

The Transition: Energy



BY **MONTGOMERY NORTON**

transition | tran_zi sh _n; -_si sh _n |

noun: the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another

Our thinking about energy has become quite limited, yet it is at the core of our debates, our economy, and our society. If you still watch television, you may have noticed the inundation of commercials lately, regarding energy. The fossil fuels industry is doing everything it can to remain the most profitable industry in the world, ever. Their commercials talk about all the jobs they create and how regular people and employees of the energy companies agree on this or that. Well, if everyone agrees that fossil fuels are so good for us, why are they spending millions upon millions of dollars on extremely sophisticated ad campaigns to convince us, I mean distract us from what we are all beginning to realize? The fossil fuel industry is the most aggressively destructive force in modern civilization. If we don't find an alternative mode of operating on this planet, we will destroy life on this planet, as we know it, what has taken nearly four billion years to create.

The discussion about the end of Fossil Fuels, called Peak Oil, is the point at which the supplies of oil reach their peak and then start to diminish. Although there continues to be debate about when this actually occurred or will occur, the important thing to remember is that there is a point where supply decreases and demand continues to increase. Either we address demand, or the cost of the remaining supply becomes too expensive for the majority of the population. Either we continue to create solutions for the 99%, or we watch social and political instability become the norm as billions more people struggle to meet their basic needs.

There are already billions of people around the world, who are starving and without access to safe, clean drinking water, not to mention sanitation, adequate shelter, the support of community, nor any form of energy. The levels of global injustices are only increasing, not decreasing. The "Green Revolution" of the 1940s – 1970s was a global endeavor to provide sufficient food for increasing world populations. Unfortunately,



the introduction of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers has transformed our food system into another byproduct of the military-industrial complex while further polluting our air, water, and ecosystems. Relying on poisons to increase production has not fed the rest of the world, only increased issues of access and injustice. Fossil fuels and these byproducts of warfare have not become the panacea that industry and corporations tried to convince us; rather they have only continued to drive modern civilization to the brink of collapse.

It's no longer a matter of "If", but "When." All the leaders and academics of the world know this. By 2007, we were overshooting the carrying capacity of the planet by thirty percent. Thus, if we continue living the status quo, we will achieve an inevitable collapse of our increasingly global society. We either create a society that lives in balance with present moment solar energy, or we continue killing each other over limited supplies of ancient, stored, and toxic fuel.

Fortunately, the military-industrial, fossil-fuel complex is beginning to crack under the pressure of humanity's awakening. We see the connections of our increasingly globalized society, both the challenges and solutions. There is definitely time for us to make a transition from fossil fuels to solar, wind, geothermal, biogas, etc. What we need is to change our lifestyles. We all resist behavioral change, but it is crucial that we transform our sense of entitlement.

The costs of our society, what we call the "American Dream," are a destructive, unsustainable system based in toxics and waste. We haven't chosen energy out of death and created a civilization dependent on the conversion of toxic oils into power. Oil has allowed man's ethos of dominating nature to reign supreme. We need to make a shift from an unbalanced expression of male power based in dominance to a balanced form of holistic, female and spiritual empowerment. We need to come to grips with our ability for destruction in time to survive this transition, and thus save the ability of the Earth to sustain life.

We are at the brink of global civilization collapse and/or global awakening. We have the challenge and opportunity; in other words, we face the crisis to choose our future. We can create thriving, sustainable communities with justice and fulfillment; or we can continue fighting over non-renewable resources that fuel power, profit, domination, and injustice. We have to design an entirely new world energy paradigm.

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