

ExxonMobil, Coll reports, through its public affairs chief, “directed a network of allies and grantees in Washington who created havoc in the climate science debate.”

Which brings us to Inside Climate News’s series “Exxon: The Road Not Taken,” named a finalist for a 2016 Pulitzer Prize. Journalists Neela Banerjee, John Cushman, David Hasemyer, and Lisa Song compared what the fossil fuel giant knew about climate change—including results from its own cutting-edge research—with the falsehoods Exxon chose to sell to the public, usually through this web of denial. The series has surely honored the organization’s purpose “to cover the issues that aren’t being covered by the mainstream.”

On the Internet, Time Magazine recognized “DeSmogBlog,” which I mentioned, as one of the best blogs of 2011, describing it in these terms. Time Magazine said this:

Fossil-fuel companies have spent millions funding anti-global-warming think tanks, purposely creating a climate of doubt around the science. DeSmogBlog is the anecdote to the obfuscation.

In addition to its regular posts highlighting egregious examples of climate denial, DeSmogBlog also maintains a comprehensive disinformation research database to expose this web of denial.

The scholarship of all these academics, all these organizations, and all these authors—the detectives who are exposing the web of denial—has shined a bright light into its dark corners and eliminated its concerted effort to dupe the American public and sabotage climate action in America—all to protect the fossil fuel industry that funds it. It is sickening, but it is big.

The denial web is designed to be big and sophisticated enough that when you see its many parts, you are fooled into thinking it is not all the same beast, but it is—like the mythological Hydra, many heads, same beast. Professor Brulle likens what he called the climate countermovement to a stage

production. Here is how Professor Brulle described it:

Like a play on Broadway, the counter movement has stars in the spotlight—often prominent contrarian scientists or conservative politicians—but behind the stars is an organizational structure of directors, script writers and producers, in the form of conservative foundations. If you want to understand what’s driving this movement, you have to look at what’s going on behind the scenes.

The web of denial is what is behind the scenes. The web is so big because it has so much to protect. Remember, the International Monetary Fund has pegged the “effective subsidy” to the fossil fuel industry every year, just in the United States, at nearly \$700 billion. If you don’t like that number, you can do some math yourself. Just multiply the millions of tons of industry carbon emissions by the government’s own social cost of carbon. You still get to a huge subsidy.

The web is complex. It is organized into multiple levels. First, it cooks up polluter-friendly nonsense among academics that it funds in hundreds of universities. For its money, the web gets a little scholarly imprimatur to the propaganda. Then off that product goes to the think tanks that are the “disguised political weapon[s],” described by “Dark Money” author Jane Mayer, to be turned into policy. Then the AstroTurf organizations get cranked up to retail that polluter-friendly policy.

Let me wrap up with this observation. One thing needs to be absolutely clear about this web of denial. Truth is not their object. Truth is actually their adversary. The web has to mislead to be effective. It has to do what a Koch brothers operative described as the goal when this whole web was being developed. Here is what the Koch operative said:

It would be necessary [to] use ambiguous and misleading names, obscure the true agenda, and conceal the means of control.

Ambiguous and misleading names, obscure the true agenda, and conceal

the means of control that lead back to the fossil fuel industry. Welcome to the web of denial. Thank you to those who are working to expose it. It is a filthy thing in our democracy.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:35 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, July 12, 2016, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. TIMOTHY M. RAY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. MARK C. NOWLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JERRY P. MARTINEZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JERRY D. HARRIS, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. PAUL M. NAKASONE