

Video 11

Climate Change in the Arctic, Part III The Final Suicidal Madness

Nuclear Weapons in the Arctic

But there is something more. Something that very few of us have thought about. A multitude of oil companies, from a multitude of countries, are making plans to drill for oil in the Arctic. Huge supplies of this valuable resource are waiting to be tapped. Fortunes are waiting to be made.

Oil companies reassure us that they will not spill any oil in the Arctic. Even if that were true, so many other dangers await us. We need to ask the Big Questions about drilling for oil in the Arctic. We especially need to ask them in our schools.

How do oil companies search for oil beneath the bottom of the sea? By blasting “sonic cannons” towed by ships. A shock wave of sound goes from the surface down to the bottom and penetrates the terrain beneath the bottom, then bounces up again, where the wave is read by instruments which produce a sonogram of the bottom, indicating where oil might be found.

These shock waves will bounce back and impact the bottom of the Arctic ice cap, battering it, cracking it, potentially shattering it. Once the ice is cracked, the warming water of the Arctic Ocean rises up into these cracks, melting the ice from *within*. The process of melting accelerates even more. The polar bears will soon be walking on mush. The layer of algae covering the bottom of the ice cap will be destroyed, and thus the foundation of the Arctic food chain will be destroyed.

The shock waves are massively intrusive to the life in the seas. Imagine someone exploding sticks of dynamite in your living room every ten seconds, for hours and days and weeks at a time. Whales and dolphins, which rely on their underwater sounds to communicate, become disoriented. Large groups of whales which have washed up on beaches show bleeding in their inner ears, and extensive damage to their internal organs, where the shock waves have ripped through the soft tissues. Fish navigate with the help of sensors along the sides of their bodies; these sensors are devastated by the blast of sonic cannons. Research has shown that tiny

creatures with fragile calcium shells—krill and pteropods—are shattered by the shock waves. Again, a major part of the marine food chain is destroyed.

What about the delicate eggs, and the tiny, delicate hatchlings which continue the miracle of life in the seas? Shattered by shock waves.

Yes, the research on the effects of sonic cannons is limited . . . because the oil companies never bothered to do the research.

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Extracting oil from the Arctic requires a sequence of industrial stages. The oil companies first explore for oil with their sonic cannons. Then they build the enormous platforms. They drill for the elusive oil. They pump the oil up to the surface. And then they transport the oil in giant ships to distant refineries.

The oil companies will all, theoretically, work within their “zones”: Norway has a zone, Russia has a zone, the United States has a zone, and so on.

A century of evidence shows us that oil vessels are closely guarded by military vessels. Take a look at the Persian Gulf as a classic example. Why did the American Congress recently vote a record military budget, \$700 billion, for a huge increase in military development? Is Washington worried about Poland? About Syria? About China? No, Washington is getting ready to meet the Russian military development in the Arctic. Russia is already increasing its submarine fleet at two northern bases, near Arkhangelsk and near Murmansk. Much of this military preparation is focused on Arctic oil.

Thus we will soon find ourselves with powerful military fleets from a multitude of countries—both surface ships and submarines—prowling the Arctic Ocean at the top of our planet. These ships will carry both “conventional” weapons as well as nuclear weapons.

Imagine an American aircraft carrier patrolling the American zone of the Arctic, as well as a Russian aircraft carrier patrolling the Russian zone (which they now claim reaches all the way to the North Pole). What sort of missiles are under the wings of the planes on the decks of those carriers? We will not know, because that is a military secret.

What sort of missiles will the submarines carry? Long-range missiles with nuclear warheads, able to reach Saint Petersburg and Moscow, able to reach New

York and Washington, able to reach the NATO airfield in Bodø, Norway, in a matter of minutes.

Remember, many of these military vessels will be sailing close to Norway's northern shore. Hammerfest will have a front seat view of oil ships and naval ships going back and forth, day and night. Nukes and oil, nukes and oil.

If you visit the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) at Hausmanns gate 3, you can find in the library a monthly journal called **Jane's Intelligence Review**. This journal keeps track of weapons developments in countries around the world. On the cover of the September 2017 issue, you will see a striking illustration of two submarines in the gray-green waters beneath the Arctic ice cap. The title of the enclosed article: "Pole Positioning: Ice melt risks Arctic military competition". Already in September of 2017 (the month of the election in Norway, in which voters agreed to drill for oil in the Arctic), **Jane's** is warning us about the next war in a long series of wars caused by oil. Which may also be World War Three. Which may also be the final war on planet Earth.

A quick reminder: the Arctic ice cap has covered the top of our planet for three million years. Because the thin, curved sheet of ice reflects 90% of the sun's radiation, it has kept the Arctic Ocean consistently cold, and thus has stabilized temperatures on planet Earth. Now as the ice cap melts, the ocean is increasingly exposed to sunlight, and thus becomes warmer and warmer. The warming ocean melts the sheet of ice from below, at an accelerating rate.

Sonic cannons will batter the ice cap. A growing number of ice breakers, Russian, Canadian, Norwegian, and American, will cut the ice cap into pieces. Submarines which surface from beneath the ice cap will further weaken the ice.

Sheets of ice break off and drift. What happens to oil rigs pumping oil when a sheet of ice, blown by a strong wind, with a surface area of over a hundred square kilometers, comes sweeping toward those oil rigs? It crushes them, and oil now leaks from a dozen broken wells. What happens if this disaster occurs in January, during the darkness of the polar night? At forty degrees below freezing.

What happens if an oil spill in one zone pollutes the waters of another zone? Do the Russians want American vessels helping to clean up an oil spill along the Russian coast, when the American vessels are suspected (as they will be) of spying on Russian submarine ports?

If America becomes involved in a military conflict with Russia, and then calls upon Norway, as a member of NATO, to support American warships against Russian warships, what will be Norway's response?

As the ice cap melts—or is battered into pieces which quickly melt—the Arctic Ocean becomes warmer and warmer, because it absorbs the sunlight shining on the top of the planet. What sort of storms will become increasingly common in the Arctic? Hurricanes are born at sea, powered by the heat from the oceans. (The **light energy** from the sun becomes **thermal energy** when the sunlight penetrates the oceans. Then that heat energy rises in droplets of evaporation from the surface of the oceans, and becomes the **kinetic energy**—the energy of motion—of the winds in a hurricane.) The warmer the ocean, the more powerful the storm.

Imagine an unprecedented storm in the Arctic, during the Arctic winter night, blowing military vessels and oil vessels out of their zones. Giant sheets of ice crush hundreds of oil rigs. Huge ships transporting oil crash on the long Russian coast; they burst open and release immense amounts of oil. Ships crash on the rocky Norwegian coast, spilling oil into the archipelagos and fjords. Rescue efforts and clean-up efforts are utterly impossible until the storm slowly dies.

What sort of future do the young people of the world now face?

What sort of world are the grandparents now leaving to their grandchildren?

If, as the result of a frozen switch, a dead radio, or an impulsive, blundering politician, one nuclear missile is launched by mistake—and it explodes with a fiery mushroom cloud over Siberia—the entire world immediately goes on nuclear alert. Aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf, destroyers in the Mediterranean Sea, submarines off the coast of China, are on full alert. NATO's missile systems in Europe are on full alert. What is happening in the nuclear silos in Russia? In Montana? What is happening in Israel? What is happening in Pakistan and India? In China? In North Korea?

Planet Earth, home to the only life known to exist in the universe, is also the home of 14,900 nuclear weapons . . . insanely dangerous weapons which threaten the future existence of life itself. The United States today has 6,800 nuclear weapons in

scattered locations around the world. Russia has 7,000 nuclear weapons. 1,800 of the combined American and Russian nuclear weapons are now on high-alert status; they can be launched within minutes.

Seven other countries also possess nuclear weapons in a state of readiness: Great Britain (215 warheads), France (300), China (270), India (110-120), Pakistan (120-130), Israel (80), North Korea (less than 10).¹

Total: 14,900 nuclear weapons which are maintained by a variety of governments in various states of readiness. These weapons are as much a part of your daily life as your morning cup of coffee.

The Arctic—that dark, cold, mysterious place about which we know so little—may well become the final battleground on planet Earth. Our greed for the profits from oil—despite the great challenges of climate change—may well trigger *our final suicidal madness*.

Is that what we want?

Young people of the world, is that what you want?

These are the questions that we need to ask . . . before we go seeking for more petrodollars in the Arctic.

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John Slade

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(Taken directly from the book, **A Letter to the Young People of the World.**)