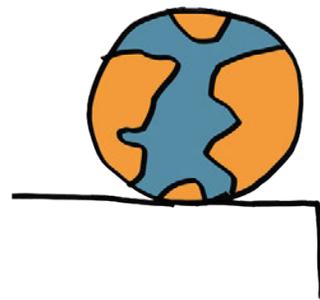


SEIZING AN ALTERNATIVE
Toward an Ecological Civilization
June 4-7, 2015
Section I: The Threatening
Catastrophe:
Responding Now



How California Can Provide Even Better Leadership

Tom Hayden (**TH**) presenting to Session 1; Track 1 (June 7, 2015)

Accompanied by Emily Taylor (his research assistant)

TH finds, when a group comes together, maybe a dozen people such as this group, they pay attention at first. But then they write out their goals. Soon they split into two separate groups, then split again.

TH prefers to start with his goals, then lists the means at his disposal. Make sure there isn't a disconnect between the goals and the means to achieve them. Frequently **TH** is criticized for not taking on big enough goals. But, he wants to keep the goals matched to his means of achieving them.

Goal: Investigate waste water from Fracking in Kern Co.

Found: Oil-based ownership following plantation ownership model. Oil field workers treated like plantation slaves

Has led to a Kern Co. economy/society in wreckage. Example: Tom Frantz (almonds business)

TH has been investigating the ponds (sumps) of waste water. There is debate whether waste water is leaking into aquifers.

The oil companies got in on a crooked sweetheart deal, perhaps since 1915. Now, 66,000 undocumented workers are victims.

Need to demand that Gov. Brown enforce the law in Kern Co.

Sheriff of Kern Co. says he would like to see Kern Co. become a part of Arizona.

Kern Co. cancer rates are very very high.

Next door to Kings Co. Kettleman an unincorporated "city" with over 500 undocumented residents. Cities can become incorporated if population over 500, but these people can't. Therefore, they have no say in how they are treated.

State government oversight is by DOGGR (Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources), with offices in Bakersfield.

Routine behavior is to hand out permits to oil companies. If permit request is submitted and DOGGR does not reply in the negative in writing within 10 days, permit is automatically approved.

DOGGR's objective: Maximize oil and gas production

The Law: DOGGR may monitor the effects of emissions. (The oil version of Mississippi plantations)

Much of this is played out in Daniel Day-Lewis' movie, "There Will be Blood."

(Audio recording picked up from this point forward)

00:00 to 00:26 **TH:** ...to be hundreds of students (inaudible) to track down the lack of voter registration, the lack of city services, that sort of thing. My dream is there would be some kind of Kern County summer project, like the Mississippi Summer Project. Look, this is a start.

00:26 to 05:12 **TH:** The start is to construct an argument that could become a law suit against Jerry Brown demanding that the state of California, with all of its agencies, enforce the law in Kern Co. First, there are voting rights and difficulties. Secondly, there are health standards that seem, on paper, that you have your children blood tested once a year. Third, there are work place safety standards, because these people are drenched in pesticide as a matter of routine. There are standards for how close a house can be situated to an oil well, or how close a house can be situated to a school, and so on. So, what's needed is a complete inventory of what has been neglected. And then, you have to match that with what Federal law, or Federal regulations require, and then you have a beginnings of an argument for a suit. And it would be an embarrassing suit for two reasons; One, the Federal government, the EPA nationally (the Obama EPA), is in serious conflict with the Brown EPA (the California EPA), over failure to monitor the emissions in Kern. Under normal circumstances, like if this was the big brutality case in Brooklyn, I think the Federal EPA would take over the state. But this is more of a "can't we work this out?" You know, we, the Federal EPA, are fully aware you have been flagrantly violating the law since 1982. You don't keep any records whatsoever that show what the monitoring would reveal. We would like you to bring all those records up to date in two years, into compliance so we can make nice with you, and see that the programs are in sync. And that is an on-going discussion, sometimes quite heated in back rooms, sometimes quite open. I, myself do not think that the Federal EPA, or any other agency, is capable of reforming DOGGR. If you meet the DOGGR people, they're going to avoid Mississippi, who don't know what you're talking about when you say *enforce the law*. They just think it means let the Mexicans take over, the Mexicans will ruin the oilfields, just like the government of Mexico did in 1937. And, if you tell them, if you don't comply, we'll see you in court, those are fighting words. I don't know what it will come to, but a little altercation is not out of the question. Shooting out the tires of Federal cars is not out of the question. This is an area that is unreal from the point of view of the U.S., and where the U.S. is unreal from the point of view of the current, they just don't see that they are living in the same country. So, I don't know what will come of it.

05:12 to 09:48 **TH:** Fortunately, the L.A. Times has decided to send a reporter in there. And, she's done five or six good articles. The name is Julie Cart, and each one rips a piece out of DOGGR. Basically, headlines like, **Benzine Levels 90% Higher than Fed's Standards**. And, I could tell you the backstory if we had time, but I'm not sure we do. The backstory of corruption is pretty depressing. Needless to say, when these articles have come out, the Governor has said, "What are we going to do about it?" And, typically, we've had our chart. What would be the next move by an administrator faced with this embarrassment? What would he do?

Audience voice: "Appoint a committee"

TH: “Close, appoint a committee. Yes, replace the head of DOGGR with a new DOGGR. A Navy man. So his name is Steve will . He’s a very straight-shooting sincere guy, and his job is to clean up DOGGR. He’s been on the job three or four months. And I’ve talked to him a number of times since my injury, and before. And he means to set the agency straight. But, in the cultural nature of things, they mean to resist him in every way they can. And so, the fight goes on. He closed about 12 of these wells. This doesn’t mean the effects of these wells in the ground have been abated. But, he shut the down. He’s met with some environmentalists. It’s clear he’s under the drumbeat from the Governor to do something. There’s really two choices policy wise. One is to reform DOGGR, and the other is to do away with DOGGR. Put the DOGGR to sleep. Reconstitute DOGGR under the EPA. So, the first path is being forced in the Legislature, Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson is the author of the bill to reform DOGGR. And, I’ve been working on it in some detail, but you can tell the intention is good, the writing is complicated, but this guy named David Sanchez in her office is doing the writing. and she wants to change the mandate from ‘promote gas and oil development’ to something ambiguous like, ‘promote gas and oil development consistent with state and Federal clean air, children’s health care and health protection laws.’ So, like, do it all even if it is contradictory. But, someone has to say how you do it all. The Governor will sign that bill. And it will be considered a step forward, and also a compromise.

09:48 to 13:44 **TH:** “ What this has to do with Fracking is very interesting. The Governor is under a lot of pressure to stop Fracking, or to put a moratorium on Fracking. One way to do that would be for his Administration to find that Fracking, in itself, causes potential damage to ground water, air pollution, children’s health, and on the basis of that assessment, you could terminate Fracking or you could propose a moratorium until safer ways are established that would protect our ground water in the state of California. So that’s one possibility. But, I don’t think he’ll do that. Sometimes crises boil for quite a time, and then all of a sudden, there’s a change. I guess, all I would say, continue to pressure on Fracking, and really study and use your brain power to analyze Fracking, especially the counter arguments, and be able to present yourself in any civic engagement as the smarter person with the argument. Right now, I think the Governor is smarter than you are. But, not on this issue of enforcement. You see, enforcement is a scandal. We’ve been handing out these permits for 40 years. Virtually, no provisions required. And, he can;t possibly defend that. He has to have some teeth in the permits. And, that’s where I think the battle will be. The more conditions you add to the permit, the more the Fracking people will go crazy. Because, they see each condition as money to be spent, headaches to be incurred, etc., so making it a real Fracking reform bill will draw skepticism from both directions. But it will add tremendously to the burden. The industry will not be able to follow its freeways of the past. And, it will probably lead to more revelations of oil spilling into rivers. We’ve got a lot of that coming. It’s going to get worse. We have, as you know, oil by rail. It is very dangerous, tons of it coming. The tracks are not laid in a way that raises your comfort that they will be able to make the Tehachapi Pass, just for an example.”

13:44 to 20:16 **TH:** “So I went out there and was photographing these places. It was hot that day. I was probably reckless, I was probably dehydrated, I was probably sleepless. I was certainly with a lot of people who were 50 years younger than me. And, we spent the next day trying to fix the photographs with GPS and locate them on maps. And so, I got tired on the third night, I told my wife I was out of sleep, exhausted. That must have been when the stroke was coming on. Late that night I was struggling for breath. We went to St. John’s. It was a satisfactory experience. We left St. John’s, and came back to UCLA, Santa Monica. They did a good job. They brought the paramedics in and wrapped me up, and stuffed me, and they began

treating me with three antibiotics for pneumonia. Pneumonia is a spiritual experience. We know, life begins with breath. So, if you're there, if you've ever been there, all you experience is that you are dying, unless somebody saves you. You know, the well-organized UCLA folks don't really think you're dying at all. They seem slightly oblivious to the pain you are in, and they slam you with antibiotics. And they put a wind machine on you, fill your lungs, and low and behold, after an hour, you're weaker, but you can feel the pneumonia retreating. You're just left with the feeling it might start again. It seems to be gone. And, a couple of days goes by, and all they are doing is they're monitoring the pneumonia, making sure that the antibiotics are working, and you gradually mend. And they really are fine fine people. They do wonderful work. As to the cause, the cause to me is, I looked into the Fracking pit, and drew my breath from them, and that caused grave injury. Combined with what else was in the air, combined with heat and lack of water, I suppose. Twelve of us driving. I don't know what causes strokes, as they say, you push yourself too hard. It can also be genetic, it can also be the blast of toxic air into your lungs. But, I felt I brought this on, that I was the martyr. The thought of being the martyr passed through my mind. The other thought that deeply affected me was the question of my family. I have a fifteen-year-old, and should I have chosen to be a martyr for his sake — at his expense. I thought I was going to lose my family. These are dark thoughts. But what I said, would I do it all over again, my answer would be, I would think very carefully and take more precautions. Because, I don't really think you can undertake these dangerous encounters without care. Anyway, time will tell, and I'm pretty convinced that I'm gaining full recovery of my mental and my physical apparatus. It's gotten better every day. And I'm not saying in ten days, but I'm saying, pretty rapidly. And I want to go back to work on this Sacramento project."

20:16 to 26:12 **TH:** "The reason it's so important is the Papal Encyclical, so let me say a few words about that. The Governor's program to establish California as the first in the Country, and the first in the World in several categories: Reduction of GHG emissions through reductions in transportation, reductions in power generated (clean power generated), and green buildings (green architectures. The three 50s. The name of the organization 350. The legislation is called 350. Plus 40. I'm opposed to 40. They set the goal of 40% reduction of GHG by 2030. I'm convinced that they should have said 50 because the science is there, it's provable. They lost an in-house argument to the PUC and the utility guys. In the scheme of things, it's impossible to quarrel because the NY Times will write an article saying these are the best goals in the world. You can't really say, "but what about the 40?" He could have been 50, 50, 50, 50, but instead, he has 50, 50, 50, 40. And, these numbers do matter, but there also is a media presentation. And, the important thing is, what started as a small movement, the 350 having to do with degrees F has become a movement having to do with a legislative agenda that is called 350. SB350 by our very good Senator de Leon. And hopefully, Brown and de Leon will go to the Paris talks in a couple of months, and the importance will be to have some sort of Latino leader and an Anglo leader in the mix of the talks because the only realistic option to reduce greenhouse gas is to increase social justice. It's not even a possibility. We're done with the scientists, academicians, we're done with the coastal environmentalists, done, done, done. The only thing that remains is to consolidate the attention of people of color, people in Oxnard, people in Latin America where the Pope comes from, people in countries that are being polluted and impoverished at the same time. And so, we've invented a California formula that will help. It could be the global answer. It's Kevin de Leon's SB535, in combination with Fran of the B SB32. These two laws are now integrated and are operational, and they say essentially that, any reductions in California of greenhouse gas emissions must include co-benefits for disadvantaged communities. So no emission reductions will be legislated or mandated unless, in the same reduction, they include an uplift for disadvantaged. So, that can mean

weatherization, farmworker's housing. It can include a self- [??] black carbon, methane, fine particulate matter that comes the pollution in the trucks, in the case of de Leon, a senator not far from here, he has eight freeways in his senate district. It means tackling the courts really seriously. Of course Long Beach, San Diego, the Bay Area, Oakland, all of which you see gains for the environment thru jobs for working class people."

26:12 to 32:16 **TH:** "So that's the hope of the world, there. Help the environment by buying more Priuses. You can buy more electric cars that speak Spanish. And that is being worked on. If we could once upon a time buy a house that I lived in, in the 40's, it was entirely guaranteed by Federal monies, Federal intervention, FHA, Federal loans, I see no reason why you couldn't do low emission automobiles for people to drive. I actually am in an ideological fight with my friends because I think it is a faster way to affect the environment, than trains and busses, given the crazy layout of L.A. If more people have bicycles and electric cars, and you subsidize them. You would have more gain, I think, than any other way. We've been stuck lately on this, jobs vs. environment issue, and our enemies are superbly located. WSPA (Western States Petroleum Association), they're doing everything they can to stop California's program. They come close. In years to come, they may have the upper hand to try to reverse the program we have — I don't know. It's going to be a battle. But the big factor in the battle this year is, the Pope. I think the Pope was elected because of Latin America. If you want to get political about it, he won the election because of the Latin American block. And Latin America had just come out from under the voodoo of Latin American imperialism for a long time. And were hostile to trade proposals that would take raw materials like oil from Latin America and use them for the rich countries. Latin America was also the scene for Liberation Theology from 1967 which was given official credit by the Latin American Bishops. There was a swift countermovement against it that said Liberation Theology was too political. And there was some truth in that in that the priests and nuns who wanted to believe in a spiritually-centered theology with affirmative action for the poor were thinking, naturally within the leftwing categories to an extent. Because, so many of them got killed by brutal police. But they had a defense against the charge that they were left wing. If you look at the doctrine of Liberation Theology, you'll find their goal, their mission, their vision is not materialist. They believe in social justice as being psychological achievement, yes, put money in your pocket. But, because they're more spiritual than communist, they don't think in terms of material gain as being the rotating center of the resolution. And, the practice of the voluntary poverty, the translation and dissemination of the Bible into multiple languages, the gathering of people together into small groups to discuss, on their own, how the book translates into their lives. It may take them on a course against the rich church, the church of empire, but not from the point of view of overthrowing it, and re-consecrating it or re-appropriating its riches for themselves. I don't see that."

32:16 to 35:18 **TH:** "So, I have a lot of hope in this encyclical. As far as I can read, it's been translated into 267 languages. It will be released in ten days. The release will be orchestrated. Every wee little parish, every sodality, every order, every Catholic school, university, will be instructed that in circle groups, like this, instructed to read it, take it to heart, apply it to their practices, you know, a lot of businessmen are Catholic. It will be very interesting for them to read it. Add a little compliance to their sales outlet. To whatever they do. Maybe there will be a lot of contention — I don't know. Maybe it will galvanize such interest that it will bring the Pope on its behalf, to insist the U.N. conference in Paris accept it fundamentally as part of the framework agreement. What's the alternative? The alternative is anarchy cast loose on the world. So, it may not be a full agreement. It may be a token agreement. But it will be the *first* agreement. I was there in 1992, and I left. I thought it was the craziest meeting I had ever tried

to attend. But, this will be an agreement, and I think California could have a lot to do with it. Because, California has made an alliance with 30 entities around the world calling for the maximum achievable goals. The entire Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, British Columbia), they even have the miracle of Alberta with its left-wing socialist government in the heart of the Tar Sands.”

35:20 to 39:23 **TH:** “A lot of strange things happening, that are in the air. I got a call from a friend of mine the other day, who is the mayor of Belfast. I’m an Irish Catholic. We go back to the times when homosexuality was shunned. Something you could be burned at the stake for. He called up, you know, the people of Ireland passed by a 62% vote on equality. People were dancing in the street, and laughing. I went, definitely old school, I said, “how could this happen, given the way we think, the way we were raised to think?” He said, “two things.” He said, “Tommy, we’re done with discrimination. We’re done with it against anybody. We’ve been through too much discrimination. All our lives, we’re not going to enact any new discrimination against anyone. It’s over, it’s done.” He said, “You have to take care of your health. Contribute to the new generation what you have learned over 40 years of struggle. You have to remember, we involved in a multigenerational battle. A battle over many generations. And you had a part of it. It won’t be quick.” I could just feel him thinking he was in the middle of a 1,200 year battle. You know, there had been witches, witch trials, horrors. Massacres, genocides in Central America, but it was for Irish republicanism, and it had to be defined, and it had a spirit of you’re in a long struggle. And I’ve been feeling, in terms of my own recovery, there could be something going on. Do you feel that? So many unexpectedly vast uprisings in the air. Like the whole world has been cleaned out. Everyone’s doing their Spring cleaning. Unexpected events. Why would 62% of the Irish vote for marriage equality on one fine Spring day? Well, that’s what I’m feeling. It’s surprising to me. It’s happening so rapidly and suddenly, that’s why I think the release of the encyclical is like lifting the lid off of any spirits, and gets many discussion going, and propel Obama to do things he hasn’t expected to be able to do. So, that’s the full story. If there is anything else I can help you with, let me know.

(Q&A covered separately)