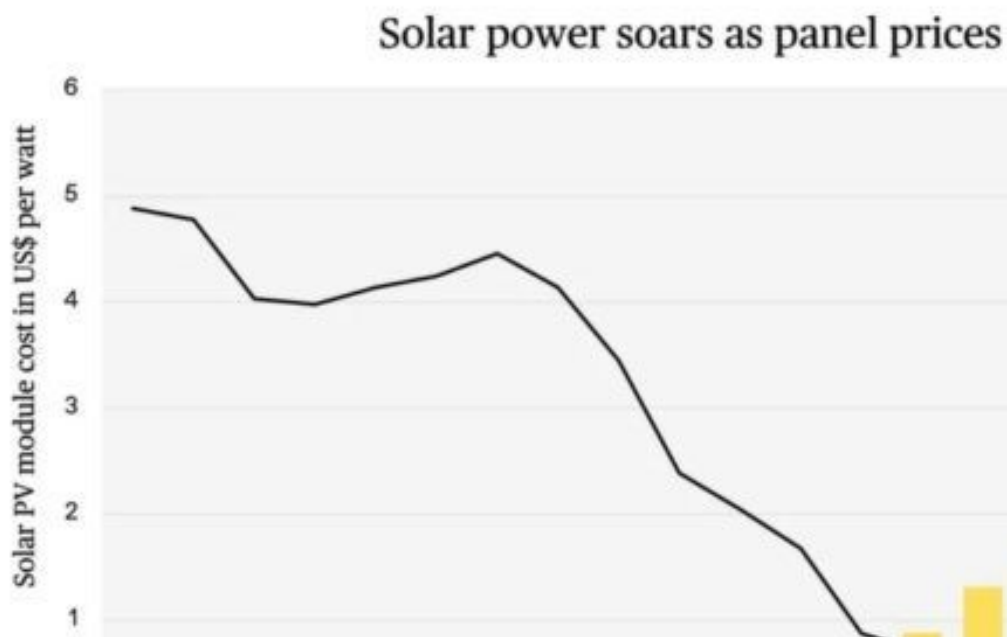
- + Gas prices in the US are the 'highest they've been in seven years,' but they are still *three times lower* than what they are in most of the EU nations. One reason the EU has much better public transportation, including high speed rail, and more fuel-efficient cars and very few monster trucks on the road.
- + In his bracing history of the US coal industry, Coal: a Memoir and a Critique, Duane Lockard reports that during the first decade of the 20th century, at least 20,673 coal miners died on the job.
- + Supermarkets and restaurants can find third-party assurances that the paper food ware they buy has no added forever chemicals, (PFAS). Yet they don't generally know what substances the paper companies are using in their place.
- + Meanwhile, the Biden EPA's "roadmap" to develop a plan to eventually, maybe, do something sometime in the future to regulate PFAS has been denounced as "too little, too late."
- + Watching the Condit Dam come down and the liberation of the White Salmon River after more than a century of imprisonment was one of the thrills of my life...

- + California Gov. Gavin Newsom is placing new restrictions on the residents (watering lawns and washing sidewalks and driveways), but is doing nothing to tighten the spigots of the state's biggest water hogs, corporate agriculture. Consider that during the worst drought in more than a century, California's almond harvest will be the second highest in the state's history. It requires 1,900 gallons of irrigation water to grow a pound of almonds.
- + The level of Lake Tahoe has dropped so low that water is no longer flowing into the Truckee River, meaning, among other things, that it will be yet another year when the already imperiled runs of Tahoe Kokanee salmon will be blocked from spawning...
- + Beta Offshore, the company that operates the ruptured San Pedro Bay Pipeline that sent 140,000 gallons spilling into the Pacific off of Huntington Beach, has pocketed \$31 million in federal relief since 2016, including a \$5.5-million Paycheck Protection Program loan in 2020 that was later forgiven. And they'll probably write off the oil spill on their corporate taxes, assuming they paid any to begin with...
- + The Huntington Beach spill was least 10 times larger than regulators predicted a worst case scenario would be from an anchor strike of the pipeline....
- + The conversion of the tropical rainforests of the Amazon (which store some 200 billion tons of carbon) to ranch lands has caused the region to now emit more carbon than it captures, accelerating climatic changes that further degrade the forests, creating a kind of death spiral in the lungs of the planet.
- + This week the state of Oregon killed three more members of the Lookout Mountain Pack, including a yearling and two pups gunned down from a helicopter. Nearly 5 percent of Oregon's wolves have been slaughtered at the request of the livestock industry this year alone. This marks the third time the state has killed members of Lookout Mountain wolf family.
- + The 9 Circuit Court will hear the lawsuit brought by Apache Stronghold against Rio Tinto's mammoth copper mine at Oak Flat on Friday morning. Here's a brand new video on what's at stake.
- + Despite three decades of political efforts and a wealth of research on the causes and catastrophic impacts of climate change, global carbon dioxide emissions have continued to rise and are 60% higher today than they were in 1990. A big new study in the Annual Review of Environment and Resources tries to pinpoint the reasons for this monumental failure:

a common thread that emerges across the reviewed literature is the central role of power, manifest in many forms, from a dogmatic political-economic hegemony and influential vested interests to narrow techno-economic mindsets and ideologies of control. Synthesizing the various impediments to mitigation reveals how delivering on the commitments enshrined in the Paris Agreement now requires an urgent and unprecedented transformation away from today's carbon- and energy-intensive development paradigm.

+ Greenland has suspended all new oil and gas exploration, with government officials saying the “price of oil extraction is too high,” citing both economic considerations and the fight against climate change. How long before there's a coup? Or another offer to buy the mini-continent?

+ Costs of solar panels over last 20 years shows that there is a cheaper, less deadly way of generating energy—as long as the panels are put on rooftops and not in sprawling industrial clumps in fields and deserts...



+ I stumbled across Chris Hayes' show on MSNBC the other night for the first time in two years, trying to find the Red Sox game. I paused because Hayes said he was about to interview an “expert” on climate change to explain the implications of Manchin's gutting of the infrastructure bill for the prospect of the US meeting its CO2 reduction targets under the Paris Accords (and, more importantly, the survival of the planet). So I waited through interminable commercials, missing an inning and a burst of HRs, to finally be confronted by the face of ...(drumroll)...John Podesta, that great man of science who couldn't figure out how to avoid falling for a phishing scam in his inbox. Podesta assured Hayes that

despite the obliteration of the Clean Energy Program enough “tax credits” remained that all will be well with the world, as long as the nation keeps congress in control of Democrats.

+ At least eight types of potentially deadly bird flu are circulating around the world. The next “big one” is coming and it will probably spillover from a chicken death camp...

+ Osip Mandelstam: “What tense would you choose to live in? I want to live in the imperative of the future passive participle – in the ‘what ought to be.” (Critical Prose and Letters)

+ It’s time to reclaim the word “scalawag” as an honorific instead of the slur it was used as during the post-Civil War period to describe native Southerners who supported emancipation, Reconstruction and black suffrage.

+ Here in Oregon, where our state tree is a clearcut Douglas-Fir, we don’t get the spectacular explosions of color you find in the northeast or Midwest, but there are brief little eruptions, between the bomb cyclones, fires and chainsaws...



Clackamas Hills in mid-October. Photo: Jeffrey St. Clair.

+ I watched the first episode of the new season of Succession last night and it felt pretty flat to me. The first season was fun, the second less so and the third seems to be variations on the same plot lines as the first two, a game of musical chairs, where each character switches places for a few episodes and every combative exchange of dialogue ends in a caustic quip, the cruder the better. It all seems strained & predictable. The concept of the odious Murdoch brood as the Lear family was inventive, if not particularly original. But

the virtue of Lear is that all comes to a savage end after three hours, whereas Succession circles around and round, hour after hour, fetishizing the decadence and opulence that it pretends to condemn.

+ “Bugs really got me, you know? And he knew at an intuitive but very deep level what I was trying to express in Rhiannon. Not many did. And, to put it bluntly, sex with Lindsay was never this good. ”

+ Billie Holiday: “You can be up to your boobies in satin, with gardenias in your hair and no sugar cane for miles, but you can still be working on a plantation”.

+ Dylan to Lennon in NYC 1964: What do you mean you’ve never smoked pot? You sing “I get high, I get high, I get high,” on I Want to Hold Your Hand, right?

Lennon: The lyric is “I can’t hide, I can’t hide, I can’t hide,” Bob.

Dylan: *Really?* Huh. Well, try some of this then...

According to McCartney, Dylan’s weed “made the ceiling move.”

I Couldn’t Find the Door, I Couldn’t Even See the Floor

Booked Up

What I’m reading this week...

A Kick in the Belly: Women, Slavery and Resistance

Stella Dadzie

(Verso)

The Path to a Livable Future: A New Politics to Fight Climate Change, Racism, and the Next Pandemic

Stan Cox

(City Lights)

Madhouse at the End of the Earth: the Belgica’s Journey into the Dark Antarctic Night

Julian Sanction

(Crown)

Sound Grammar

What I’m listening to this week...

LIVE

Chick Corea Akoustic Band

(Concord Jazz)

Georgia Blue

Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit

(Southeastern Records)

Village Mothership

Whit Dickey / William Parker / Matthew Shipp

(Tao Forms)

Where the Antidote Can be Found

“While we are looking for the antidote or the medicine to cure us, that is, the ‘new’, which can only be found by plunging deep into the Unknown, we have to go on exploring sex, books, and travel, although we know that they lead us to the abyss, which, as it happens, is the only place where the antidote can be found.” (Roberto Bolaño, The Insufferable Gaucho)

Jeffrey St. Clair is editor of CounterPunch. His most recent books are Bernie and the Sandernistas: Field Notes From a Failed Revolution and The Big Heat: Earth on the Brink (with Joshua Frank) He can be reached at: sitka@comcast.net or on

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