

It's Time to Find Our Common Ground and Fight the Real Deep State

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Big Oil, King Coal, Big Chemical, Big Tech and Big Pharma are titans of a Deep State cartel that is driving our country down the road to plutocracy and environmental apocalypse. We must unite to fight them — and not each other.



Editor's note: This is the introduction to ["Climate in Crisis: Who's Causing It, Who's Fighting It and How We Can Reverse It Before It's Too Late,"](#) by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Dick Russell.

"To greed, all nature is insufficient." — Seneca

Long before it turned its attention to systematically destroying the planet, the carbon industry set its sights on destroying American democracy and on bulldozing our values.

The term "Deep State" is one of those toxic phrases that highlights and exacerbates the widening chasm between Democrats and Republicans. Ironically, polarization is a key strategic objective for the sinister cabal that the phrase describes.

Right-wing populists use the term Deep State to characterize the supposed authors of the cavalcade of social and economic demotions that have fatally wounded America's dwindling middle class. The obliteration has been so systematic and complete that it seems obvious to them that it is planned.

In their view, a group of secretive aristocrats, led by George Soros and the late David Rockefeller, manipulate shadowy institutions like the Federal Reserve and the Council on Foreign Relations in order to shift wealth and power to billionaire elites, with the ultimate aim of achieving “World Government.”

To weaken the American character, these secretive aristocrats’ allies among the “Hollywood Elites” have deliberately cheapened our culture by infiltrating TV and film with sex and violence. These elites are purposefully undermining American democracy, subverting constitutional rights and waging economic and cultural war on Main Street America, our democracy and national sovereignty.

Since all those cohorts have devoted energies to averting climate change, the global warming debate has become a prominent feature of these cosmologies. Decarbonization is seen as yet another attack on the U.S. economy, and a ploy for One-World Government.

Like every conspiracy theory, this one has nuggets of truth.

Democrats, meanwhile, dismiss talk of a Deep State as the ravings of deluded right-wing conspiracy theorists. They point out that Hollywood czars like Tom Hanks and Barbra Streisand are a great distance from real power, while arguing that Wall Street itself pushed sex and violence onto our TV screens. Pornography, after all, sells sex.

David Rockefeller died in 2017, and the remaining Rockefeller family members have greatly diversified interests and little demonstrated appetite for One-World Government. Democrats point out that George Soros is 90 years old, and manages vast investments in oil and gas with annual profits that dwarf his relatively tiny contributions to climate change activism. His Council on Foreign Relations is an anemic think tank, its members mainly jockeying to burnish resumés and rub shoulders with a doddering Henry Kissinger. The council takes no position on foreign policy issues and mostly publishes informational white papers that gather dust.

But the Deep State does exist. It has already obliterated the middle class and has democracy on the ropes. The real power behind the curtain is a conglomeration of corporations — coal, oil, chemical, steel and pharmaceutical, recently joined by telecom, Big Tech/Big Data — all bound, in a web of corruption, to our global military-intelligence apparatus.

It is this collaboration of modern Robber Barons that is making war on democracy, civil rights and the lower classes, while driving our country down the road to plutocracy and environmental apocalypse.

This conglomeration has declared war on America's democracy and freedoms. Anyone who doubts that the Deep State exists should read the myriad histories of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), including Tim Weiner's "[Legacy of Ashes](#)," David Talbot's "[The Devil's Chessboard](#)" and James Douglass's "[JFK and the Unspeakable](#)."

John D. Rockefeller laid the groundwork for the conglomeration with his ruthless drive for monopoly control of the world oil supply. (His company, Standard Oil — now ExxonMobil — controlled 90% of the U.S. oil supply). The pharmaceutical cartel is the offspring of Rockefeller's U.S. petroleum and coal tar industries and Third Reich chemists, who were deeply incriminated in the Holocaust and the Nazi war effort.

Rockefeller gained controlling shares in IG Farben (now Bayer, the German chemical and pharmaceutical conglomerate). His philanthropy focused on his philosophy of promoting petroleum-based pharmaceuticals and marginalizing the previously popular alternative medicines: osteopathy, homeopathy, natural remedies and plant medicines.

For decades, the Rockefeller family owned some 80% of the U.S. pharmaceutical industry. Today, the Rockefeller Empire — in tandem with JP Morgan Chase — continues to own half the pharmaceutical industry in the U.S.

John D. Rockefeller's grandson, David, with his ties to the oil and pharmaceutical industries and international banking and his friendship with Allen Dulles, was certainly among the Deep State's Grand Panjandrums.

David Rockefeller used his close relationship with the CIA, initially through Dulles, and his position as a director and then chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, to wage war on nationalist movements and representative democracies around the globe whenever they threatened the profits of his oil, mineral, chemical, pharmaceutical or banking interests.

All of these histories reveal Big Carbon as the conspiracy's center of gravity.

The CIA and the military nurtured a long cozy relationship with King Coal and Big Oil. Since the abolition of slavery, the Navy's replacement of sailboat fleets with fossil fuel-driven transportation and the introduction of petroleum-based pharmaceuticals, American wars have

been, to a greater or lesser extent, strategic struggles over control of coal ports, shipping routes and oil fields.

America's first great foreign excursion was Cuba's War of Liberation. In 1898, America's Yellow Press appealed to the nation's idealism to drum up popular support for U.S. intervention, purportedly to support Cuban revolutionaries in their struggle for independence from Spain. To create a pretext for intervention, Deep State militarists staged the "false flag" scuttling of the battleship, the USS Maine in Havana Harbor, and blamed the sinking on Spain.

Their true objective became clear soon after Cuba's independence fighters achieved victory over Spain.

Deep State militarists robbed the new nation of its most important port, expropriating Guantanamo Bay as a Naval coal terminal. A century later, Guantanamo, the symbol of America's abandonment of its revulsion for imperialism, became the situs for where America rebuffed its seminal revulsion against torture.

Today, Guantanamo Bay stands as a kind of "anti-Statue of Liberty" — a hemispheric symbol of the surrender of fundamental American values to the Deep State military-industrial complex, with its devouring hunger for carbon and its ambition for authoritarian control.

After Cuba, protecting American oil and coal resources and ports became a *raison d'être* for an endless parade of new American wars and interventions.

A nation's political structure tends to reflect its economic organization. When major industries are owned and controlled by a small group of wealthy individuals, the nation itself becomes economically stratified and tyrannical.

Coal and oil are authoritarian industries. They are highly capitalized and rely on ruthless control of real estate and resources. While most nations declare that their oil resources are publicly owned, in practice, poorer citizens rarely share in petroleum profits. Large multinationals, frequently allied with local oligarchs, invariably and systematically find ways to steal and monopolize these resources.

The term "oil curse" describes the nearly universal dynamic by which the governments of nations or states with rich oil reserves invariably devolve into highly militarized and despotic organs that are brutal and dictatorial.

Oil-dependent economies generally foster giant wealth gaps between rich and poor and violent totalitarian governance. The strategic relevance of oil and steel make these industries natural allies of the military and intelligence apparatus.

In 1954, the CIA's director, Allen Dulles, overthrew the democratically elected government of Iran, after the country's beloved Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh — the first democratically elected head of state in Persia's 4,000-year history — committed the "crime" of threatening to nationalize oil fields controlled by BP and Texaco. (Texaco had formerly been Dulles's client at the white-shoe law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell.)

Dulles installed the Shah to rule Iran and to protect the financial interests of his petroleum company client. Seventy years later, the entire world is still suffering from the blowback of that coup. The Iran Hostage Crisis of 1979 (precipitated when David Rockefeller and his crony, Henry Kissinger, pressured President Jimmy Carter to host the deposed Shah of Iran in the U.S. in order to protect Chase Manhattan's assets); the rise of militant Islam; the Afghanistan, Iraq and Syrian wars (which flooded Europe with displaced refugees, undermining Europe's unity and democracies); and our continued enmity with Iran, a nation that, in every other respect, should be our closest Middle East ally — are all blowback from that anti-democratic coup.

The founders recognized that America could not be both an imperial power abroad and a constitutional democracy at home. It is a seminal axiom of American foreign policy that our democratic government should not embroil America in foreign wars. President John Quincy Adams summarized the consensus of the founders, when he declared:

"[America] goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will commend the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and the benign sympathy of her example."

But the American carbon titans successfully overwhelmed these qualms and deployed the U.S. military as their private army, expanding its reach to protect Big Carbon's global interests.

Allen Dulles helped his oil-fueled Deep State cabal to engineer America's departure from its traditional principle of non-intervention. My grandfather picked our family's 60-plus-year fistfight with the CIA in 1954, when President Eisenhower appointed him to a commission, chaired by former President Herbert Hoover, to investigate the CIA.

The official tenet of American foreign policy was supporting the spread of democracy. Yet the Hoover Commission found that the CIA was working, in league with petroleum companies, in direct opposition to official U.S. State Department policy, and regularly engaged in conduct antithetical to U.S. values.

Following the thinking of President Adams, my grandfather believed that America could not be at once an imperial power and a constitutional democracy. He was angry and disgusted to learn that Dulles and his agency were overthrowing governments, disrupting elections, bribing politicians and undermining democracy around the globe in service to Big Oil and mining companies, as well as industrial/chemical agriculture.

The CIA orchestrated changing other countries' governments 72 times during the Cold War, affecting nearly one-third of the nations on Earth.

I was in Chile in 1973, during the coup d'état orchestrated by the CIA and David Rockefeller for the sole purpose of protecting U.S. telecom (ITT), banking (Chase), oil (Texaco), chemical (DuPont and Dow), food (PepsiCo Inc) and mining interests (Anaconda) — all threatened with nationalization by President Salvador Allende. I was fired upon — and nearly killed — by an army patrol as I struggled on foot across the Andes to Argentina. I was very conscious of the key role played by David Rockefeller and the U.S. Telecom behemoth ITT Corporation (International Telephone and Telegraph).

Strategic lust for oil and the need to protect oil infrastructure motivated most of the CIA's interventions. CIA spooks and paramilitary units often worked hand-in-hand with mercenaries and private armies, which American oil companies paid, armed and trained.

Foreign warlords and politicians, fattening on oil company payrolls, routinely sold out the interests of their own nations (and murdered their own citizens) in furtherance of petroleum company ambitions. They financed and trained tens of thousands of oil industry personnel throughout the Middle East as paramilitaries, to fight off the Soviets and destroy oil infrastructure to prevent its capture in the event of Soviet invasion.

According to biographer David Talbot, Dulles was incapable of distinguishing the U.S. national interests from the interests of his former oil industry clients. In fact, U.S. national interests took a distant back seat to shareholder profits.

My grandfather recommended the disbandment of the CIA's "Plans" division. He feared that the dangerous alliance of military and intelligence apparatus with oil industry fat cats would have disastrous consequences for America's democracy and our global reputation, potentially turning America into a National Security State. He recognized that the large oil corporations have no loyalty to America, much less to our core values.

A [statement](#) by Exxon CEO Lee Raymond, during a 1998 ExxonMobil meeting, confirmed my grandfather's suspicions about the essential lack of patriotism among oil men: "I'm not a U.S. company," stated Raymond, "and I don't make decisions based on what is good for the U.S." It is no accident that the Deep State kingpin, Charles Koch (founder of Koch Industries, the largest privately owned oil company in the world), made his fortune by building refineries for the homicidal communist dictator Joseph Stalin. Koch and his sons deployed billions of ill-gotten dollars to create an infrastructure of Deep State think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute and the Competitive Enterprise Institute, tasking them with the job of creating the philosophical underpinnings for the domination of America's democracy by corporations and militarists.

On my seventh birthday, January 17, 1961, three days before my uncle John F. Kennedy's (JFK) inauguration as America's 35th president, outgoing president Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered the greatest speech of his career, warning Americans against the Deep State, which he called the "military-industrial complex."

Eisenhower cautioned that the cartel could destroy our democracy:

"This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence — economic, political, even spiritual — is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the federal government... [W]e must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society."

Eisenhower went on:

"In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

Eisenhower cautioned that Americans must learn to recognize, and guard against, all the milestones of tyranny:

“We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of a huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.”

On the same day as Eisenhower’s speech, just days before my uncle took the oath of office, Belgian intelligence spies — with the support of Allen Dulles’s CIA — murdered the Congo’s charismatic leader, Patrice Lumumba.

As a U.S. senator, JFK had used his position as chair of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on African Affairs to support Lumumba and other anti-colonial leaders. Dulles was disdainful of my uncle’s sympathies for African liberation movements and, in particular, his admiration for Lumumba.

Dulles wanted to commit this murder before JFK took office. The Congo ranked among the world’s richest nations measured by its mineral wealth and natural resources, including its abundant oil fields. U.S. and European mineral, and petroleum companies were salivating at the prospect of exploiting tribal tensions to cut the newly liberated nation into bite-sized parcels that they could easily devour and rule.

They knew Lumumba was the only Congolese leader with the charisma and popularity to unite all of Congo’s rival warring tribes.

Lumumba’s murder shocked and saddened my uncle. He would not live to learn of the CIA’s role in orchestrating that hit for Big Oil and the Deep State.

Beginning in 1958, Dulles had worked with Eisenhower’s bellicose vice president, Richard Nixon, plotting to oust Cuba’s newly ascended revolutionary leader, Fidel Castro, who earlier that year had deposed brutal dictator Fulgencio Batista and his mafia cronies.

Nixon and Dulles persuaded Texaco to shut down its critical Cuban refinery and United Fruit Company — another of Allen Dulles’s former clients — to cease exports of Cuban sugar, so as to crush their economy and destroy Castro’s revolutionary regime.

Castro and his lieutenant, Che Guevara, were avowed Marxists, but their revolutionary colleagues embraced a wide range of competing ideologies that were mainly democratic and anti-Batista.

The CIA's preemptive strikes, bent on starving the tiny nation, forced Cuba to turn to Russia for financial help. The Soviets agreed to rescue the besieged Cubans by trading Russian oil for Cuban sugar.

The CIA retaliated with the aerial bombing of a Havana shopping center. That illegal CIA act of terror gave Castro the political strength to declare his new regime communist for the first time. He made the announcement at the funeral of the CIA's victims.

In 1989, Castro told me, "The United States facilitated Cuba into embracing Marxism."

When JFK denied the CIA's request to transport the "Bay of Pigs" brigade in naval vessels, Dulles's former client, United Fruit Company, provided the CIA with a fleet of ships to support the invasion. When Castro's overwhelming forces predictably trapped the brigade on the beach at Playa Girón, JFK refused the CIA's request for air support by U.S. forces.

Dulles had assured JFK that U.S. military intervention would, under no conditions, be necessary. JFK realized that Dulles and other CIA officials and military brass had lied to him. He told his closest advisors, "I want to splinter the CIA into a thousand pieces and scatter it to the winds."

JFK fired Allen Dulles after the Bay of Pigs, but Dulles continued to steer the CIA remotely and would return to government in 1963 to lead the Warren Commission investigation of JFK's death. He used that post to conceal the CIA's deep involvement in JFK's assassination.

My uncle and father spent their careers — and gave their lives — to the task of saving democracy from the Deep State cartel. They enraged Dallas oilmen by their efforts to revoke the Oil Depletion Allowance and other tax subsidies, which then provided corporate welfare worth \$185 million, annually, in handouts to America's petroleum corporations.

Texas oil producers paid zero income tax on 27.5% of their taxable income. A handful of powerful Dallas oilmen, most notably Clint Murchison, H. L. Hunt, Sid Richardson and D. H. Byrd, were making millions from the allowance. Byrd alone had a \$30 million annual income (in

the 1960s) and paid no federal taxes. These Welfare Cowboys all had close connections with the CIA.

Big Steel also had a natural alliance with the Pentagon. In 1962, JFK mediated a fierce wage dispute between the United Steelworkers Union and the 12 largest steel companies. The president intended to hold inflation in check by fighting the wage/price spiral. His delicate negotiations led to an extraordinary agreement: workers acquiesced to a wage freeze and the steel companies agreed to freeze steel prices.

Shortly after signing the agreement, U.S. Steel CEO, Roger Blough, came to the Oval Office to announce that Big Steel was committing a double-cross. The top six steel companies were violating the agreement and unilaterally raising prices by \$6/ton (3.5 percent). Jack told Blough, "You are making a big mistake." He then ordered the Pentagon to move shipbuilding contracts from the noncompliant companies to smaller companies that had not raised prices.

My father, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), sent FBI agents to raid the big six steel company offices and to cart out their filing cabinets on dollies. His deputies told the steel executives to expect prosecutions on tax evasion and antitrust activities. It was the strongest pushback by a U.S. president against corporate power since Andrew Jackson fought the banks.

The Wall Street Journal denounced JFK for his naked power play against Big Business. Wall Street and the Deep State never forgave him. But that was only the beginning of Camelot's war on the Deep State.

JFK defended Rachel Carson, whose book, "[Silent Spring](#)," resulted in the banning of DDT, against Monsanto and the chemical conglomerates.

He sent Pentagon and CIA spooks into apoplexy when he refused to dispatch combat troops to Laos, Vietnam or Cuba.

When he proposed détente with Khrushchev and Castro, Nelson Rockefeller accused JFK of treason. Jack signed the nuclear test ban treaty that the oil industry violently opposed — petroleum companies were America's largest producers of uranium, and they feared that peace would undermine their business model.

My Uncle Jack died two months after signing the Atmospheric Test Ban treaty, and 14 weeks after signing National Security Order 267, which ordered all U.S. advisors out of Vietnam by December 1965.

JFK's death saved hundreds of millions of dollars for Texas oilmen by permanently deferring his plan to repeal the Oil Depletion Allowance.

My father's first instinct was that the CIA had murdered his brother. Less than two years later, Lyndon Baines Johnson ordered close to 250,000 U.S. combat troops into Vietnam, converting that country's civil conflict into an American War, in which more than 58,000 Americans and millions of Vietnamese would die.

In 1968, my father died during a presidential campaign waged against the war machine. He promised he would end the Vietnam War on the day he took his oath of office. He told his writer friend, Pete Hamill, that he meant to break up the CIA. Three weeks before his murder, he publicly acknowledged that he intended to reopen the investigation of his brother's assassination.

My father's death was one of five great national tragedies — the assassinations of JFK and Martin Luther King Jr.; the Vietnam War; 9/11; and COVID-19 — that allowed the men who want permanent war to transform America, which was once the world's exceptional democracy, into a National Security State.

JFK and RFK dedicated their careers to preserving American democracy and idealism. One of their defining struggles was against the Deep State, and in particular the clawing power of Big Carbon. My own career has continued this tradition.

In the 1970s, Exxon, formerly Standard Oil, employed the world's most brilliant carbon scientists to understand every stage of oil production. The company prided itself on knowing more about the fate of the carbon molecule than any individual, corporation or government on Earth. Internal documents, created in the years following my father's death and recently made public, show that those scientists warned Exxon that business as usual would melt the polar ice caps, cause sea levels to rise and trigger cataclysmic climate change.

Exxon CEO Raymond described "so-called global climate change" as "the issue that perhaps poses the greatest long-term threat to our industry."

Rather than change its business model to save humanity, Exxon and its carbon cronies invested half a billion dollars in a four-decade campaign of lies and deception to gull the public into believing the absurd: that climate change is a hoax.

A century earlier, one of my father's favorite poets, Rudyard Kipling, described such deception as truth being "twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools."

Big Oil's Deep State cronies — the intelligence apparatus, the military-industrial complex and some mainstream media who take cues from oil and automobile advertisers — abetted this venal campaign.

Two forces drive democracy: money and political intensity. The Deep State has money, but its mission — to further enrich and empower the wealthiest 0.001 percent — is not a potent vessel for populism. Instead, it relies on so-called "wedge" or "culture war" issues to recruit foot soldiers. Steel, Oil and Pharma deploy front groups and PR flaks, using all the alchemies of demagoguery: dog-whistle racism, bigotry against immigrants and people of color, and invocations to patriotism and Christianity, in order to engage those whites who still feel alienated by the Civil Rights laws of the 1960s.

The Wall Street fat cats, the power brokers and PR flaks talk openly about "gulling the rubes" in their rural redoubts, winning their loyalties with palaver of abortion and the Three Gs: God, guns and gays. In the words of Christian Coalition President Ralph Reed, "They write the checks, and they get the joke."

These cohorts have used their money and political power to engineer for themselves obscene subsidies and tax breaks. (Exxon, the wealthiest company on Earth during the 1990s, paid virtually no federal taxes.) According to the World Bank, Big Carbon receives annual subsidies of \$5.4 trillion globally and \$655 billion in the U.S — more than we spend on our military and 10 times our education budget.

Using political clout, the carbon incumbents have written the laws that regulate energy in America to reward the dirtiest, filthiest, most tyrannical and warmongering fuels from Hell, rather than the cheap, clean, green, democratic and patriotic fuels from Heaven.

The carbon cronies have made climate change a defining feature of that conversation. Flipping the narrative, they portray climate change advocacy as a sinister effort to establish world government and rob America of its economic independence and sovereignty.

Big Carbon's big lie is that any change in the status quo would raise gas prices and deplete middle-class jobs.

I've spent 40 years fighting to stop the oil and coal titans from contaminating our water, our air and our children with toxics, arsenic, benzene, PAHs, the mercury that has poisoned every freshwater fish in America, and the carbon that now poses an existential threat to our planet. I have litigated these issues across the Americas.

As a partner of the clean tech investment firm, Vantage Point Venture Partners, and advisor to Stanwool Energy, I was involved in building transmission lines and generation infrastructure for clean, democratic energy from wind and solar, including the two largest solar plants in North America.

I've been deeply involved in building and deploying renewable energy infrastructure that competes with oil and coal. Vantage Point was the earliest investor in Tesla and the force behind Ivanpah, the world's largest solar thermal plant. I know the science and the economics of carbon energy backwards and forwards.

Predatory industries always employ the same playbook. Big Tobacco swore smoking didn't cause cancer. Monsanto convinced us that DDT and glyphosate were harmless. Pharma lied to persuade doctors and the public that opioids were not addictive, that Vioxx did not cause heart attacks, that vaccines are undeniably safety tested and that the autism epidemic is an illusion. They use the same phony (tobacco) scientists and mercenary biostitutes to gin up fraudulent studies that sow doubt, paralyze policy reform and give political cover to their tame politicians.

They all work together in lockstep, coordinated by their Capitol Hill trade associations, lobbying firms, captive agencies and paid-off politicians to increase authoritarian control, to transform all of us into mindless consumers, to shift middle-class wealth to billionaire plutocrats and to liquidate our "purple mountain majesties" and our entire planet.

They enrich themselves by impoverishing the rest of us. They capture regulators, seduce reporters, corrupt science and pay off lawmakers to subvert democracy. They employ state-of-the-art propaganda, psychological warfare and all the formulaic alchemies of demagoguery to divide us.

For 40 years, I've worked with the Left on conservation, climate, energy and the environment. In recent years, in my battles against Pharma, I have also worked with many right-wing allies, including Trump supporters.

Big Oil, King Coal and Big Pharma are all titans of the Deep State cartel of deception and authoritarian control. In its most audaciously ruthless betrayal, this cartel has engineered a suicide pact for humanity and our planet. They have brought us to the eve of Armageddon. Their business plan poses an existential threat to humanity.

They have declared war on democracy and personal freedom. They are the Four Horsemen — the apocalyptic forces of ignorance and greed, pestilence and fear.

Today we are living in the beleaguered world that the Deep State's greed and negligence has created — the science-fiction nightmare that these criminals devised. The glaciers are melting on every continent, threatening the food and water supplies for billions of people. The ice caps are shrinking, their melt water swelling the oceans and flooding coastal cities. Fisheries are collapsing globally.

Disease, drought, fire, famine and flood are transforming the planet into scenes reminiscent of Biblical accounts of the Apocalypse.

This is not a hoax. You don't need a science degree to know the planet is warming any more than you need a degree to know that the nation's autism epidemic is real. In both cases, you need to be deliberately blind to ignore the evidence.

Within the short time span since the first edition of this book (then titled "Horsemen of the Apocalypse") appeared in 2017, the pace of climate change has accelerated beyond what anyone had then foreseen. July 2019 became Earth's hottest month since record-keeping began in 1880.

I live on the West Coast now, where the fire seasons in California are two months longer than they historically have been. Twice in the past two years, my family has had to evacuate our home, in an area that was never part of the traditional fire zone.

My family has a summer home on Cape Cod. Two 100-year storms struck our town over the past two years, destroying a pier that had withstood every storm for a century.

These are my personal harbingers of the predictable fallout of climate change: storms on steroids, droughts, famine, disappearance of the ice caps and the glaciers on every continent, spread of insect-borne tropical diseases, threatening civilization and humanity.

Wildfires raged across Alaska, the Arctic, Greenland and Siberia; Australian wildfires devastated that continent; California wildfires are 500% larger than they were in the 1970s; the burning of the Amazon is leading to a cascading collapse of natural systems across the planet. In the world's second-largest rainforest, the Congo, 50% more fires burned than in the Amazon.

The Canadian Arctic permafrost is thawing 70 years sooner than had been predicted, and a United Nations report warns that at least 30% of the Northern Hemisphere's permafrost will melt during our children's lifetime, creating feedback loops that will release billions of tons of methane, the worst of the greenhouse gases.

During 2019, sea ice within 150 miles of Alaska's shoreline completely melted away for the first time in recorded history. The state's largest city, Anchorage, baked in temperatures of 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Salmon died of heat stress, and levels of shellfish poisoning soared. Then, the Greenland ice sheet lost a mind-bending 12.5 billion tons of water in a single day. That ice sheet contained enough frozen water to raise sea levels around the world by 20 feet.

Hundred-year flooding events are now a regular occurrence in the U.S., especially in the Northeast and Southeast. Superstorms and rising sea levels will displace as many as 280 million people around the world. A U.S. report warns that 21 beach towns — including Miami Beach, Galveston, Atlantic City and Key West — will soon be underwater.

Indonesia is already relocating the millions who live in its capital city of Jakarta. When I visit our Great Lakes Waterkeepers, I see steadily rising water levels that have put the Great Lakes communities in crisis. Both Detroit and Miami mayors have declared states of emergency as rising waters threaten their cities.

Even as floods are drowning our great municipalities, meteorologists are predicting megadroughts on a scale last witnessed in medieval times. During a 2019 heat wave that swept across Europe, 1,500 people died from heat stroke in France alone. Desert heat will parch the U.S. Southwest within decades.

The United Nations estimates that two billion people are already facing moderate to severe food insecurity, primarily due to the warming planet. Warmer oceans and a hotter, wetter

atmosphere provide steroids to storms. I visited with Bahamas Waterkeepers before and after Hurricane Dorian, which, in 2019, wiped out thousands of housing compounds and businesses on Grand Bahamas. Many of these had taken Bahamian families three generations or more to create.

In August 2019, with global atmospheric CO2 levels already at 415 parts-per-million (ppm), Iceland citizens held a funeral for the once massive Okjokull glacier, and erected a plaque which reads:

“A letter to the future. Ok[jokull] is the first Icelandic glacier to lose its status as a glacier. In the next 200 years all our glaciers are expected to follow the same path. This monument is to acknowledge that we know what is happening and what needs to be done. Only you know if we did it.”

Nowadays, every week seems like a new chapter from the Doomsday Book of Revelation, but I will close with a warning penned by a desert prophet a thousand years earlier:

*The earth lies defiled
under its inhabitants;
for they have polluted the land, transgressed the laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt;
therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched,
and few men are left ...*

— *Isaiah 24:5-6*

If we are to avoid the curse, we need to call out the authors of the sinful pollution. As the late activist musician Utah Phillips observed more than a decade ago:

“The earth is not dying, it is being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses.”

The Deep State profits from our division and employs so-called “bourbon strategy” techniques to keep Americans in internecine struggles — black against white, urban vs. rural, Christian against Muslim, right against left, blue collar vs. white collar, Republican against Democrat — to distract us all from waging class war against the Deep State Elites.

The term should, instead, unite us.

It's time to find our common ground and fight the real Deep State, and not each other. We need to work together to escape the seduction of their lies and propaganda so we can unite against the real villains!