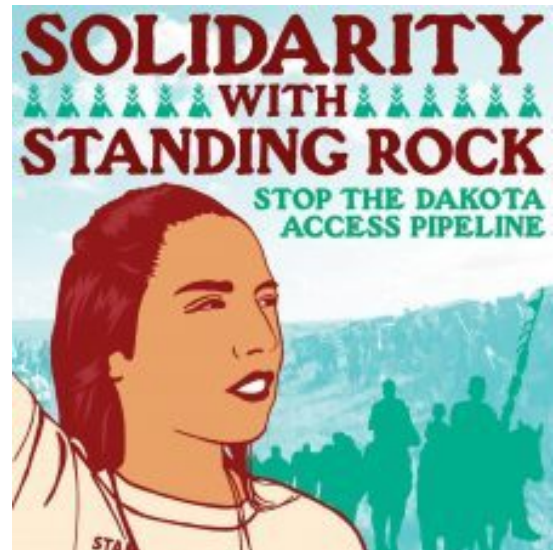


# Solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux and all the Struggles of Indigenous Peoples

November 8, 2016



The Black Workers for Justice support the struggles of the indigenous peoples to defend their land and treaty rights and their struggles for environmental justice. And in this moment we are in full support of the resistance of the Standing Rock Sioux to the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). We call on all people to support them politically and materially.

## **Racism at Work**

The location of the Dakota Access Pipeline is another transparent case of environmental racism. The pipeline's original path crossed the Missouri River just north of Bismarck, but the residents objected fearing oil spills. The city's population is 90 percent white. The pipeline was redirected south to go under the river along the Standing Rock Reservation. The river provides the majority of the reservations drinking water.

For us this is just another case of targeting people of color and other vulnerable populations for receiving the harmful byproducts of capitalist production. That was the case in Warren County in 1982 when PCB was dumped in the community or in the Shiloh Community of Morrisville when wastewater from the Koppers plant resulted in Superfund Clean Up Site in 1989.

The contrast between the treatment of the Standing Rock protestors and the anti-government protest in Oregon led by the Bundy family is stark. The white supremacist rightwing group seized and occupied Federal land while heavily armed. They were not assaulted and have recently been exonerated. The Standing Rock protestors while peacefully protesting have been subject to violent responses including physical injuries, being held in dog cages, having numbers written on their bodies and being subject to invasive body searches.

## **Who are the Culprits?**

The DAPL is a \$3.7 billion project that promises to provide 470,000 barrels of oil a day. The Energy Transfer Crude Oil Company is constructing it. 17 banks are providing capital for construction of the project. They are Citi-Bank, Wells Fargo, BNP Paribas, SunTrust, Royal Bank of Scotland, Bank of

Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Mizuho Bank, TD Securities, ABN AMRO Capital, DNB First Bank—and that's actually a bank based in Philly; it's not the DNB Bank based in Norway, which is actually provided several hundred million to the Energy Transfer family separately—and ICBC London, SMBC Nikko Securities and Société Générale according to Hugh MacMillan of Food and Water Watch. In other words it is the banks and Wall Street, the chief instruments of the 1%.

We should also note that Donald Trump holds stock in Energy Transfer and Phillips 66, which holds one quarter of the stock in Dakota Access. No surprise here.

### **States join together to repress the struggle**

We are witnessing not only the militarization of law enforcement that was so blatantly on display in Ferguson but also the cooperation of law enforcement agencies across state lines. At least six states across the Midwest, including Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming have deployed deputies to join local law enforcement, state police and a private security firms. Activists in Minnesota and elsewhere mounted protest against the Sheriff demanding they bring their deputies home.



### **Response from National Political leadership**

President Obama has acknowledged that Native American nations are making their voices heard and called for more consultation between the Native American tribes, the agencies and other parties. He has said this in the context of relationships developed during the course of his administration but has offered no condemnation of the tactics of the security company employed by Energy Transfer or the violation of sovereignty and treaty rights.

The statement released by the Clinton campaign is an affront to the Standing Rock Sioux and says absolutely nothing. It tries to maintain neutrality but simply maintains her support for fracking, the oil industry and the banks. "From the beginning of this campaign, Secretary Clinton has been clear that she thinks all voices should be heard and all views considered in federal infrastructure projects. Now, all of the parties involved—including the federal government, the pipeline company and contractors, the state of North Dakota, and the tribes—need to find a path forward that serves the broadest public interest." This what the people can expect in a Clinton presidency.

### **AFL-CIO position on DAPL**

This repressive and violent response to the non-violent actions by the Protectors is taking place in the shameful context of the AFL-CIO's support for the Dakota Access Pipeline. At the urging of the Building Trades, the Federation has placed support for a few temporary jobs above the sovereignty and cultural rights of the Standing Rock Sioux. Moreover it flies in the face of the AFL-CIO's previously acknowledged position that "The carbon emissions from coal, from oil and natural gas, agriculture and so many other human activities have caused global warming, and we have to act to cut those emissions, and act now." Trade union and labor activist are horrified that President Trumka has not condemned the violence, including attack dogs and mace, being used against the protestors include placing arrestees in cages. Many unions such as UE, CWA and APWU have come out in opposition to DAPL and have criticized the AFL-CIO for their position. We encourage other union members, individually and through their locals, to do the same.

### **Indigenous united front**

The Dakota Access Pipeline has created the broadest united front of Native American tribes seen in North America in many years. It is reported that at least 100 and perhaps as many as 300 tribes have given support. Moreover indigenous groups from South American have joined the effort. In North Carolina, the Cherokee, Lumbee and Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation have given political and material support.

### **Support for IEN**



We also support the efforts of our friends in the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN)(<http://www.ienearth.org/>) who have taught us much about climate justice and have been essential leaders of the struggle for environmental justice here in the US, especially among people of color. Their leadership is recognized on the international level as well. They have been and will continue to be a vital source of information about what is taking place on the

ground.

### **Build Solidarity**

Our communities have limited resources and are called upon to support so many things. We ask that as you provide support for Haiti and Eastern North Carolina that you also consider support for the Standing Rock Struggle as they take their resistance into the fall and winter months. At a minimum we must educate our family, friends and coworkers. We should see this as a duty.

The resistance at Standing Rock and the Black Lives Matter Movement are two of the most important struggles of our time. The well being of oppressed people depends on our strong support for these fights. The forces of white supremacy and right wing populism on display during this presidential campaign make it clear that we are entering a very dangerous period. Our survival depends on us building unity, creating democratic peoples assemblies and contending for power locally and statewide while we participate in national efforts to resist, build and win.

*Originally posted by Black Workers for Justice.*