

health system—which is universal and free at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels—makes care accessible and keeps people as healthy as possible as long as possible, saving resources for more expensive treatments and interventions in the process.

But prevention and health promotion by community-based healthcare workers are only part of the story. Cuba's policies and practices both at home

More than 50,000 Cuban health professionals are serving in 66 countries.

and abroad (currently more than 50,000 Cuban health professionals are serving in 66 countries) are built on several principles proven effective in resource-scarce settings.

First, coordinating health policies at the local, regional, and national levels is essential; this is particularly important where infectious diseases are concerned since uniform protocols are integral to containment.

Next, health initiatives must be cross-sectoral and based on integrated messages and actions. A fragmented, uncoordinated response by and among different agencies can prove dangerous and even deadly. This was tragically illustrated by the death of Thomas Eric Duncan in Dallas and the US Centers

for Disease Control's allowing a nurse who had Ebola to travel on a commercial flight.

Finally, infectious disease outbreaks must be addressed quickly—easier said than done in poor settings, where public health systems are already strained or collapsing.

The Ebola outbreak snaps the need for Cuba's approach into sharp relief: only a coordinated response, provided by well-trained and equipped primary healthcare professionals will contain this—and future—epidemics. Indeed, policymakers such as the World Health Organization's Margaret Chan and US secretary of state John Kerry have lauded the Cuban response, underscoring the importance of collaboration as the only solution to this global health crisis.

Forging this solution, however, requires harnessing the political will across borders and agencies to marshal resources and know-how. Havana took up the challenge by hosting a special Summit on Ebola with its regional partners and global health authorities on October 20, 2014. Noticeably absent were US health representatives; if we're to construct a comprehensive, integrated and effective global response, all resources and experience must be coordinated and brought to bear, regardless of political differences. Anything less and Ebola wins.

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“You know your government has failed when your grandma starts to riot”

A Review of Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything*

by Kim Scipes

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate by Naomi Klein, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2014, 566 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4516-9738-4, \$30.00.

Naomi Klein has once again mobilized her impressive journalistic and writing skills, this time to address the issue of climate change in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*. The timing of her new book is propitious, coming out in the same month as the Global Climate March in New York City (September 2014) and 2700 demonstrations worldwide the same day. It should be seen as another important arrow to be added to the quiver of the global movement for life.

Klein's clarity is striking, as is her ability to cut through the nonsense and obfuscation of not only the mass media, but of those of corporate and governmental “leaders” who are in the process of killing the atmosphere (or those denying it is being murdered) and thus each of us. She reports that a non-binding agreement signed in Copenhagen by the major polluting countries to keep the rise in the Earth's temperature below 2 degrees Celsius is a joke: “[greenhouse gas] emissions are rising so rapidly that unless something radical happens within our economic structure, 2 degrees now looks like a utopian dream.”

A 2 degree Celsius temperature increase in the Earth's average temperature from that of the year

1750—the beginning of the industrial revolution—has been long seen as the most the planet can tolerate before we start having major negative ramifications in natural systems that sustain human and animal life as well as that of many plants; 2 degrees

“...the ‘warmists’ in the political center...are still insisting that the response can be gradual and painless...”

today is generally seen by climatologists and other earth scientists as an increasingly inadequate standard.

Klein reports that even the World Bank recognizes we're on track for a 4 degree warmer world—by the end of this century—and then quotes Kevin Anderson of the UK's Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research: “a 4 degrees Celsius warming—7.2 degrees Fahrenheit—is ‘incompatible with any reasonable characterization of an organized, equitable and civilized global community.’”

With this knowledge, why haven't the peoples of the world mobilized to curtail greenhouse gas emissions? “I think the answer is far more simple than many have led us to believe: we have not done the things that are necessary to lower emissions because these things fundamentally conflict with deregulated capitalism;” “the actions that would give us the best chance of averting catastrophe—and would benefit the vast majority—are extremely threatening to an elite minority that has a stranglehold over our economy, our political process, and most of our media outlets.”

Klein proceeds to detail what's going on, writing a powerful chapter on the climate change deniers, especially the Chicago-based Heartland Institute. But she does not let the liberal left off the hook, either: “So here's my inconvenient truth: I think these hard-core ideologues understand the real significance of climate change better than most of the ‘warmists’ in the political center, the ones who are still insisting that the response can be gradual and painless and that we don't need to go to war with anybody, including the fossil fuel companies.” Further, “[t]he deniers get plenty of the details wrong... but when it comes to the scope and depth of change required to avert catastrophe, they are right on the money.”

Ultimately, Klein recognizes that we need to challenge the very cultural worldview of those killing the planet: “What the climate needs to avoid collapse is a contraction in humanity's use of resources; what our economic model demands to avoid collapse is unfettered expansion. Only one of these sets of rules can be changed, and it's not the laws of nature.”

Klein spends the rest of the book strongly supporting her case. She debunks myths, such as that some “enlightened” capitalist such as Richard Branson will save us, or that a technological “fix” will do the trick. (Unfortunately, she missed Bon Joon Ho's recent movie “Snowpiercer,” which shows if we don't get changes right the result will be chaos.) She eviscerates the idea that fracking is safe, pointing out its extensive release of methane, which is even more harmful to the atmosphere than carbon dioxide. Her arguments are bold, cogent and to the point. She's not willing to let people off the hook, and criticizes “magical thinking.”

The third part of her book—the part that focuses on those fighting

back as well as those fighting for change—is inspirational.

This is the section that gives hope, the realization that those joining the struggle today do not have to start from scratch but with the knowledge there is a global movement for social and environmental justice. Klein reports from places such as Romania, Greece, Latin America as well as Native American reservations, and on the increasing development of

“What the climate needs to avoid collapse is a contraction in humanity's use of resources...”

cross-sectoral alliances such as “Cowboys and Indians” on the North American plains.

In this section, she draws attention to something extremely important: it used to be the extraction industries (mining, oil and gas, etc.) could get their way by limiting the impact to those who were dependent on that industry, especially for jobs. That's no longer true today; as their search for minerals expands widely, they are now affecting many who are not dependent on their “largesse.” This also means the resistance can expand, as people not dependent on industry can fight back, as well as support those who are still trapped.

It's difficult to critique such a powerful book that one thinks should be widely read, but there are two things to which attention should be drawn. First, although she alludes to it in various places and even mentions its name several times, there's no real explanation of what she means by “capitalism.” Most activists will get the hint; for those who come across her book without that prior understanding, however—and especially with her subtitle—this is never explained.

Second, she overwhelmingly focuses her attention on economic processes at the heart of her concern, and I think that is necessary, but I argue it's not sufficient. Surprisingly, at least to me, there is no

discussion of power and the wars in the Middle East that revolve around control of oil. Klein is aware of this, I'm sure, but still, she doesn't address it. I assume it's because her work is already over 500 pages (with notes), but future analyses must incorporate this understanding along with that of economics.

This is an important book that deserves to be widely read. Klein's not willing to put up with the bullshit—are we?

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