

# Committees for territorial defence and decolonization.

A breach was opened by an now well-known anonymous group . Their autonomous action to reoccupy the territory demonstrated the inseparability of ecological and decolonial perspectives. By blocking Junex's oil project and by affirming the legitimacy of traditional Mi'kmaq sovereignty on the territory, their action made space for new possibilities of successful struggle. This call to organize is done with the audacious spirit of the first barricades, now fallen.

Since the dismantling of the barricades, the River Camp has become a central anchor in the fight against fossil fuels and fracking in Gaspésie. Beyond being a place of meaningful daily existence, the camp furthers efforts to build a force to oppose the economy of death, brought about by the extractivist state and the fossil fuel industries that it finance. By rallying inhabitants from everywhere in Gaspésie, in the rest of Quebec and the Maritimes, this space has proved that it has great potential in terms of creating encounters and alliances.

In their declaration of support at the Junexit banquet, two traditional Mi'kmaq chiefs wrote that "after the fall of the barricade, the fight has only begun. Relationships are forming between the Mi'kmaq District Chiefs, as well as native and non-native water and land protectors. We call on all groups and individuals concerned for the protection of the water and the land on the territory of Gespegawagi to give their support, and to join the struggle here."

The call for a week of action was a success in multiple regions, seeing banner drops, occupations, protests, and train blockades. The cause, taken up by ecological as well as decolonial activists, became a symbol of the defense of the territory, of the necessity to protect the land and the forms of life we belong to. "Everything to lose, nothing to gain". Even more than just opposition to projects of extraction, we want to express our attachment to the territory and the threat oil poses to that which we hold dear.

To think about the follow up of this struggle, and how to continue it, to see how we can contribute to the multiplication of these conflicts, we propose to friends, comrades, allies, and accomplices, to meet where they are--in forms favoring both autonomy and the expansion of the struggle.



# Defeating Catastrophe

## *Ecology and Decolonization*

Not a day goes by without another part of the globe ravaged by the phenomenon of global warming, not a day goes by that doesn't remind us of the dramatic decrease in biodiversity every year. Under the effects of widespread fossil fuel extraction, catastrophe erupts into our daily life, painting a somber future. The derailment of a train full of oil destroys an entire village. Sudden climate change paralyzes an entire region. What we call catastrophe is really nothing other than the norm of an economy founded on acceleration and growth.

Fossil fuels, intended to free us from dependence on the sun, have rendered us dependent on the institutions and infrastructures that produce them. Beyond those who want to delay or speed up the end of the world, a spark of life is given shape by combatting projects of the economy of death, and re-inhabiting the world.

Dispossessed, we are disconnected from others, each individual in their little personal situation, blind to the violence needed to keep this system in place.

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**“Defending the territory means breaking this little ball. It means to re-learn how to live with that which surrounds us and to work with those who constitute us. To break the normal tempo of the economy, to find ourselves again.”**

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The blockade of Junex's project in Gaspésie, and the camp that followed, are spaces that allow us to gather and organize ourselves against that which ravages the world. These spaces are linked to the territory, and weave new paths.

But if the disaster that is the oil economy seems self-evident to us, we must remember that from the point of view of native people, the relationship to this disaster is conceived differently. For them, this catastrophe is a reality that has been in process for 500 years. The destruction of the environment goes hand in hand with the dispossession that preceded it. Their perspective reveals the colonial character of modern history. It lets us understand that the development of the economy would never have been possible except through dispossession and exploitation. This system still functions today, under the same logic, and Junex is the ultimate example.

To pose the question of defending the territory in “America” inevitably implies thinking about the process through which the extractivist economy and its institutions have been able to grow. This process is colonization, that is to say, pillage, destruction, and occupation of native territories.

From an indigenous perspective, defending the territory is therefore inseparable from the struggle for decolonization. In this process, ancestral sovereignties repressed by 500 years of colonization have to be revived and put in the forefront. For the ecological activists, this implies creating non-native worlds capable of living without dispossessing others of land. Through a common struggle against that which threatens us and for the survival of new and ancient traditions, worlds that have up until now been incompatible can meet each other. This meeting must take into account the colonial order, so as to destroy it. By doing this we can address shared problems.

The construction of the “Americas” was nothing other than a long violent process to take over territories and resources. The fossil fuel industry is the new fur trade. The decolonial perspective offers a way to think about this tragedy. To interrupt History, we must block that which creates it--that's to say, the infrastructure of the extractivist economy. The mobilizing force that can emerge from concrete alliances between the ecological and decolonial perspectives, between natives and non-natives, is the harbinger of a victorious struggle. The possibility to win against this world, and to create others, is in our hands. Let's seize it!



# What to do ?

## *“Moving forward while questioning”*

The proposed form of committees is designed to favor autonomy and local initiative. In supporting the River Camp, we believe in the importance of re-territorializing these struggles. The idea of combining defense and decolonization, for us, provides a shared sense of meaning without needing to work in a programmatic manner. Each location, each setting brings a different reality, without a universal solution. This is why we choose a humble path: “moving forward while questioning.” We must use the conditions on the ground to start and expand these struggles in order to act directly, while also organizing for the long term. To do this, we suggest several directions for the coming months.

### **I. Know the Territories**

It is first necessary to investigate. Practicing investigation means learning how to designate the enemy by making him appear concretely via his plans and policies. We must understand how they think, so that we can identify their endgame and prevent it. This stage, which is already under way, consists in identifying and understanding the projects of the extractivist economy throughout the territory and their links with the colonial program. These links can be found in the current development of the territory and in the omnipresence of extraction infrastructures. The territory is fractured by inequalities and united by a network of communication and transportation infrastructure. It is necessary to grasp its functioning, methods and, more particularly, to understand how this extractivist policy leads to the underdevelopment and loss of sovereignty for the inhabitants of the peripheral regions. In the same gesture, we must bind ourselves to resistance and understand the enemy from the point of view of what they mean. Links should be made between the people who live on the land and struggle to defend it. This involves learning to hold dear to what they love and to hate what threatens them, to share life.

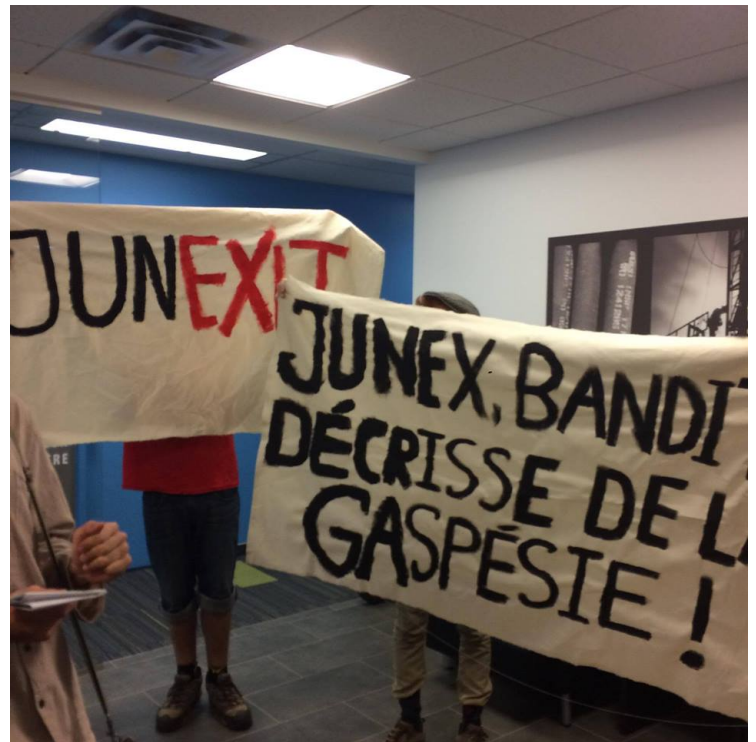
### **II. Build Autonomy**

The extractivist system depends on the circulation of resources from the peripheries to the center. In order to oppose this, our networks must allow us to respond swiftly and join actions rapidly once a call is launched. Building autonomy is first and foremost aimed at reuniting forces to combat what is devastating the territories. It is a matter of instilling a new force in protest movements and reinventing them through old and new traditions; these forms of life which allow us to live on the land necessarily teach us to fight against what threatens it. The effort is therefore multifaceted : to build a combative ecological movement, to support the traditional forms of indigenous sovereignty and to regain power over our lives. To do this, we must make our world

habitable, that is to say, to re-discover material means, knowledge, imagination and existential meaning to hold in both desertion and confrontation.

### **III. Block Flows**

To those who live in the city and for whom the world seems impossible to recapture, an important role is to bring confrontation by attacking symbols, infrastructures, enemies that threaten the forms of life we hold dear. In the city, as elsewhere, the modernization and development of the extractivist capitalist economy must be compromised until it becomes untenable. The survival of this economy depends on its ability to (1) extract resources and (2) to circulate them. Our tactical considerations must stem from this simple observation. Our mode of organization must enable us to effectively support the struggles that are taking place on territories beyond colonial borders, to help them to expand and to channel resources that allow their continuation.



We propose these steps in order to multiply blockades and actions in the coming months. The success of the actions that are undertaken will depend on our ability to build strong long-term relationships of trust that enable complicity, and a reciprocity that binds us together. The movement we propose to develop implies a profound deconstruction of the relations of power present between us, infused into our minds by colonial ideology. Thinking about decolonization involves projecting oneself into a broader time period than a campaign or a camp. In the end, we want to make moments when one lives and moments when one struggles inseparable.



# Deepening Ideas, Furthering the Struggle

The formation of a committee aims to bring those who wish to articulate ecology and decolonization in the fight for the defense of territories together. Committees allow for greater participation and coordination of efforts. They can both support the River Camp and organize themselves on their own territory. To build the committees and prepare to continue the fight against the oil companies, we propose some themes of activities and actions for the coming months. We plan to organize a training weekend and committee meetings in the coming months. In the meantime, it's about maintaining tension, investigating ongoing projects, and building strong relationships.

## Propositions

### Organize support for the River Camp

Ensure a physical presence, provide equipment and money. People living in the camp decided to spend the winter there. We must therefore stay aware of the needs that will be expressed in the coming weeks in relation to this challenge.

### Organizing discussion around books

- For an Amerindian Autohistory
- Red Skins White Masks
- Carbon democracy. Political power in the era of oil
- Wasáse indigenous pathways of action and freedom
- The Anomie of the Earth: Philosophy, Politics, and Autonomy in Europe and the Americas
- Decolonization is not a metaphor
- 1492, the occultation of the other
- Coloniality of Power and Democracy in Latin America

### Produce agitation and information material

It is important to publicize the activities of committees through posters, leaflets and other dissemination tools. As well as to expose the population to ecological and decolonial issues.

### Investigate and build solidarity

Go to meet people in struggle. It is fundamental to get to know the territorial defense struggles are built on bonds with those who engage in them.

### Establish fundraising activities

We must finance the continuation of the camp, the struggles in progress and the legal defence of those arrested during the blockage and the week of actions.

### Organize training for action

When time comes to implement actions or intervene in those already in progress, it is fundamental to know how to do it by minimizing the danger that we will run and maximize the one we represent: ABC of an occupation, preparation of medical teams, training in street tactics and survival in the forest, learning how enemy technologies work and those that can be useful to us.

### Adopting positions of support in a general assembly

### Organizing autonomous actions

Targets and forms of action are numerous. The addresses are easy to find as long as the enemies are identified. Organizing actions is both a way to connect with each other by including new people and raising the tone against extractivist economy projects.

### Organize screenings

- List of films on offer:  
(Available on the NFB website)
- Kanehsatake, 270 years of resistance
  - The Restigouche events
  - Does the Crown want to wage war on us?
  - For the survival of our children
  - Our nationhood
  - Kouchibouguac

### Participating in the organization

During the next months, it would be interesting to circulate in the areas that have meant support for the River Camp. We propose to set up a conference tour.

To organize discussions on Camp de la Rivière events with people who participated in the fight: [campdelariviere@gmail.com](mailto:campdelariviere@gmail.com) To contribute to the next publications of the newspaper and build the network of committees: [cddt@riseup.net](mailto:cddt@riseup.net)