

# Toxic Wasteland Created on Mother Earth by Uranium Mining



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Images Courtesy of Edward Burtynsky and Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto

Uranium Tailings No. 12, Elliot Lake, Ontario 1995

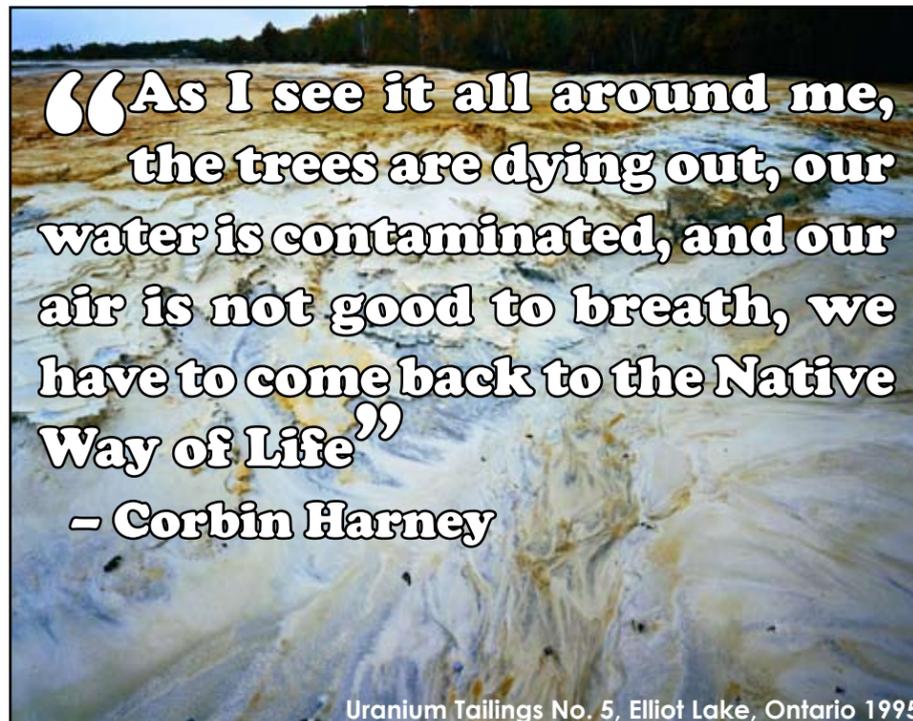
## Natives Jailed for Defending Our Childrens Future

This article is dedicated to all our brothers and sisters who are sacrificing their freedom to bring attention for the protection of our Sacred Mother Earth and our childrens future. Since our homelands and territories have been stolen and treaties broken, corporations, developers and the government are mismanaging our resources and creating contamination and toxic waste.

Not long ago, news began to trickle out from scientists from around the world of the holes over North America in the skies protective shield, later to become known as ozone depletion. No other natural disaster had been known to humankind which received such media attention so quickly about the threat of environmental degradation and human survival. Around the same time information began to appear from international press that scientists from around the world had confirmed the earth was now experiencing a phenomenon called global warming, that gases were being trapped in the lower atmosphere and were causing temperatures to rise at a level that threatened life, already thousands upon thousands of human casualties from this environmental killer were well documented. Global warming has changed the climate, changed the quality of life and no one knows better than scientists, environmentalist, bioengineers, academics. The indigenous people of the world, the ones who still live off the land, who still maintain a close relationship to Mother Earth, many

First Nations Drum

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“As I see it all around me, the trees are dying out, our water is contaminated, and our air is not good to breath, we have to come back to the Native Way of Life”

- Corbin Harney

Uranium Tailings No. 5, Elliot Lake, Ontario 1995

who maintain a diet which is mostly wild meat and vegetation, understand that the world is in a crisis. Society and the public has been told and warned by the old elders, the chiefs and clan mothers of the consequences of the misuse of technology.

Chemical manufacturing, the production of toxic waste, the production of excessive garbage, urban sprawl, this mismanagement can be traced to where cities were built on deserts, rivers have been killed for profit and made to run upstream instead of downstream, hydro dams are documented by scientists to be tilting the core of the earth's balance causing earthquakes and tidal waves around the world. Factory farming is causing the pollution of the populations water supply, not to mention the enormous energy that is being used to feed livestock, the overwhelming cruelty to animals used for factory farming has created a disease known as mad cow, another threatening disease to humans is SARs. The problems created by man are overwhelming now, not only

from men but from women too!, in fact these problems come from a mentality from humans, this type of mentality, thinking and attitude are causing the problems of the world in a way that is obviously wrong, negative, or plain destructive to the point that the survival of life is now at stake and in many cases life is deteriorating. We are killing life, we are killing our childrens future and we are assaulting the cycles of life.

Our animals are suffering more than ever in the history of the earth, in 2007 we were informed that the honey bee was now being threatened with extinction, many native people here in Canada are aware of the intense struggle of our polar bear, they are drowning from the ice melting in their hunting grounds. We are witnessing the rape and plunder of our Sacred Mother Earth by corporations who are raking in billions and billions of dollars profit. Tribes have had to fight the logging giants who have clearcut many old growth forests. Now the mining giants of the world are raping

Alberta for oil sands turning Cree territory into a wasteland.

### The Worlds Greatest Environmental Disaster

On the morning of 26 April, 1986 a Soviet nuclear plant at Chernobyl near Kiev, exploded, pouring radioactivity into the environment, setting off the worst disaster in the history of nuclear energy. In the aftermath, more than 130,000 people had to be evacuated from the central contaminated zone and permanently resettled, a million live under radiological watch in high radioactivity zones, over 600,000, including 250,000 children are entered in a medical register, as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, for the rest of their lives, nearly 3 million acres of agricultural land are lost for decades. Chernobyl was the greatest environmental catastrophe in the history of the earth ie uranium mining.

### Historical Protest

The uranium industry is more active in Northern Saskatchewan than any other place in the Western world. For the Native People of the area it is the dominant force continuing the destructive momentum built up over 300 years of colonialism. If the present trend continues the result will be genocide. Mining and exploration are taking place even though Native Land claims and Aboriginal rights have not been settled.

Wollaston Lake is one of the small Indian communities struggling to survive. In the summer of 1985 the people there hosted an unprecedented protest. From June 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>, on the west side of Wollaston Lake, all traffic in and out of Rabbit Lake and Collins Bay uranium mines was

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## Uranium Mining Cont from page

blocked for 80 hours. The blockade marked the first act of civil disobedience against the uranium industry in Saskatchewan. The decision to carry out the blockade was made only after all conventional means of protest had been exhausted.

### Elder Corbin Harney Speaks Out

Corbin Harney stands as no one else does at the moment for that new alliance between indigenous people and environmentalist. Corbin Harney is an elder and spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone, a native people indigenous to Idaho, Nevada, Utah and California. Corban Harney came out from behind the bush and is leading his people to protest the US governments nuclear testing. "As I see it all around me, the trees are dying out, our water is contaminated, and our air is not good to breath, we have to come back to the Native Way of Life, the Native Way is to pray for everything, our Mother Earth is very important, we can't just misuse her and think she is going to contiune. We've been told to take care of what we've got so that we can leave something for the younger generation, we the people are going to have to put our minds together to save our planet here. We only have one water, one air, one Mother Earth."

### Elder Bob Staffanson Speaks Out

The world that we know is in serious jepardoy because of the destructive capacities of selfish, uncaring and narrow people and because technology is out of control. Cultural arrogance and worship of technology have clouded our societies moral compass. The unprovoked war in Iraq is symptomatic of our worst impulses masquerading as our best. The corrupt election in the USA testifies to the degree to which the American people have been brainwashed by conniving and brutal leadership using the language of benevolence and compassion.



Uranium Tailings No. 7, Elliot Lake, Ontario 1995

All of the destruction to Mother Earth and our childrens future is in the same context, we are creating lies, injustice, negativity and death, the people who are forced to prison and taken away from their families for speaking out in defence of Mother Earth are protectors for their people in the history of the earth.

### Elder Bob Lovelace Speaks Out

On February 15, 2008 Bob Lovelace received a 6 month prison sentence and a \$25,000 fine for protesting peacefully against the Frontenac Ventures Ltd uranium mine. Bob Lovelace is a professor at Queens University and native councillor at Flemming college here in Ontario, Canada. Bob says he has a responsibility to his children's future and that he has a responsibility to protect Mother Earth for his tribe, the Ardoch Algonquin Nation. Our Mother Earth is sacred, her body is sacred, the rivers and streams are Mother Earth's blood, we need to keep her clean for our children's future, all my relations.

### Natives Jailed for Defending Our Childrens Future

On March 17, 2008, Judge George Smith of Ontario Superior Court in Thunder Bay sentenced Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig (KI) Chief Donny Morris and 5 other band members to 6 months in jail for contempt of court. The natives had disobeyed an October court order that directed them to stay away from exploratory drill sites operated by Platinex, Inc. KI leadership also rejected a compromise proposed by Ontario Aboriginal Affaris Minister Michael Bryant that would have greatly increased the bands legal costs and required Platinex to consult with natives. KI leaders said they objected to the plan because it assumed drilling would go ahead.



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