



News of how working people are fighting for a planet that is sustainable -- environmentally, economically, and socially. If you like what we are doing and want to connect, please sign up for our newsletter and other information on the Labor Network for Sustainability website ([Sign up here!](#)). You are welcome to repost anything in this newsletter - help us spread the word!



We need your support to accomplish the work ahead. Your individual contributions will provide LNS with the resources we need for bold, independent action that will be necessary to accomplish our goals.

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Social Self-Defense

From the day Donald Trump was elected President of the United States, thousands of people began to resist his agenda. Demonstrations against Trump broke out in American cities; police chiefs, mayors, and governors declared they would not implement his attack on immigrants; thousands of people signed up to accompany threatened immigrants, religious minorities, and women; technical workers pledged they would not build data bases to facilitate discrimination and deportation.



As a contribution to the emerging resistance to the Trump agenda, the Labor Network for Sustainability has just published ["Social Self-Defense: Protecting People and Planet against Trump and Trumpism."](#) It recounts the resistance so

far and proposes Social Self-Defense as a shared frame for the many constituencies under attack. Social Self-Defense is the protection of that which makes our life together on earth possible. It includes the protection of the human rights of all people; protection of the conditions of our earth and its climate that make our life possible; the constitutional principle that government must be accountable to law; and global cooperation to provide a secure future for people and planet.

What can labor's role be in Social Self-Defense? For an inspiring example, see "[Vermont Labor Council Initiates Social Self-Defense](#)" by Traven Leyshon, president of the Green Mountain Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

LNS is part of a new [United Resistance Campaign](#) launched by Greenpeace and many allies.

LNS released this statement in support of the campaign:

Trump's presidency threatens immigrants, African Americans, Muslims, workers, women, children, the elderly, the disabled, LGBTQ people, and many others. Indeed, it threatens all that holds us together as a society. We the people - society -- need to defend ourselves against this threat and bring it to an end. Resisters to repressive regimes elsewhere have called such resistance to tyranny "Social Self-Defense." The struggle to protect our people and planet against the Trump agenda requires such a strategy. Therefore we are proud to join the United Resistance Campaign as a form of Social Self Defense.

The People's Climate Movement has put out [this call](#):

"On Saturday, January 21st through Tuesday, January 24th, for the first 100 hours of the Trump administration, join the People's Climate Movement to oppose the Trump Administration's aggressive attacks on our air and water, our economy, our health, our families and our future. We are ready to fight back and demand an end to the attacks on working people and labor unions, people of color, immigrants, women, Muslims, and LGBTQ people."

Labor Convergence on Climate

In January 2016 LNS brought together 75 labor movement leaders and activists for the first Labor Convergence on Climate. Planning is under way for the second Convergence, targeted for



early summer 2016. ([Click here](#)) for more on the Convergence. Meanwhile, the Convergence is calling on labor climate activists to form Labor Climate Action Committees and Study Groups within and across their unions.

Amalgamated Transit Union - Acting on Climate

The Amalgamated Transit Union convention passed a new resolution on climate and established a climate committee.

The full resolution can be [found here](#).

Meanwhile, the ATU is organizing coalitions around the country to fight for public transit and protection for bus drivers. Read how 50 labor leaders, organizers, union members, and transit riders and representatives from the Labor Network for Sustainability set four basic goals for a campaign around the transit system in Buffalo, NY:

- Sustainable transit for all
- A contract for ATU members
- Local voices in decision making
- Increased ridership and decreased environmental impact

The report can be [found here](#).

Divest/Invest

The Labor Convergence on Climate is gearing up to encourage unions to divest from fossil fuels and instead make investments that promote a worker- and climate-friendly just transition. The annual Arabella Report on ["The Global Fossil Fuel Divestment and Clean Energy Investment Movement"](#) was just released. It shows that 688 institutions in 76 countries representing \$5 trillion in assets are planning to divest from fossil fuels. They are doing so both to protect the climate and to protect themselves against "stranded assets." It is time for unions and workers' pension funds to develop a divest-invest strategy that addresses the needs of workers as well as the climate.

Bob Muehlenkamp, Member of the Convergence Steering Committee, focused on Divesting fossil fuel stocks from union pension funds, says:

"The world is rapidly changing to renewable energy. Fossil fuel company stocks will decline in value as these companies have to abandon their assets in the ground. Union leaders and pension trustees are acting against the fiduciary interests of their members unless they move now to divest their pension funds from these stocks."

Standing Rock

Having halted the Dakota Access pipeline at least for the time being, Native Americans at Standing Rock are now constructing the Mni Wiconi Sustained

Community. Dallas Goldtooth of the Indigenous Environmental Network sent LNS this report on it:

The Mni Wiconi Sustained Community has been designed with Traditional architecture and modern low-impact renewable energy + water/waste systems, blending local Indigenous construction techniques with the latest in technologies and expertise. The site is a climate adaptive model community, a sacred gathering place for generations to come and a place to remember and honor the history being made at Standing Rock while celebrating an economy and way of living dramatically less dependent on fossil fuels.

Living per the Earth's cycles, we are taking this time to build strong partnerships, resources and financial support to allow us to rebirth the active construction phase in the Spring of 2017. At that time, we intend to start construction of at least 7 Earth Lodges, 6 Straw Bale Buildings, 28 Tiny Homes, and 20 Yurts. Learn more by watching [this video](#).

Please consider supporting this profoundly impactful project by contributing at www.buildwithstandingrock.today, or contact our campaign manager at pennelys@sustainableations.org for information on organizing a fundraising circle in your local community, or to offer other support! Thank you SO much for standing by our side as we #BuildWithStandingRock TOGETHER and breathe life into this beautiful demonstration of sustainable Indigenous design and construction that will serve as a long-term Heritage Site to show the world the power of Native American prayer and ingenuity.

JUST TRANSITION

Railroad Workers Cut Greenhouse Gas Emission and Improve Their Own Jobs

Can workers take the lead in fighting for climate protection right in their own workplaces?

Read the inspiring story of how railroad workers in Washington, DC used their union to improve their own conditions - and fight climate change - by proposing and winning their own plan for investment in improved technology. It provides an inspiring example of how workers and their unions can take their own action to reduce their employer's greenhouse gas emissions while improving their own jobs.

[Read the full story](#)



Lessons on Transition in German Coal Country

Richard Lipitz, President of the Western New York Area Labor Federation,

recently toured the coal mining region of Germany to study how its transition to clean energy is addressing the needs of workers and communities. Read his report "[U.S. Trade Unionists Draw Lessons from German Coal Transition](#)"

UN Study Lays out a Pathway to a Just Transition

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has just released a report entitled "[Just transition of the workforce, and the creation of decent work and quality jobs.](#)" Its purpose is to assist nations to move decisively on reducing the greenhouse gasses produced by work and workforces, while creating decent work and quality jobs for a new labor market. According to Carla Lipsig-Mummé of the Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces to Respond to Climate Change project (ACW), "Achieving just transition has been elusive, requiring as it does a mix of state financial support and regulation, technological advances and work redesign, mobilization of the social safety net, willingness of employers, an active labor market policy, and the creative engagement of workers and their unions." The paper "breaks new ground in a much trodden field."

Climate, Jobs, and Justice

The Illinois Future Energy Jobs Package

On December 1st, the Illinois General Assembly voted to approve the Future Energy Jobs Package, a bill which would

more than double renewable energy generation in the state and allow Illinois to become a leader in creating green jobs, including low income solar jobs, and energy efficiency. Kenzo Esquivel, Diane Fager and Rev. Tony Pierce write, "Our victory in this fight proves that we can still win, and win big, even in the age of Trump, if we build grassroots, people power around a bold vision. We need not cower in the corner if we organize ordinary people to name, claim and fight for the kind of world we know we deserve."



["Clean Energy Victory in IL Shows We Can Still Win In The Age of Trump"](#)

The legislation represents a large step on a jobs-friendly pathway to a just and climate-safe Illinois. For a vision of that pathway, see LNS's report "[Illinois Jobs and Clean Energy: Protecting the Climate and the State Economy.](#)"

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