

THE POLITICS OF CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

Every day brings new climate calamities. Beyond these looms the risk of cascading ‘tipping points’ and runaway warming. Millions of people are suffering under the impact of extractive industries, pollution, and climate change. We know the problem facing us is not technological, but political. A mass movement against climate change is necessary and it’s emerging worldwide. How can we win? A movement that wants to win can’t avoid politics, because politics is about power: the power to win and the power of climate enemies. But what politics?

OPPOSE FOSSIL CAPITAL

Everyone can see that the government is not taking enough action to radically reduce emissions, but why? It is not simply corrupt or inept. States compete by encouraging capital accumulation, so protect the interests of polluting and exploitative corporations. Their pursuit of profit and economic growth at any price is no accident, it is the essence of capitalism.

JUST TRANSITION

A minority of wealthy individuals and corporations are responsible for the vast majority of atmospheric carbon, yet they are the ones with the greatest stake in the status quo. The rich are already planning to insulate themselves from the worst effects of climate chaos while failing to prevent it - and to repress the rest of us. The global majority will have to take them on to protect our environment. Diversifying our movement and mobilising that global majority means a just transition is vital. It must offer secure green housing, jobs and transport for everyone. This will need programmes of publicly funded investment and the retraining of workers whose livelihoods currently rely on carbon intensive industries. There are already trade unionists making this case through campaigns like One Million Climate Jobs and Scot.E3.

ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Colonialism and imperialism have always gone hand in hand with extractive industries and environmental destruction. Fossil capital and the arms industry profit from imperialist conflict and competition. Imperialist states fight to control natural resources, build extractive infrastructures that destroy the conditions of life for indigenous peoples, and routinely violate the flimsy and

inadequate international agreements on emissions. The climate movement must be anti-imperialist and stand in solidarity with indigenous people against incursions by extractive industries. Campaigns demanding that corporations and public institutions divest from fossil capital and the arms industry are gaining ground, from university campuses to workers’ pensions.

MIGRANT SOLIDARITY & THE FAR RIGHT

As climate chaos and war displaces millions of people in the Global South, imperialist states are militarising their borders against the survivors of their own policies. Many on the far right are climate deniers, promoting carbon-intensive industries. Brazil’s far-right President Jair Bolsonaro poses an existential threat to the rainforest and to indigenous peoples. Others are using the climate crisis to justify genocidal racism, blaming people from poor countries, who have contributed little to this catastrophe but face the worst consequences. Climate change is an international crisis that demands an internationalist solution. We need to oppose the far right, build solidarity with migrants and opposition to border controls.

rs21 Public Meeting

Launch of the brilliant new book ‘Revolutionary Rehearsals in the neo liberal age’ – sponsored by the publishers Haymarket books. More details at tinyurl.com/revrehearsals

Contact us at intsocscotland@gmail.com

Website rs21.org.uk

