

# Being a transgender woman at the International Youth Camp

by Sister from Scotland

In July this year, I attended my first ever International Youth Summer Camp. While I may have been a committed Leninist for a long time, and while I have been a member of the [Fourth International's Scottish section](#) for a few years now, unfortunately those years fell amid the COVID-19 pandemic and thus were deprived of camps. So by Summer of this year, I was especially excited to finally attend the camp as part of a delegation made up of comrades from Scotland (along with some dear international friends based in England!). It being my first ever time would have made this camp a special occasion all by itself, but there was another, much more personal reason why I was so excited to be taking part: This was going to be my first time living publicly as a woman.

You see, I am a transgender woman. But so far I have been a very cautious and closeted trans woman. I am really early on in my transition, and until recently the only people I have truly been myself around are fellow trans people from the queer movement. And even then, I've only presented as a woman in small gatherings of trusted friends and partners. But I decided that this time, at the camp, I was going to take a leap into the unknown: I was going to dress, present, live as the woman I really am, for the duration of the camp. I was going to introduce myself to my comrades.

It is a general point with me, that I do not take leaps into the unknown very often. I am one of those people who are very easily caught and stuck by indecision when it comes to big choices. I am a woman, but a fearful one. I want to show my face: I want to be known and thought of and spoken to and loved as a woman, but I am afraid. I am a woman, but most of

the time I am silent and hidden, buried deep in the closet. So what led me to take a leap, for once?

Two things. Firstly, I was impressed by the [Fourth International](#)'s approach to identity issues. Not just their historical involvement in the feminist movement, but also the ongoing commitment to racial justice, feminism and queer struggle that I could see upheld in the various sections of the international. Of course, historical and programmatic commitments, while inspiring and appealing to a closeted trans woman like me, would not alone have been enough to convince me to bare myself so truthfully and openly.

It was the second thing that was decisive. It might seem small to you, reader, but it was simply getting the chance, a few months before the camp, to meet some members of the Danish section who introduced themselves with they/them pronouns. Here they were, some gender dissidents just like me, clear and queer among their fellow comrades without a worry. It occurred sharply to me, right then and there, that if I was just a little bit braver, I could be like that!

Well, that decided it. With a good deal of panicked, excited sincerity, I told those comrades about myself, I mean really, truly about myself, and told them that I wanted to come out at the camp. They were supportive and cheerful, and looking forward to knowing the real me when we met again in France. And so, I had now committed myself. I won't lie: It was a decision I would worry and fret about as the camp drew near. This was natural, obviously. I was about to come out to about two hundred people, and across multiple language barriers too! Would I get tangled up in explaining myself? Would there be misunderstandings? Would some people turn out to be bigots? I had reason to be more than a little nervous: A depressing number of times in my years on the left, I have seen how easily some supposedly progressive "comrades" have dropped the act and morphed into reactionary dogs when challenged by actually-existing trans people with ideas and opinions.

However, I was also buoyed by a kind of feverish anticipation. The simple prospect of cutting the bullshit, dropping my boyish disguise and being totally honest seemed so radical, so wonderful, so liberating, that I could not wait to get to France. Besides, I knew full well that to be openly myself at the camp was a political commitment, not just a personal one. I am both a militant in a battle for my own civil rights and a socialist, and I feel it is my duty as a transgender socialist to do my best to bring together the causes of trans rights and socialism into one struggle. I firmly believe that the perspectives of trans people are valuable, and that the socialist movement is lessened by their absence, just as it is lessened by the absence of black perspectives or disabled perspectives. If the patriarchy tries to turn gender into a binary of bitterly opposed frontlines, then gender rebels like me are well positioned to show how these frontlines are vulnerable to permeation, sabotage and mutiny. We cannot be quiet, not when we have so much to give, so much to talk about, so much to teach. And so, I felt compelled to raise my voice: A woman's voice, loud, sharp and liberated.

As the fateful date approached I made some preparations, like telling the other members of the Scottish delegation, and coming out to a few comrades I had already met. Their support and acceptance was a welcome boost, and it really cemented my resolve and confidence to know that they would have my back during the camp. And when, after the long journey down to the campsite, the time finally came to commit to things and reveal my true self, it was good to be able to take the first steps with some help from comrades. I remember, on the first morning of the camp, speaking with my delegation, airing out some last-minute nerves and making absolutely sure that, in the event of any exclusion or bigotry, I could count on them to help me assert my right to be there as the woman I am.

Thankfully though, all that worrying was completely needless. I got so hung up on potential issues and fears, only for them

to dissolve the moment I walked out into the sun in a dress and began introducing myself. I don't think I was prepared for how natural it all felt, as if I had been doing this my entire life. Whether it was a comrade who had previously met me as a "boy", or whether it was someone entirely new, things went so smoothly that I was a little bit shocked. But only a little bit, because the dominant emotion I felt was joy – pure, riotous, joy.

This wonderful feeling would develop into a deep sense of fulfilment as the days passed. Yes, as one of a handful of trans women at the camp, I was in an extreme minority, but it hardly felt that way. On the contrary, the blanket response of my sisters was to welcome and include me, and as I spent time participating in the women's discussion spaces, learning, sharing ideas and helping to plan actions, I came to realise some things: chiefly, that this was the first time I properly felt a part of a women's movement.

I am a feminist. The problem is though, that the feminist movement in Scotland and the UK is in a parlous, disorganised state compared to the women's movement in the rest of the world. Feminism in these gloomy islands can't boast of mass, vibrant, militant women's strikes and demonstrations in the way that Argentinian or Portuguese or Polish or Chilean feminism can. In addition, the feminist movement here is so riven by culture war junk and middle class transphobia, that it feels pretty difficult for a trans woman like me to feel safe or welcome taking part in what little we have. There is that constant worry with the movement back home, a lingering fear that solidarity is something that can easily be revoked when the sister doesn't fit some arbitrary biological or social norm.

I had no such worries among the women at the camp. Here I experienced live, determined, militant sisterhood, a sisterhood ferocious in combat yet caring and inclusive towards its own, a sisterhood committed to mass revolutionary

struggle. And I was welcome implicitly, no questions asked! As I sat in meetings surrounded almost totally by cisgender women, I felt utterly at ease, a circumstance which honestly surprised me. I reflected that, were I in a similar setting in the UK, I would be a lot more nervous and on-edge, the familiar fear gnawing at me and making me wonder whether my inclusion might suddenly be subject to withdrawal on some bigot's whim. But here, among revolutionary socialist women, I was as much a woman as any other, a comrade to be loved and supported.

And this love and support helped me realise something else, too: The sheer difference which living in an honest manner makes to my ability to express emotions. I've long been aware of how enforced masculinity has marked and scarred me in various ways. Throughout childhood, I was conditioned, punished and harassed into acting and thinking like a boy by various forces, whether they be the ways patriarchal society moulds the minds of children to adopt certain gender roles, the way kids learn to laugh at girly "faggots" and "trannies", or the way an overly emotional child is relentlessly bullied for being "soft" and "effeminate", too much of a "crybaby". This prolonged campaign against the personality of the child induces a painful kind of alienation- Confused and afraid, bombarded by the world around you, the easiest response is just to give in and try and fit the role as well as you can, even if it means doing as the oppressor wants and shutting away parts of yourself. Sure, it might make you less of a target, and you might be convinced that it's better to try and be "normal" and "just like the other boys", but it never, ever, feels right. Even though you can't put your finger on what's wrong and why you feel so at odds with yourself, you simply cannot ignore the pain, no matter how much you scream at yourself to shut up and conform. It's hard to be at peace when you're mutilating yourself.

This is something that you gradually confront as you begin to

wake up and process the fact that you've been brainwashed, but you really do not realise the extent to which your identity has been dulled by living a lie until the burden of the lie is gone. It's something I've been approaching as I've shared my womanhood with loved and trusted friends, but the scale, duration and public nature of my doing so at the camp, and in front of so many cis people simultaneously, affected me in ways I hadn't prepared for. It shook me, but in the most wonderful way possible. Living so naturally and freely as a woman was like coming home to myself. Suddenly, I was so much less inhibited and so much more confident in expressing my feelings and emotions. Years of self-censorship and self-scrutiny have led me to mentally check myself in countless ways whenever I'm with other people, but here I didn't need to think about how I acted and expressed myself at all- Everything just flowed naturally.

So here I was, accessing those alienated parts of my personality that had been walled off and hidden by a childhood of having to be a boy. Here I was: A confident, affectionate, goofy, relaxed woman, perfectly at ease among her sisters and comfortable in her own skin. It felt so good to throw all the old defense mechanisms, all the nerves, all the congealed boy shit- in short, all my chains- right into the trash. How lightly you breathe when you aren't chained down!

This is what made the Youth Camp so special for me. I think it speaks to the way that the Camp functions as a space for a kind of pre-figurative politics, a way of testing out some elements of socialism via collective, co-operative living. The ability to express yourself exactly as you wish to at the Camp, there among your fellow militants, is a miniature of that limitless expression of the human personality that will be the right and freedom of everyone under socialism. I may be back in Scotland now, and I may be remaining quite closeted for the time being, but I nevertheless see the camp as marking an important milestone in my transition. It has inspired me,

and given me strength and determination. I have had a sample of full, liberated womanhood, and I want it every day of my life. Yes, the world will not always receive me as enthusiastically as my comrades have done, and yes, the struggle for freedom will be long and difficult, but I also know what's at stake and what's to be won, if only I, we, all of us women dare! And I know that it can only be so through collective, revolutionary sisterhood. We will go forward over the corpse of the patriarchy, arms linked and voices raised as one.

*Our bodies, our choice!*

*Every woman a sister, every sister a revolutionary!*

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Sister from Scotland is a [Fourth International](#) supporter.

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## **The experience of the International Youth camp, an essential political moment!**

The International Youth camp took place from 23 to 29 July 2022 in Vieure, France. After two years of suspension due to

Covid-19, the gathering is a week of self-managed camp that this year brought together more than 200 young revolutionaries from different parts of Europe, but also from Ukraine, Russia, Brazil and Mexico to celebrate the 37th edition of the youth camps of the [Fourth International](#).

This annual camp is dedicated to indepth discussion of different themes, to the sharing of our local and international struggles and to the developing of common strategies and actions. Each day is divided into several parts. The mornings are reserved for plenary educationals on themes such as ecosocialism, feminist and LGBTQIA+ struggles, imperialism, anti-racism, anti-fascism, class struggle as youth and strategic approaches. This year we had guests such as Andreas Malm (Socialistiska Partiet, Sweden), Olivia Borchmann (SUF, Denmark), Julien Salingue (NPA, France), Laurent Sorel, (Gauche Éco-Socialiste, ex Ensemble Insoumis, France), Marta Autore (Comunia, Italy) and Jonathan Simmel (SUF, Denmark)

The afternoons are mainly aimed at highlighting specific concepts or situations arising from the theme of the plenary. They consist of concrete workshops on different struggles, inter-delegation meetings to deepen our international knowledge and share strategies of struggle, but also non-mixed spaces for self-organisation of feminist, LGBTQIA+ and anti-racist struggles. In order to build and elaborate a real internationalist struggle, standing commissions on the Russian imperialist war in Ukraine and ecosocialism today were also on the agenda. A [declaration in solidarity with the resistance of the Ukrainian people](#) was also adopted.

Throughout the busy stay, the camp also remains a place for practising self-management where young activists manage the different daily tasks from cleaning to multilingual interpretation. There are also voluntary tasks such as the awareness team (to deal with conflicts or personal concerns) or the care team (which acts as a preventative measure and



ensures the well-being of everyone) that allow us to make the space as safe as possible and to carry out certain tasks around care.

This kind of political practice is even more indispensable in a materialist perspective. The neoliberal capitalist system in which we live shapes our thinking; in other words, our consciousness is constructed according to the world around us. Throughout the year we fight this system, even when the revolution seems far away, we know that the struggle is permanent and on all fronts. For many participants, far from being a utopian space outside the system, the camp, by its organization and structure, allows us to have a foretaste of a self-managed internationalist communist solidarity society requiring perpetual adjustments in order to ensure the proper functioning of community life. Indeed, during meetings between FI youth delegates in preparation for the camp, the camp is constantly redefined each year on the basis of previous criticisms. The camp is organized by the member organizations or those close to the Fourth International in Europe, and its construction is ongoing and international.

This political moment is an essential exercise that acts as a catalyst facilitating the sharing of experiences, a festive atmosphere and above all a true spirit of camaraderie. The experience of the youth camp is essential in the construction of tomorrow's anti-capitalist, ecosocialist, feminist, queer, anti-racist, anti-fascist and internationalist society.

*Translated by [International Viewpoint](#) from [Gauche Anticapitaliste](#) Originally published at: <https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article7766>*

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# **“Total, BP or Shell will not voluntarily give up their profits. We have to become stronger than them...”**

## **Interview with Andreas Malm**

Andreas Malm is a Swedish ecosocialist activist and author of several books on fossil capital, global warming and the need to change the course of events initiated by the burning of fossil fuels over the last two centuries of capitalist development. The Jeunes Anticapitalistes (the youth branch of the [Gauche Anticapitaliste](#), the Belgian section of the Fourth International) met him at the 37th Revolutionary Youth Camp organized in solidarity with the [Fourth International](#) in France this summer, where he was invited as a speaker.

**As left-wing activists in the climate movement, we sometimes feel stuck by what can be seen as a lack of strategic perspectives within the movement. How can we radicalize the climate movement and why does the movement need a strategic debate in your opinion?**

I share the feeling, but of course it depends on the local circumstances – this Belgian “Code Red” action, this sort of *Ende Gelände* or any similar kind of thing, sounds promising to me, but you obviously know much more about it than I do. In any case, the efforts to radicalize the climate movement and let it grow can look different in different circumstances.

One way is to try to organize this kind of big mass actions of the *Ende Gelände* type, and I think that’s perhaps the most useful thing we can do. But of course, there are also sometimes opportunities for working within movements like Fridays for Future or Extinction Rebellion for that matter and try to pull them in a progressive direction as well as to make

them avoid making tactical mistakes and having an apolitical discourse. In some places, I think that this strategy can be successful. Of course, one can also consider forming new more radical climate groups that might initially be pretty small, but that can be more radical in terms of tactics and analysis, and sort of pull others along, or have a “radical flank” effect. So, I don’t have one model for how to do this – it really depends on the state of the movement in the community where you live and obviously the movement has ups and downs (it went quite a lot down recently after the outbreak of the pandemic, but hopefully we’ll see it move back up).

Finally, it’s obviously extremely important to have our own political organizations that kind of act as vessels for continuity and for accumulating experiences, sharing them and exchanging ideas. Our own organizations can also be used as platforms for taking initiatives within movements or together with movements.

**For some of us, our first big climate action was during the COP 15 in 2009 in Copenhagen. Now we are in 2022 – what do you think are the lessons that the climate movement has learned since then?**

The COP 15 in Copenhagen was a turning point. I was very active in the run-up to COP 15 and was part of the group that organized the big demonstration there. But the sense that most of us had in the movement after COP 15 was a general sense of failure. Of course, the COP itself was a massive failure, but we also realized that the demonstrations and direct actions didn’t really have an impact. The movement realized that the focus on the COP summits that we had had up until then didn’t really make sense at all, and it was largely after that that you saw a decisive turn towards opposition to fossil fuel projects, blockades, climate camps and things like that.

I think that this strategic turn will have to be reinforced, particularly given the fact that this year’s COP will be held

in Egypt and next year's COP will be held in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. These two countries are both completely inhospitable to dissent – it's impossible to organize anything on the ground there and so this is different from the most recent COP happening in Glasgow. The climate movement will have to organize things in other places – we can't bring activists to Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt, this resort town where the summit will happen. So, these two upcoming COPs should be occasions for the movement to pull off mass actions at various places around the world at that time, targeting fossil fuel projects.

I was at the COP 26 in Glasgow last November. Again, there was a very big demonstration – something like 100,000 people, – again, there was an alternative “people's forum”, and I had a sense of déjà vu. This is something that we've been doing for a long time and it doesn't really get us anywhere. One very brilliant comrade in the climate movement in Portugal, João Camargo, expressed in discussions around Glasgow and in a piece he wrote that we need to decisively turn our backs on the COP process because it's so useless. As I said, the upcoming two COPs really should be just an opportunity to escalate the struggle in which we engage regardless of COPs.

**Carrying on with the strategic and tactical issues, in your talk the other day you mentioned the question of the role of the workers and the workers' movement as they are (and they are obviously very different in the different countries). You elaborate a lot on how to block the most destructive fossil infrastructures and companies; how do you see that in relation to the workers – not only in these sectors but more generally – and the workers' movement as you know it – be it the Swedish example or other countries?**

I think I phrased this a bit unfortunately the other day and I came across as too dismissive of trade unions. That wasn't really my intention. My concrete experience over the past few years in relation to trade unions has been pretty limited, but

my sort of horizon is northern European and in Sweden the trade unions are completely indifferent to the climate issue probably more so than in even in Norway and Denmark. Swedish unions are totally ignorant and uninterested and also totally incapable of putting up a fight for their members interests. We have no strikes in Sweden any longer. This is probably an exception rather than the rule, but the level of class struggle in Sweden is so low that from my point of view it's extremely hard to imagine that all of a sudden organized labor in Sweden would rise to the occasion and become an important player in climate politics.

In Germany, which is where I have a little bit more concrete experience of climate activism to an extent, the situation is a little bit more complicated. On the one hand, with the Fridays for Future movement in 2019, which was stronger and larger in Germany than anywhere else, you had a moment in the autumn of 2019 when you had a trade union component to these strikes and the big public sector union called on its members to join. On the other hand, you have a very negative experience from the struggle around coal in Germany – which is really a key struggle in the whole European field of climate politics – where the big trade unions have resisted calls for an immediate or even early phase-out of coal and have been very retrograde in clinging to coal.

Out of this experience a position has emerged that has been articulated by my dear friend and comrade Tadzio Müller, who has been sort of a key organizer, strategist and thinker of Ende Gelände. He now almost says that he considers the working class in the global North to be more or less part of the enemy – he thinks that the organized working class is so invested in the existing economy that it will just defend coal and similar things like it has in general. Then there is an opposite position which is very forcefully articulated by another friend in common, Matt Huber, in his recent book *Climate Change as Class War. Building Socialism on a Warming Planet:*

he says that the only hope for climate politics is to activate the forces of organized labor and that it's only by turning towards the working class – including by taking jobs in the industry, something like the old industrial turn that we had in the 80s – that we can make any progress on the climate front. So the organized working class is the only conceivable subject of a climate revolution. So these are like polar opposites and here I find myself advocating a kind of centrist position between these two. I cannot accept the idea that the working class is part of the enemy – not even coal workers – but on the other hand I don't really believe in the idea that organized labor will be the prime mover of the climate front. I think the prime mover of the climate struggle will be and is a climate movement that isn't defined around class. I think there are three routes for someone to be interested in the question of climate: 1) having some kind of personal experience of adverse weather which is becoming more and more common; 2) having knowledge of the severity of the crisis without having personally experienced it, which isn't very hard to get by and doesn't require a PhD or any university degree; 3) being animated by solidarity with people who suffer from climate disasters around the world. I would think that these are the three main routes into the commitment to climate struggle and none of these routes necessarily pass through the point of production. So it's potentially a funnel that draws people into the climate movement from various points along the landscape of class society.

The movement that emerged in 2019 was largely defined not along the lines of class or race or gender, but rather of age. It was primarily a youth phenomenon – with Fridays for Future in particular – and there is a logic to that because the climate crisis has a very distinct temporal aspect: it's young people who will have to deal with this through the rest of their lives while old people have perhaps benefited from the fossil economy and won't see as much of the damage. I think this needs to be theorized and to an extent accepted and

understood that the age component of the climate struggle will be significant in the coming mobilizations. I think that Matt Huber and others who argue along similar lines as he does are correct insofar as the climate movement needs an alliance with the working class and with segments of organized labor to amass sufficient strength to turn these things around. The climate movement has to make sure that its politics are compatible with working class interests and can converge with those interests. But that's something else than putting all eggs in the basket of an industrial turn or proletarianization of the climate movement, which I think would be a strategic dead-end. Now the promise of the Green New Deal and of all these kinds of initiatives that we've seen in recent years – which haven't come to fruition unfortunately, but that doesn't mean that they're useless or doomed – that the climate transition goes hand in hand with improving the standards of living for workers and strengthening the bargaining power in the political position of the working class is something that needs to be pursued further.

When it comes to the concrete tactical questions about relating to workers when you are having a blockade, again, from the German experience I think it would be a massive mistake – a workerist error if you like – to prioritize good relations with the coal workers over having an effective blockade that temporarily damages the interests of these workers because you close their mines for a few days or something like that. There have been numerous initiatives to try to establish contact and dialogue with coal workers in Germany and it's been very unsuccessful, particularly in the east where the coal workers rather tend to move towards the far right – the Alternative für Deutschland, AfD – as a defense of their interests because the AfD wants to continue with coal forever and doesn't believe in the existence of the climate crisis. Then again, we definitely shouldn't give up on the idea that the type of transition we want to see has to ensure that workers in sectors that have to be dismantled

completely get equivalent or better jobs, preferably in the places where they live so they don't have to move. This should be a key component of the transition. But eventually you can't expect workers in the fossil fuel industry itself to take the initiative for closing down that industry – it's a basic Marxist insight that their immediate day-to-day class interest is of course to keep their jobs. So the initiative to close that industry down has to come from the outside and the blockade is a manifestation of this: we're coming from the outside and we want to shut this sector down because it's necessary. But you don't want to make these workers your enemies and you don't want to consider them the enemy – you want to tell them that unfortunately they are employed in a sector that has to be shut down but that we are demanding that the transition ensures that they get equivalent or better jobs where they live.

I really felt the mistake I made the other day – coming across as too dismissive of the trade unions – when I was at this workshop about eco-unionism, where I heard several cases – some of them I knew about – of workers in factories actually proposing a conversion of their production. We've had a comrade in the Swedish section of the Fourth International (FI) who has been doing absolutely heroic work in the metal workers' union in the auto industry for decades; he has been trying to establish the idea that auto workers can save their jobs by proposing a conversion of their plants to something like electrical boxes or wind turbines or whatever it is that could be used for the for the transition. Unfortunately, he just hasn't made any progress because he's so isolated and the trade union bureaucracy has such complete control. I have sort of followed his efforts for two decades, and he's banging his head against the wall of trade union bureaucracy trying to get somewhere with this idea. I've sort of lost faith in it because it hasn't produced any results; but in cases where it does produce results, I'm obviously extremely excited and happy to be proven wrong. Nothing would make me happier than



the spreading of these kinds of examples of workers in factories having ideas about the transition.

A glimpse of hope from Belgium then. It's not like the trade unions are very green and climate friendly – well, they say they are but in reality they're not, as demonstrated for instance by their position in favor of the extension of the airport in Liège to build a hub for Alibaba's activities in Europe – but still, in the 2019 Youth for Future movement, we saw a new group called Workers for Climate that was created by grassroots and left-wing unionists. What's more, the main unions – including the bureaucracies – sent delegations to the demonstrations, and the most progressive wings of the CSC union, organizing for instance the retail workers but also the aviation branch, officially covered the workers who would strike. It's very symbolic, but still it was made public and the workers received the information that they could go on strike and be covered by the union.

This is a universe away from Sweden, it would never happen there – but it's great!

Another thing: in the Belgian public transport sector, there is a real interest in the climate issue. This reminds of the [statement by Naomi Klein](#) that railway workers on strike are actually struggling for climate. There may be some sectors of the working class and some unions in some countries that could more easily be reached regarding the climate issue.

My limited understanding of Belgium is that you still have a fairly significant industrial manufacturing sector and a working class that every now and then engages in some serious battle for its interests. So you have some class struggle happening in Belgium – we have nothing in Sweden, absolutely nothing! But where there is class struggle happening, of course the potential exists for workers themselves taking initiatives or for the climate movement drawing them in or for convergence or productive interaction, and this should be

taken up. It's exclusively a question of the level of intensity of the class struggle. At the COP 26 for instance, there was this strike happening in Glasgow by garbage collectors, and Greta Thunberg approached them and expressed her support for their strike, and they joined the big march. That's just one example of how these things can play out. Sweden is perhaps an extreme case, but the problem is that generally I think that the intensity of working class struggles is very low compared to what it was in the 80s, 70s, 60s – not to mention of course the 1920s. If the climate issue had exploded in the 1950s and 60s, it could have played out completely differently. Now it has exploded in a moment of doldrums where the working class is historically quite weak.

**One last example of how at some point we could find another potential, in Belgium at least: during the last general strike before the pandemic, in February 2019, the airspace was shut down and there were no flights at all for 24 hours. This shows what unions are still able to do and how they could potentially change things for real. On another note: now there is a huge energy crisis which is also part of the reason why there is a very high inflation in several countries, and this is a major topic which is being discussed within the labor movement in general and which also mobilizes people to demonstrate. Could there be a point of convergence here, where we can easily highlight the need to solve the energy crisis for environmental reasons as well as for social reasons?**

Absolutely. I guess that two demands should be efficient in that situation. First, roll out renewables as fast as possible, also because they're now cheaper than fossil fuels actually, so the cost of a unit of electricity is lower if it comes from wind and solar than if it comes from any fossil fuel in Europe. There should be massive public investments in order to deploy renewables as fast as possible. Secondly, in this situation of rising energy prices, it should be seen as fundamentally perverse that private oil and gas companies are

swimming in these insane superprofits and you should be able to whip up some kind of public anger about these.

**Definitely. In France – but probably also elsewhere – there has been a proposal from the parliamentary Left to implement a special tax on these profits – and even a limited number of Macron’s MPs, who usually act as loyal soldiers for his authoritarian neoliberalism, seem to be inclined to agree on this idea. Now these are immediate demands, but you also put forward transitional demands to be taken up by the climate movement, i.e. demands that enter in direct contradiction with the ongoing capital accumulation. What are some of these demands?**

One of them is the demand for not a single additional fossil fuel installation or infrastructure. This can apply to an airport, a highway or a gas terminal or oil pipeline among other things. Another transitional demand – and obviously none of this is my invention, it’s something that is being discussed more and more – is nationalizing the private energy companies and taking over oil and gas and coal companies and forcing them to do something different, to stop their extraction of fossil fuels as fast as humanly possible and perhaps instead roll out renewable energy or even engage in carbon dioxide removal – that means taking down CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere in one way or another. But these are only two dimensions, they are not the only ones and again, it depends on where you find yourself. In some countries, the oil and gas and coal sectors are already nationalized – there, you would have to formulate this differently.

**You mentioned carbon dioxide removal (CDR), which is a great opportunity to discuss geoengineering. You warn a lot about solar geoengineering and Naomi Klein also does, and we can fully understand why when we see the nightmare it could be when we read or hear about that. Yet in the media in general there is not much writing about that – then again, you say you fear that it might come out all at once – and we seem to hear**

much more about carbon dioxide removal. Why is that? What's your take on solar geoengineering? And what's your take on carbon dioxide removal – given the state of things now, is it becoming unavoidable as a necessary yet insufficient part of the solution, to be deployed next to massive reductions of emissions?

This is a massive field which we can talk about for hours. I have a research project on this topic with a Belgian colleague from Lund university, who is also a friend and comrade, Wim Carton. We have a research grant and this coming autumn we will do research with a whole team of interns – made up of students from my Master's program in human ecology – on various aspects of carbon dioxide removal. We will write a book with Verso in the spring, which would be about both carbon dioxide removal and solar geoengineering and whose working title right now is *Overshoot. Climate Politics When It's Too Late*. I spent the past couple of months writing about solar geoengineering and trying to understand it. This might sound bizarre but I'm trying to use psychoanalysis to understand solar geoengineering because it has the component of repressing a problem as in the Freudian model of repression, where you push something out of the conscious so that it appears not to exist, but under the surface it's bubbling and sooner or later it explodes.

CDR and solar geoengineering need to be distinguished as they work in different ways. You're absolutely right that solar geoengineering isn't much talked about. Some vulgar Marxists have sort of anticipated that big fossil fuel companies would promote solar geoengineering as a way continuing with business-as-usual. That has not happened: neither ExxonMobil nor any other big fossil company say anything about solar geoengineering, nor is there any government that's advocating it and there's no far right party advocating it – although during the Trump era there was this expectation that he would soon flip over into advocating solar geoengineering, none of

that has happened. On the contrary, carbon dioxide removal, which works very differently, is something that all the big oil and gas companies say that they are planning on doing as part of their net zero propaganda, and you can see far right parties – someone here on this camp mentioned Berlusconi the other day – advocating in favor of planting trees and things like that, and there are also a lot of startups and capitalist companies who see carbon dioxide removal – perhaps particularly direct air capture – as a new line of business where you can produce commodities and make profit from them. So you have this sort of the burgeoning field of business opportunities in CDR that doesn't exist in solar geoengineering because that doesn't produce any new commodities that you can sell.

There are many differences between them but another one is that CDR, just as you suggested, is going to be necessary because the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is already too high. We need to get CO<sub>2</sub> down from the atmosphere, back under the ground, locked into subsurface storage – where it was originally before it was taken out in the form of fossil fuels and set on fire. The only way to do that on a massive scale seems to be to use some kind of advanced technology – planting trees is not going to be enough because you can't return carbon to the passive part of the carbon cycle, under the ground, just by planting trees. Planting trees affects the active carbon cycle, but to get it back sequestered under the ground, where it's locked out geologically from the active carbon cycle, you need something else. A technology like direct air capture has promise in this respect because it can actually capture CO<sub>2</sub> and mineralize it, so you turn it into stone under the ground.

There are now plants on Iceland doing that and it's essentially a proven technology, but the problem there in our analysis – Wim and I wrote an article about this in *Historical Materialism* – is that this technology is being captured by

private interests who don't see any profits potential in taking the carbon and burying it underground, because that means that you essentially put a resource out of the business cycle. What they can do instead to make profit is to capture the CO<sub>2</sub> and turn it into a product such as synthetic jet fuel or they can use it in fertilizers or capture CO<sub>2</sub> and sell it as fizz to Coca-Cola – this is what Climeworks, one of the big direct air capture companies, does. When you use it as a commodity, then you can make a profit, but that's just recycling the carbon because it doesn't actually put it under the ground. So if you want to put it under the ground you need to sort of liberate this technology from the compulsion to make profit – that's our view.

Solar geoengineering on the other hand is a very different story because it comes with so many dangers of messing with the climate system. The biggest risk, of course, is what is known as the termination shock: if you do solar geoengineering, you have this sunscreen but you continue to build up CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere; what happens is that all of this CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is just waiting to exercise its radiative forcing – its impact on the climate; – so if the sunscreen is taken down for some reason, boom, all of a sudden this accumulated CO<sub>2</sub> creates an enormous rise in temperatures. (Picture boiling water on which you put a lid and it continues to boil, it burns hotter and hotter, and then you take away the lid and the whole boiling water comes out of the pot.) That could lead to the most unimaginably disastrous spike in temperatures and there are all sorts of other dangers with geoengineering. Therefore, solar geoengineering isn't something that people on the left should advocate for, and here I part company with someone like Kim Stanley Robinson for instance. He's a novelist who wrote a great novel called *The Ministry for the Future*, probably the best climate fiction so far, but he advocates in favor of solar geoengineering – which forms a big part of that book – from sort of a left-wing perspective. A colleague of mine, Holly Jean Buck, does the

same thing in the US: she's written about solar geoengineering, and she says that this is something that the left should look upon as a potentially useful technology.

I don't think it is useful, I don't think we should ever advocate it, but we should prepare for it because it's so likely that it will start; the likeliness does not come from any aggressive sponsorship, so far like we said it's almost never talked about, but there is a logic to it which is that there is only one known technology that has a potential to immediately reduce temperatures on earth. Carbon dioxide removal would have effect over decades, and likewise, if we were to stop emissions now you wouldn't see a drop in temperatures – you would see the temperatures rising more slowly and then perhaps flattening out. If you are in a situation where you feel we are in a total emergency and we have to do something and reduce temperatures, the only thing you can do to accomplish that is to shoot sulfate clouds into the atmosphere. It's the only known technological option for doing this. With every summer, with every new season of disasters, my feeling is OK, when will the order be given to implement geoengineering? When will things break, when will the system snap and when will there be a sudden real sense of emergency that – as in during the pandemic – we have to do something and when will there be this moment where governments start looking around: “what can we do? The American West is on fire”, or becoming a desert, or the entire Europe is burning or whatever? And then there is only one thing you can do.

If we are in such a moment and the planes take off, I'm not saying we should for instance shoot down those planes or sabotage them or something like that. But we should think about what a left strategy in such a moment would be because it looks increasingly likely for strictly logical structural reasons. There are more and more signs that part of the sort of bourgeois intelligentsia is moving towards this. For instance, there is a think tank called the Paris Peace Forum

which aspires to be like the World Economic Forum in geopolitics – they have put together a commission on overshoot which is chaired by Pascal Lamy who was previously chairing the WTO, and he said a few months back that we need to look into geoengineering, that there is no other way... You know this guy?

**Yes, he is or used to be a neoliberal member of the Social-Democrats in France, he was EU commissioner for trade and then he went to the WTO...**

Right. Another sign is that about a year ago the US National Academy of Sciences put out a long report advocating a national research program into geoengineering, and I think that it's far more likely that Biden and the Democrats initiate moves towards this than Trump and the Republicans. So this is something to closely monitor and prepare for.

**This leads us to the question about the state. Many people and many leftists say that the climate and more generally the ecological disaster is a reason why we need to take up the question of the state and not only focus on something like local alternative societies, because it's so global and so bad and it will require so many investments and decisions and so on, that you need to find something as a state to act. But then of course there is the question of what kind of state we are thinking of. You talk about it a bit in in your book on the pandemic – it would be interesting to explore that question.**

Fundamentally, I think that the observation is correct that this crisis, however it's dealt with, is going to be dealt with by the state. Solar geoengineering would be an incredibly extreme intervention into the whole planetary system and it would be carried out by some states. Carbon dioxide removal on a large scale obviously requires massive involvement from the state. Emissions reductions also require the state because the reductions will have to be so big and quick and comprehensive



that no other agent than the state can conceivably do it. Here we should point out that all scientists who advocate carbon dioxide removal and/or solar geoengineering are perfectly clear that none of this will work without massive emissions reductions. Those who advocate solar geoengineering nowadays never say that we can do this instead of emissions reductions, they say that we have to do both at the same time; the question is "is it really likely that both happen at the same time?" They think so, I think that's an optimistic illusion. What I mean here is that there is no serious way out of the climate crisis without massive emissions reductions, and they have to be extraordinarily fast and deep and radical.

Now in whichever path states follow, I think states will undergo changes into their character. If you have a state that is implementing solar geoengineering, that state will become extremely powerful because it will rule the climate of the planet, so you would have all sorts of dangers of authoritarianism and extremely centralized control over climatic conditions in other parts of the world. There are all sorts of scenarios: solar geoengineering might cause monsoon failure in India or some other very bad side effect somewhere in the global South. But the state that does geoengineering – it could be the US for instance – will probably continue regardless and thereby exercise incredibly centralized power over humanity.

Now a state that undertakes massive emissions reductions could also change character. it might be authoritarian because it needs very forceful steering of the economy and of society if you're going to have these rapid emissions reductions. But there could also of course be a deepening of the democratic substance of that state: for instance if you nationalize private fossil fuel companies, what you do is that you essentially extend the democracy to the sphere of energy production. In other words, you put it under public control and take one sector of the economy into the hands of the

democratic polity, which in a way pushes against the limits of bourgeois democracy which says that democracy is this strictly political sphere and that the economy is a sphere that runs itself and should not be intruded. If you take over the energy sector and put it inside the political sphere then you sort of extend democracy into the economy. I think that a real transition requires this kind of deepening of democracy and that it can take on potentially something like a rupture, a revolutionary change in the sense that if you are ever going to accomplish this you probably have to defeat a very important part of the class enemy because it's not like Total or BP or Shell will voluntarily give up and say "OK, take our companies and we will never again have any profits and we're just going out of business and dying voluntarily". That's not how it works usually in history. So if we are going to accomplish that, we need to become stronger than them which is a very tall order because they are so much stronger than us right now. So we need to become stronger than them and if we were to defeat them, then that doesn't necessarily mean total social revolution but it's a change in property relations that could perhaps set in motion a process that goes beyond the current order of things.

**Apart from the question of the state and of local initiatives, there is the question of the role of the individual. There is an important, frequent narrative put forward by corporations and governments that it's essentially the responsibility of the individuals to solve the ecological disaster, but there is also sometimes pressure in the activist circles to live and act differently and maybe sometimes even to solve this question by individual or small changes on the scale of the individual or the community. What is your impression about this?**

It is a question that always pops up and that we struggle with all the time. Generally, I think it's important to point out that individual lifestyle changes will never be the solution

and that what you can do as an individual has extremely limited effect. Buying into this whole narrative that I as a consumer can change things by shopping differently is to capitulate to a bourgeois narrative about society that is fundamentally false. First of all, you as a consumer can affect extremely limited change on your own. And you acting as a consumer is fundamentally unequal in the sense that it's the richest consumer that has the most influence: you don't want to base your politics on your affluence. A working-class consumer might have no capacity – or no time – to buy the more expensive, more ecologically sustainable alternative. Bill McKibben was at my university once and he was asked the question “what's the most important thing I can do as an individual?” and he said “stop being an individual, join with others and do things together, that's the only way to change things”, and that's correct.

On the other hand, the idea that what you do as an individual doesn't matter at all is the opposite mistake. This isn't about impact but it's about credibility: if we advocate ecological war communism or a total transformation of society, it would be hypocritical of me or anyone arguing along these lines to make no changes in their own lifestyles and just go on flight binges or eat endless amounts of meat for instance. Saying that it doesn't matter what I do as an individual so I can do anything but I'm all for a total change of society is not a way to make yourself credible. You need to practice what you preach just at least a little bit.

Now there is this saying by Adorno which you might have heard: “there is no good life in a bad one”, which is sometimes translated as “there is no right life in a wrong one”. To me, this means that if you're stuck inside in a system that is fundamentally rotten it's extremely difficult for you to purify or purge yourself and live in a completely sustainable fashion. That's virtually impossible, unless you go out and live on your own as a hunter-gatherer in the forest to escape

from the dirt of capitalist industrial civilization. We cannot strive for complete purity, it's impossible because you want to be part of society and you want to affect change in that society – you don't want to stand isolated outside of it. And as long as you're inside of it, which again is a prerequisite for changing it, then you have to make concessions to the society in which you live. This has always been the situation with our struggles: the workers have a relation of dependence to their employers and receive wages from their employers; they fight against their employers but they're still in a relation of dependence and can't just escape that dependence. In the same way, we are locked into a system that makes us consumers of fossil fuels and we can't just parachute out of it completely.

This means for each and one of us that we need to negotiate this in our own lives and make decisions balancing what's the right thing to do. And here the thing that most often comes up is flying because that's the worst thing you can do as a private consumer in terms of emissions, and it's also an act that is hard to resist sometimes because for instance if you want to go to North America for some reason – there might be a political reason for you to go there – then there is no other option than flying. Last December I needed to go to Egypt because that's a country I have connections to. And for the first time in human history you can't get on a boat on the northern Mediterranean and cross to the southern Mediterranean – there are no boats to Egypt! That's bizarre because that's how people have traveled for millennia for instance between Egypt and Italy – but it's not there any longer because an entire capitalist society has enforced aviation is the only mode of transportation that is available. What do I do then? Do I sit home and say I can't go to Egypt because there are only flights? No, that's not what I did, I took a flight to go there. On the contrary, when I discussed about how I were to come here to this camp [in central France], I was first told that speakers are asked to take the cheapest transportation to

the camp, which in my case would have meant flying here but that wouldn't have felt right – I try to avoid flying within Europe. And then I was alerted to the bus of the Danish delegation leaving from Copenhagen, so of course I took the Danish bus because that's a much better thing to do. But I think that there is no general rule for how to deal with these things in individual lives other than try to avoid excessive emissions and try to avoid emissions-intensive choices when possible. Of course you have to weigh this against other factors – the political projects you're involved in or family affiliations and so on. In any case, we need to abandon first the idea that my individual actions are what's going to change society and secondly the idea that you can become pure and free of sin and guilt in this society.

**In [your interview](#) with Stathis Kouvélakis for Hors-Série, you added another argument about how consumers don't have control about how things are produced, about the global chains of production and so on, and that's another important issue for us as Marxists.**

Yes, for instance the steel sector which is crucial when it comes to emissions – there is no way that a consumer of final products really can make an impact on choices in the steel sector because steel is an input into other commodities, and as a consumer when you buy a car or whatever it is you don't get into contact with the steel industry directly, you cannot boycott it.

**One word on Sweden where you come from. What's the state of the climate or ecological movement besides Greta Thunberg and what are the challenges for the Left in the country?**

Well, Greta is an anomaly because the climate movement in Sweden is extremely weak. Sweden is generally a graveyard for social movements and Greta became famous in Sweden because she first became famous in Europe. She was kind of discovered by the Swedish media all of a sudden – “so there's this Swedish

girl who's becoming very famous in Europe so we need to cover her here as well". But Fridays for Future as a movement was always weaker in Sweden than in Denmark, not to mention Germany or even Belgium. We never reached the stage where you were – at some point in late 2019 there were a couple of fairly big demonstrations in Stockholm but still far from the influence and the magnitude seen in other countries. There are initiatives here and there. At the time this interview is published there will have been a small scale Ende Gelände type of thing in late August against a cement company on Gotland, an island to the east of Sweden. There was a massive flop in early June: an attempt by activists in Stockholm – I was part of it in the beginning – to establish a campaign called "Pull the Plug" during a summit which took place in early June and didn't receive any media attention. The summit was called "Stockholm+50" because in 1972 there was an important UNEP summit there that was sort of a milestone in the development of international environmental politics – so the idea was that 50 years later, the Swedish government and UN would have a 50 year anniversary summit. We wanted to make actions at the same time, but the only thing that eventually happened was a march between various apartments where CEOs of oil and gas companies and banks in Sweden were living. We were going their outside of their apartments, burning some Bengal fires, chanting and so on – a great idea, but there were only 100 people. 100 people after half a year of attempts at mobilizing: a complete failure. Embarrassing even.

And then there is the question of the Left. There is the Left Party, which is the former Communist Party, and our FI section dissolved itself as a party – we used to be the Socialist Party and now we are called Socialist Politics – largely to be able to work inside the Left Party. Now the Left Party has a new chairwoman since a couple of years, Mehrnoosh Dadgostar, who goes by the name Nooshi. She has abandoned the climate politics of her predecessor Jonas Sjöstedt. He was an auto worker who used to work at the Volvo plant in Umeå in northern

Sweden and was very close to some of our FI comrades because the largest metal workers union in northern Sweden is led by members of the Swedish section. He sort of started the process of inviting us into the Left Party in the years when Podemos and Syriza were interesting left-wing forces. He wanted to open up the Left Party and make it more that kind of party and suggested that we work together. He had a personal commitment to climate politics and he made it a profile issue of the Left Party. But Nooshi's strategic project is to win over working class voters from the Sweden Democrats – the far right – back to the Left Party. Now I'm simplifying a bit but she kind of has the idea that the working class is essentially the white working class in old industrial or postindustrial towns in rural areas, and that in order to win back these voters from the Sweden Democrats we have to tone down our climate politics and our anti-racism. Our current – Socialist Politics – and quite a few others within the Left Party are of course dissatisfied with this turn – this is a controversial line that she has taken. She's styling herself as an old-fashioned Social Democrat, very pro-industry – she likes to go to construction sites and put a helmet on and take photographs of herself posing as a worker, this kind of workerist attitude...

**This sounds similar to the short-lived experience of Sahra Wagenknecht's Aufstehen in Germany.**

Yes, it is that sort of thing. You have this tension all the time: should we be against "identity politics" and just go for hardcore class issues or should we have a broader understanding of class and the revolutionary subject. And unfortunately she has a very clear tendency towards the former position in this debate.

**One last word about Code Rouge, the action we've already mentioned at the beginning of the interview. As Gauche Anticapitaliste, we are members of a quite large coalition – with organizations such as Greenpeace for instance – which is planning an important action of civil disobedience in the**

beginning of October. The goal is to block a big infrastructure from Total...

Oh, wonderful!

We agree with you! (Total bought the main Belgian oil company Petrofina 20 years ago by the way.) We aim at mobilizing more than 1,000 activists for this action. It's really ambitious – we would like to accomplish something like Ende Gelände, which is very inspiring. We are working hard to make it a success...

Do you have dates for this action already? Where will it be? Is there a website?

Yes, it will take place during the weekend of 8-9 October. There is a website which is <https://code-rouge.be/> (in French and Dutch). The place has not been disclosed yet – we'll disclose it at the last moment to have more chances of success in this confrontational action.

Of course, it makes sense. Perfect! Unfortunately I can't make it on these dates, but if I could I would definitely join!

*July 2022*

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# **Solidarity with Ukrainian and Russian resistance to the war**



# – Statement of 37th Fourth International youth camp

*Having met this week with Ukrainian and Russian socialists committed to the defeat of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we, activists gathered at the 37th international revolutionary youth camp in solidarity with the [Fourth international](#) in Vieure (France) from the 23rd until the 29th of July 2022, declare our opposition to Russia's imperialist war in Ukraine.*

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine since the 24th of February 2022 marks a clear escalation of the war which had been going on since 2014 in the country. It is aimed at satisfying Great Russian expansionism; it has resulted in numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity; tens of thousands of Ukrainians have already been killed, 15 million have been forced to flee their homes and many of them had to seek refuge abroad. The immediate withdrawal of Russian troops is necessary to stop the sufferings and ensure the democratic self-determination of the people in Ukraine.

We express our solidarity with the Ukrainian people who are the victims of this unjustified assault and support their resistance against the invading and occupying power. We also stand in solidarity with opposition to the war as expressed by Russian activists, many of them having had to flee abroad to escape the authoritarianism of Putin's regime. We remind Europe that this regime is hailed by many far-right movements which have been on the rise throughout the continent.

We warn against any direct inter-imperialist war between NATO and Russia, all the while striving for the defeat of the Russian invasion. A nuclear conflict would be a disaster the world has only had horrifying glimpses of before.

We call for the cancellation of all Ukrainian foreign debt

held by Western powers as well as international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. This debt has only helped develop a neoliberal regime of capitalist accumulation in Ukraine at the expense of the Ukrainian working class. Freeing these funds would help Ukraine resist the Russian assault and rebuild the country without the interference of Western neoliberal markets.

So far, the sanctions have targeted a limited number of members of the Russian ruling class; they clearly are ineffective in stopping the war.

Furthermore, Western companies continue to trade military components with Russia. We support the expropriation of Russian millionaires' assets in foreign banks and their redistribution to rebuild Ukraine and support the victims of the war. This requires an international public register of wealth; such a register would also be a necessary first step to impose any meaningful tax on the capitalists of our own countries to make them pay for the economic and social crisis which the war in Ukraine has aggravated while allowing for even more delirious profits for capitalists such as in the spheres of energy and arms sales.

We thank our Ukrainian comrades from [Sotsialniy Rukh](#) for dedicating time to come to this camp and share their experiences; we will stay in solidarity with them and with our Russian comrades to contribute to the defeat of the Russian invasion in any way we can and help rebuild an independent and democratic Ukraine. We hope our exchanges and discussions during and after this camp can help inspire a world free of military blocks and all neo-colonial relations.

*29 July 2022*

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# Building revolutionary tenderness: Chronicles of the 37th Revolutionary Youth Camp in France

*Between July 23 and 29, around 200 young people gathered to celebrate the 37th edition of the Revolutionary Youth Camp organised by the Fourth International in Vieure (France). After almost three years since the last camp, the hope, motivation and emotion of returning to share self-managed spaces of camaraderie, support and mutual learning were enormous. And it certainly did not disappoint.*

One of the greatest difficulties we have when it comes to explaining and developing our political project for society is to bring our theoretical proposals to praxis with maximum consequences. They accuse us of being utopian or idealistic and perhaps we are, but we need oases in which to show how a fair, democratic, supportive, open and empathetic society where the division of tasks, interpersonal relationships and collective interests prevail over the principles of exclusion, competitiveness and individualism prevailing in capitalist societies.

That is what the revolutionary youth camps are about: of understanding the revolutionary organisation as part of a joint learning process of our own struggles, but also of sharing experiences of struggle and resistance with comrades from the global north and south who allow us to walk towards an ecosocialist, feminist, queer, anti-racist and anti-capitalist horizon.

Thus the program, which is usually divided into thematic days, tried to offer a broad look at the main issues that affect the

crisis of neoliberal capitalism and that help us build poles of radicalisation in youth. It placed special emphasis on the need to bet on ecosocialism as our lives depend on it; to stand firm in the anti-imperialist struggle and against the radicalisation of authoritarian neoliberalism; to vindicate the importance of LGBTQI+ struggles not only on a cultural level, but also in the materialist intersection of advancing collective rights and freedoms; to delve into the advances that feminism has made and discuss how to go on the offensive against reactionary discourses. Finally, the importance and necessity of having organic structures that allow us to organise rage internationally was also addressed, enabling us to weave common strategies against a system that devours, crushes and marginalises us.

All of this was developed through plenary activities that addressed how to be revolutionary in a world in flames, how feminist and LGBTQI+ struggles are a threat to capitalism, the characterisation of authoritarian neoliberalism and its attacks against international solidarity networks, how to decolonise society, the role of youth in the class struggle and the importance of organising ourselves to crush capitalism. On the other hand, educational activities also took the form of workshops in which participants elaborated specific problems or shared experiences of international struggle. Among them, we can highlight the need to bring to the debate aspects such as new forms of relationships and radical ways of loving, the importance of talking about capitalism and mental health, the new struggles in which youth play a central role, as is the case with housing and the fight against speculation or the Marxist theory of the state.

At the same time, spaces for women, LGBTQI+ and people of colour were created which, in addition to being safe places for those who are part of the group, also allowed us to go deeper into the discussions and horizons towards which feminist, queer and anti-racist struggles are directed.

In short, the camps are an opportunity for political training, but they are also the best option for weaving personal networks of friendship, sisterhood and camaraderie, which are essential to the societies we aspire to build. In other words, to harden ourselves without losing our tenderness, because tenderness is revolutionary and knows no borders. Therefore, I would like to thank all the compañeras for making the camps a space that truly becomes a reference point when imagining alternative futures. In difficult times for social movements and the radical left, enjoying places where utopia becomes a reality is a pill that enables us to recharge our batteries, to focus on youth building along a new political path. Paraphrasing Durruti, “ruins don’t scare us because we carry a new world in our hearts. And that world is growing right now.” For this reason, understanding the revolutionary organisation as part of a joint learning process of our own struggles, and sharing experiences of struggle and resistance with comrades from the global North and South, is a ground-breaking and transformative exercise that inspires us to stand firm until victory. Long live the Revolutionary Youth Camps. Long live the Fourth International.

*1 August 2022*

*Diego Fernández Gómez is a militant of [Anticapitalistas in the Spanish state](#)*

*Article published in [Poder Popular](#). Translated by David Fagan for [fourth.international](#) and published at: <https://fourth.international/en/2022-france/456>*

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# Rising Clyde 6: latest issue of Scottish Climate Show on “Climate Camp Scotland”

The latest issue of Rising Clyde, the Scottish Climate Show hosted by Iain Bruce, is now available on YouTube via the Independence Live video service.

In this episode Iain interviews Iain talks to Quan, Gillian and Scott, activists taking part in [Climate Camp Scotland](#), one of the most important climate movement events of the year, live from the camp near Aberdeen in August.

## Watch the programme here:



A full report of the Five Days of Action can be found here: <https://www.climatecampscotland.com/post/five-days-of-action-at-climate-camp-aberdeen>

# Previous Issues

Previous Rising Clyde shows on Independence Live can be found here:

[\(1035\) SHOW: Rising Clyde – YouTube](#)

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## **Dora María Téllez: Plea for release of political prisoners in Nicaragua**

In this YouTube video 19 July 2022, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Sandanista Revolution in Nicaragua, US activist and photographer [Margaret Randall](#) presents an appeal for the release of revolutionary activist Dora María Téllez from imprisonment by the dictatorship of Ortega-Murillo.

Dora María Téllez was one of the military commanders of the Sandanista Revolution in the 1970s and minister for health in the first Sandinista government of 1979-90, where she championed the rights of women and gay and lesbian people. She was arrested and imprisoned by the current Nicaraguan government for her part in opposition to the dictatorship of President Ortega.

Main photo shows Dora María Téllez (in the centre, wearing a black beret) as a military commander during the FSLN conquest of León, Nicaragua (June 1979). Source Wikipedia (Public Domain)

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# **Rising Clyde – latest issue of Scottish Climate Show on “Power To The People!”**

The latest issue of Rising Clyde, the Scottish Climate Show hosted by Iain Bruce, is now available on YouTube via the Independence Live video service.

In this episode, Iain presents activists from the new campaign on the cost of fuel – Power to the People, which is setting up groups across Scotland including in Glasgow.

The activists are:

- [Matt Kerr](#), Glasgow Labour Councillor for Cardonald ward
- [Frances Curran](#), former Scottish Socialist Party Member of the Scottish Parliament and trade union activist
- [Coll McCail](#), youth climate activist and member of Scottish Labour Executive representing young members

## **Watch the programme here:**

## **Power to the People: Protest against energy price rises**

[Power to the People Glasgow](#) has called a protest at the Headquarters of Scottish Power in Glasgow on Friday 12 August 4-6pm to oppose the huge rise in energy prices from 1 October 2022, due to be announced around that time:



**FRIDAY 12TH AUGUST  
4-6PM  
SCOTTISH POWER HQ**



   @PTTPGLASGOW  
 **POWERTOPEOPLE2022@GMAIL.COM**

Power to the People Glasgow social media links and information can be found here: <https://linktr.ee/pttpglasgow>

The Power to the People slogan comes from the Left in the European Parliament and the European Left Party who have a really informative video about the European Energy Market here:

While the UK left the European Energy Market with Brexit, energy prices in the UK are based on the European and global markets and are still influenced by supplies from the EEA/EU

(gas from Norway, electricity from France, the single energy market in Ireland).

## Previous Issues

Previous Rising Clyde shows on Independence Live can be found here:

[\(1035\) SHOW: Rising Clyde – YouTube](#)

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## **Ecuador: Victory for indigenous strike movement, but the struggle continues! La lucha continúa!**

The 18 day mass strike and protest movement in Ecuador has ended after negotiations with the neo-liberal government resulted in a major victory for the indigenous movement that launched it. [ecosocialist.scot](#) *activists report on the latest developments.*

Negotiations were concluded on 30 June with significant concessions agreed by the government of right wing banker President Lasso. These were greeted with acclaim by indigenous protestors who returned from the capital Quito to be met with mass rallies and triumphant scenes in the areas of the country where they are concentrated (*photos and videos above and below*).

Their leader, Leonidas Iza, was greeted as a hero by the

indigenous population.

Crucially the movement has given the government only **90 days** to show significant progress on implementing the agreement – otherwise the strike will start again

On the price of fuel, one of the major demands, there was only a minor concession. The government agreed to a 15 cent reduction in prices while the movement demands 40 cents. There was debate amongst activists as to whether this meant the mobilisations should continue

However, the protests were never about one issue – the indigenous organisations had put forward a list of ten interlinked and radical demands covering a range of economic, social and ecological issues.

So the fact that Lasso has agreed to stop expansion of extraction of natural resources in indigenous community areas and to give their organisations real rights of veto of any proposed exploitation of the environment is very important. Two decrees were revoked that would have enabled more oil drilling in the Amazon and mining on indigenous and protected lands, as well as in areas that are important water reserves and of archaeological significant.

The government also agreed to increase investment in health and education that has been suffering from massive underinvestment in indigenous areas.

A series of joint commissions will examine other proposals, but the pause in the strike and protest actions is only temporary – in 90 days time the indigenous movement will review the situation, judge whether the government has moved sufficiently, and decide whether to resume the strike and protest action.

# Mass protests rock Ecuador capital

The actions were led by the indigenous umbrella organisation [CONAIE \(Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador\)](#) and two other allied groupings, FENOCIN and FEIN. The protest strike was huge among the mainly farming based communities, and many indigenous protestors poured into the capital Quito to rock it with mass demonstrations.

They faced severe repression, with six protestors killed and hundreds beaten and arrested by brutal state forces. On the second day of the strike the leader of CONAIE, Leonardis Iza, was [illegally arrested](#), dragged away in handcuffs by armed forces of the state and held for 24 hours. A mass protest wave against his arrest, supported by worldwide solidarity statements, forced his release and he resumed leadership of the strike movement leading the negotiations with the government.

On three occasions, the government imposed temporary 'states of emergency' in different parts of Ecuador, but were forced to lift each of them as part of the negotiations with the indigenous organisations and as the National Assembly of Ecuador had begun to consider a 'no confidence' motion in the President and demands for negotiations.

The indigenous communities of Ecuador themselves represent only about 1 million people out of 17 million. However more than 60% of the population have some indigenous ancestry. This helps to explain how the movement was able to avoid the ever present danger of isolation. More importantly, however, the indigenous movement has long been seen as **the** point of reference for other social movements, regardless of region or ethnic identity. Some still remember the early years of the century, when the indigenous movement helped to bring down

three unpopular governments. Above all, almost everyone carries fresh memories of the successful, indigenous-led insurrection of October 2019, which is also when the figure of Leonidas Iza first emerged at the centre of the movement.

From the beginning of this nationwide strike on 13 June, the mass protests in Quito began to attract sympathy and support from other workers, from the women's movement, and from students and universities across the country. Perhaps most importantly, they drew support from the poor urban neighbourhoods of the capital and other cities – including a large-scale operation to collect food, blankets and other supplies for the protesters who had arrived from the countryside. For the right wing recently elected President Lasso there was the danger that the movement would spread and unseat him from power. The government therefore moved from initially resisting all the demands to agreeing major concessions.

## **A Global Climate Justice Movement**

This must be regarded as a victory for the indigenous organisations, who emerged more confident and united from the struggle. Their ten point programme of demands must be seen as a model for the type of ecosocialist movement uniting opposition to ecological neo-liberal destruction that the entire world urgently needs.

Awareness is rising globally about the importance of not just the neo-liberal attacks on living standards and the poor, but also on the importance of protecting the natural environment from devastation. Indigenous communities are increasingly seen as in the front line of defence of the planet against rampant extractivism and the need to prevent climate change.

Leonidas Iza addressed last year's 'From the Ground Up' online programme, organised by the UK COP26 Coalition, in preparation for the [ultimately disappointing summit outcome in Glasgow](#). Indigenous activists were evident in the protests in Glasgow during the two weeks of COP26 last November when the city came alight with the global climate justice movement.

More recently indigenous communities in Brazil were praised in the normally silent mainstream British media over their unstinting efforts in exposing the brutal murders of British journalist Dom Phillips and his Brazilian collaborator Bruno Pereira – murders that were clearly directly related to Phillips' exposure of massive commercial exploitation of Amazon rainforest areas that has the backing of Brazil's right wing President Bolsonaro. The full story of Phillips' murder needs to be uncovered.

## **Tremendous victory but ecosocialist struggle continues**

While the concessions by the Ecuadorian government and the scale of the mass protests represent a tremendous victory, the struggle for people and planet continues.

ecosocialist.scot helped to launch [a global petition](#) in solidarity with the struggle in Ecuador in conjunction with organisations across Latin America and other allies. We thank everyone who signed this, including leading Scottish political figures who either signed or indicated they were supportive. Such public shows of solidarity particularly from the states of the 'Global North' helps the protest; but in the light of developments we are suspending the petition and will encourage everyone who signed to continue to back the movement in other ways, including supporting both protests in Britain against

rising energy prices and for [just wage and benefit rises](#) and the struggle [against fossil fuel extraction in the North Sea](#).

If the Ecuadorian government backtracks, then the movement will be back on the streets in a few months and worldwide solidarity will be more needed than ever. The result of the recent elections in Colombia and Chile give encouragement, as does the routing of Macron's candidates and the election of a radical independentist to the French National Assembly from the South American colony of French Guiana. Many eyes will also be on the forthcoming election in Brazil and the potential defeat of Bolsonaro.

But the Ecuadorian indigenous movement has shown that comprehensive ecosocialist-based demands to confront the economic, social and ecological crises, supported by strikes and mass protests, also have a major role to play. [ecosocialist.scot](#) believes we need to build a movement in Scotland that supports those demands and methods, and links up with others across the world in supporting and encouraging a global movement for people and planet.

[ecosocialist.scot](#) editorial board

1 July 2022

## Media and information

Video showing the reception to the victory in Cotopaxi and in the capital

[Recibimiento en Cotopaxi. Viva la... – Conaie Comunicación | Facebook](#)

[#EnVivo 🇪🇺🇨🇪🇨🇮 iSolo la lucha nos... – La voz de la Confeniae | Facebook](#)

*Ecuador Update! Indigenous communities in Chimborazo, in the central highlands, send reinforcements to the protests in the*

capital, Quito [#EcuadorResiste](#) [pic.twitter.com/T3gSpMAUbB](https://pic.twitter.com/T3gSpMAUbB)

– [ecosocialist.scot](#) [#freepalestine#ceasefirenow](#)  
([@ecosocialistsc1](#)) [June 26, 2022](#)

[#ParoNacional2022Ec](#)

*iEl pueblo unido jamás será vencido! esta tarde en Sangolquí, cantón Rumiñahui. [#conaie](#) [#quito](#) [pic.twitter.com/AY7R8LqchZ](https://pic.twitter.com/AY7R8LqchZ)*

– [CONAIE \(@CONAIE\\_Ecuador\)](#) [June 26, 2022](#)

Articles about the struggle from [International Viewpoint](#), online magazine of the [Fourth International](#)

[New lessons from the popular struggle in Ecuador: preliminary ideas – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine](#)

[Two projects confront each other once more – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine](#)

[“We demand that the government responds to CONAIE’s 10 points and halts repression” – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine](#)

[Stop the repression in Ecuador! Solidarity with the indigenous-led strike! – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine](#)

[An open scenario, with nothing decided in Ecuador – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine](#)

Summary of the negotiation outcome (in Spanish)





## 18 DÍAS DE RESISTENCIA JUNIO 2022 LOGROS DEL PARO NACIONAL EN ECUADOR

- ✓ **BAJÓ** el Diesel de \$1,90 a \$1,75, la Extra y Ecopaís de \$2,55 a \$2,40, es decir menos \$0,15 ctvs por galón. Entraremos en un **proceso de focalización** para los sectores que necesitan más subsidio: agricultores, campesinos, transportistas, pescadores y más.
- ✓ Derogado el Decreto 95, no se ampliará la frontera petrolera, para **proteger los territorios y los derechos colectivos de los pueblos indígenas**.
- ✓ Reformas al Decreto 151 con lo cual **no habrá minería en:**
  - Áreas protegidas y territorios ancestrales;
  - Zonas declaradas como intangibles;
  - Zonas arqueológicas;
  - Áreas de protección hídrica.
- Se garantizará la consulta previa, libre e informada de las comunas, comunidades, pueblos, y nacionalidades indígenas, considerando los estándares dictados por la CIDH y la Corte Constitucional ecuatoriana.
- ✓ Se fortalecen los **operativos y mecanismos de control de precios** en la especulación en el mercado de los productos de primera necesidad (Decreto 452).
- ✓ Se declara en **emergencia el sistema de salud pública**, para entregar inmediatamente medicina e insumos a los hospitales y centros de salud (Decreto 454).
- ✓ Con el Decreto 456:
  - El Bono de Desarrollo Humano subirá de USD 50 a USD 55, beneficiando a 1,4 millones de familias
  - Subsidio en 50% el precio de la urea para pequeños y medianos productores;
  - Reducción de la tasa de interés del 10% al 5% de Banecuador para créditos de hasta USD 3.000;
  - Los préstamos vencidos de hasta USD 3.000 serán condonados.
  - USD 100 millones más para créditos productivos, los cuales serán por hasta USD 20.000 a 10 años plazo y a 5% de interés anual.
- ✓ Se elaborará un proyecto de Ley reformativa al artículo 66 de la Ley Orgánica de la Circunscripción Territorial Especial Amazónica.

Durante 90 días se instalará una mesa técnica de diálogo para dar seguimiento de acuerdos y resolución de los temas pendientes de la agenda nacional de 10 puntos.

Por la contundencia del paro nacional Guillermo Lasso solo apareció en cadenas de televisión y nunca se sentó en la mesa de diálogo, sin embargo, su gobierno se vio obligado a responder al pueblo.

**NO RENUNCIAMOS AL DERECHO A LA RESISTENCIA  
SI NO CUMPLEN VOLVEREMOS MILLONES**



# [Updated] Global petition against repression in Ecuador (updated 1 July 2022)

*\*\*\*LATEST \*\*\* Thanks to the tremendous victory of the indigenous struggle in Ecuador in the agreement of 30 June, this petition is no longer being promoted. Full details here: <https://www.ecosocialist.scot/?p=1340> We thank those who supported it and will keep them informed of developments. The article and updates will remain on our website as a historic record and background of the struggle.*

[ecosocialist.scot](http://ecosocialist.scot) is launching a global petition (below) against the current repression in Ecuador and in solidarity with the movement of the indigenous people, other workers organisations and social movements for just demands in their general strike against the right wing government of President Lasso. Early signatories include parliamentarians, political and climate activists, and workers' leaders from across the world.

The general strike in Ecuador was initially called by the movement of indigenous people ([CONAIE](http://CONAIE)) and has been underway since Monday 13 June. The strike and mass protests are growing in support among workers, but have been met by a massive wave of repression by the Lasso government including the illegal detention of indigenous leader Leonidas Iza, mass arrests and police brutality including the killing of an 18 year old indigenous protestor and at least four others (see below for Latest News and <https://www.ecosocialist.scot/?p=1277> for background).

We are targeting this petition at both the workers movement and the climate justice movement. The 10 demands of the movement relate not just to the harsh economic conditions of the people through rising prices of food and fuel while workers' incomes fall, but are also against the exploitation of the natural environment and extraction of resources that has devastated indigenous people's across Ecuador, the entire continent and the world. The demands include opposition to privatisation of public services and the need for investment in education and health.

The petition can be found on the ipetitions website (link below) and can also be signed on a Google form. ipetitions will display the total global signatories, but if you also fill in the form to share your details we'll be able to publicise your designation and area of activity. The list below will therefore extend. We call on all activists in the workers and climate justice movement to both sign and promote

the petition on social media and through your organisations. The world needs to support the movement of indigenous peoples, workers and environmental activists in Ecuador in their hour of need.

*LATEST EVENTS from our correspondents on the ground – updated 25 June 2022*

*The Ecuador National Assembly is debating online a motion of no confidence in President Lasso though it seems doubtful that it will be passed. President Lasso has suspended the State of Emergency order, in a blatant attempt to try to void the no confidence motion. But the repression against demonstrators continues, as show in videos below. Many thousands more indigenous protestors have mobilised to reinforce those already in the capital, Quito.*

## **Police brutality against protesters in Quito on Friday.**

<https://www.ecosocialist.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ecuador-Video-2022-06-2-attacks-on-protesters-1.mp4>

<https://www.ecosocialist.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ecuador-Video-2022-06-attacks-on-protesters-2.mp4>

## **Indigenous communities in Chimboraza in the central highlands send reinforcements to the protests in capital Quito**

[Indigenous communities in Chimboraza in the central highlands send reinforcements to the protests in capital Quito](#)

[\(Facebook video\)](#)

## **Thursday 23 June report**

Thursday, the eleventh day of the national strike in Ecuador, was a very intense day. It began with an important victory for the indigenous-led movement. Thousands of mainly indigenous protesters managed to reoccupy, entirely peacefully, the main cultural centre in Quito, the Casa de Cultura. This is where the indigenous movement has traditionally found shelter when it mobilises in the capital. It was their centre of operations during the uprising of October 2019. However, as part of its state of emergency, the government had sent the army and police to seal off the building and its grounds. This made it much more difficult this time for the indigenous contingents arriving in Quito to find shelter and have a coordinated logistical and symbolic centre. They had been more spread out around various university campuses that had partially allowed them in. Some were left sleeping out in the cold.

The fact that on Thursday, faced with a huge swell of protesters outside, the security forces simply let them in, was interpreted as a possible, significant concession by the government. A massive and euphoric rally of indigenous and other protesters took place in the main auditorium, addressed, in particular, by Leonidas Iza, the undisputed, central leader of the strike. There was talk of more concessions and the possibility of meaningful talks, with results, as the movement has been putting it, with the government.

However, a little later, part of the movement, led by indigenous women, began to march from the House of Culture to the National Assembly, to put pressure on them. There have been so-far unsuccessful attempts there to revoke the president's decrees of a state of emergency. This march was met with very severe repression from the police and army,

*using tear gas, water cannon and live, buckshot, ammunition. At least one young man died after receiving multiple pellet shots in his chest and neck. As night fell, groups of police on motorbikes also attacked at least one of the humanitarian locations where people from the local community were distributing food to indigenous protesters. In one case the police fired pistols at the group as they ate, wounding at least one of them. There are reports of another death as well, taking the total so far to at least four.*

*Another worrying development is that sections of the middle-class, racist right in Quito have begun to mobilise against the protests. There are reports of groups of white-shirted young man driving around and abusing isolated individuals or vulnerable groups of indigenous protesters, shouting racist abuse at the “f\*\*\*\*\* indians” and telling them to go home. It is not clear if there have been physical attacks, but some of these vigilantes seem to be carrying guns. The right also mobilised a march of a few thousand towards the area where the protesters are concentrated, but they didn’t get very far and soon turned back to their base in the affluent neighbourhoods of north-central Quito.*

Thank you for your support.

ecosocialist.scot

**Link to Petition:**  
**<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/stop-the-repression-in-ecuador>**

**Send us your details if you sign:**  
**<https://forms.gle/jFzJ5T7a4VTDa2VL9>**

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Text of petition and signatories (English/Spanish)

# **Stop the repression in Ecuador, Solidarity with the Indigenous-led strike! / Alto a la represión en Ecuador, Solidaridad con el paro Indígena**

To also have your name publicly associated with this petition, please complete the form here: <https://forms.gle/jFzJ5T7a4VTDa2VL9> This petition was initially organised by [ecosocialist.scot](https://ecosocialist.scot) / Para que su nombre también se asocie públicamente con esta petición, complete el formulario aquí: <https://forms.gle/jFzJ5T7a4VTDa2VL9> Esta petición fue organizada inicialmente por [ecosocialist.scot](https://ecosocialist.scot)

**STOP THE REPRESSION IN ECUADOR, SOLIDARITY WITH THE INDIGENOUS-LED STRIKE!**

“The repression against the nationwide strike called by the indigenous movement in Ecuador has only increased since President Guillermo Lasso first declared a state of emergency and a curfew on Friday, 17 June. The police and army have been using brutal force, tear gas, stun grenades, pellet shot, to stop thousands of peaceful indigenous protesters from entering the capital, Quito. At least one protester has died, three are reported to be in a critical condition, dozens more have been wounded or arrested. The army and police have sealed off the House of Culture and several university campuses in an attempt

to deny the indigenous protesters their traditional places of shelter in the capital. An immense citizen effort is underway, from students, women's groups, neighbourhood organisations and the population in general, to collect food, blankets and basic provisions for the protesters who have made it into Quito.

Massive mobilisations and road blocks continue in indigenous territories across Ecuador. The local Governor's offices have been occupied in at least three provinces.

Secondary school and university students, teachers, health workers, trade unionists, neighbourhood organisations and the feminist movement are mobilising in towns and cities.

Bus drivers, taxi drivers and truckers have either promised stoppages or already joined in the road blocks.

We the undersigned, demand an immediate end to the violent repression of peaceful protesters in Ecuador. We call on President Lasso and the government of Ecuador to lift the state of emergency, release those still in detention and drop all charges against the movement's best known leader, Leonidas Iza, President of Conaie, who was illegally detained on 14 June and released 24 hours later, but who still faces charges that carry a possible prison sentence of 1-3 years.

In place of a military response, we urge President Lasso to engage in serious negotiations with the indigenous movement and other social movements, to address their just demands.

These include the 10 points put forward by Conaie – including fair prices for agricultural products; freezing of fuel prices because this generates price increases; respect for the collective rights of indigenous peoples and nationalities; a budget for health and education; an end to the voracious extractivism in indigenous territories; stop speculation and rising prices of basic food basket items; stop the privatisation of strategic sectors; public policies to curb the wave of violence.

These have since been enriched by other social movements incorporating their own demands, for example for public polices to curb gender violence and femicide.

The victory of Gustavo Petro and Francia Marquez in the presidential elections in neighbouring Colombia, show that the people of the region want to turn the page on decades of neoliberal economic policies that only generate poverty, violence, racial exclusion and the destruction of mother earth. We stand in solidarity with all their struggles and with the indigenous-led strike in Ecuador.”

## ALTO A LA REPRESIÓN EN ECUADOR, SOLIDARIDAD CON EL PARO INDÍGENA

“La represión contra el paro nacional convocado por el movimiento indígena en Ecuador no ha hecho más que aumentar desde que el presidente Guillermo Lasso declaró el estado de excepción y el toque de queda el viernes 17 de junio. La policía y el ejército han utilizado una fuerza brutal, gases lacrimógenos, granadas de aturdimiento y perdigones, para impedir que miles de manifestantes indígenas pacíficos entren en la capital, Quito. Al menos un manifestante ha muerto, tres se encuentran en estado crítico y docenas más han sido heridos o detenidos. El ejército y la policía han acordonado la Casa de la Cultura y varios campus universitarios en un intento de negar a los manifestantes indígenas sus lugares tradicionales de refugio en la capital. Está en marcha un inmenso esfuerzo ciudadano, por parte de estudiantes, grupos de mujeres, organizaciones vecinales y la población en general, para recoger alimentos, mantas y provisiones básicas para los manifestantes que han conseguido entrar en Quito.

Continúan las movilizaciones masivas y los bloqueos de carreteras en los territorios indígenas de todo Ecuador. Las gobernaciones locales han sido ocupadas en al menos tres provincias.



Estudiantes de secundaria y universitarios, profesores, personal sanitario, sindicalistas, organizaciones vecinales y el movimiento feminista se movilizan en pueblos y ciudades.

Los conductores de autobuses, taxistas y camioneros han prometido paros o ya se han sumado a los cortes de carretera.

Nosotros, los abajo firmantes, exigimos el cese inmediato de la represión violenta de los manifestantes pacíficos en Ecuador. Pedimos al presidente Lasso y al gobierno de Ecuador que levanten el estado de excepción, liberen a los que aún están detenidos y retiren todos los cargos contra el líder más conocido del movimiento, Leonidas Iza, presidente de la Conaie, que fue detenido ilegalmente el 14 de junio y liberado 24 horas después, pero que aún se enfrenta a cargos que conllevan una posible condena de prisión de 1 a 3 años.

En lugar de una respuesta militar, instamos al presidente Lasso a entablar negociaciones serias con el movimiento indígena y otros movimientos sociales, para atender sus justas demandas.

Entre ellas se encuentran los 10 puntos planteados por la Conaie, entre ellos, precios justos para los productos agropecuarios; congelación de los precios de los combustibles porque esto genera aumentos de precios; respeto a los derechos colectivos de los pueblos y nacionalidades indígenas; presupuesto para la salud y la educación; fin del extractivismo voraz en los territorios indígenas; freno a la especulación y al aumento de los precios de los productos de la canasta básica; freno a la privatización de los sectores estratégicos; políticas públicas para frenar la ola de violencia.

Desde entonces se han enriquecido con otros movimientos sociales que han incorporado sus propias demandas, por ejemplo, políticas públicas para frenar la violencia de género y el feminicidio.

La victoria de Gustavo Petro y Francia Márquez en las elecciones presidenciales de la vecina Colombia, demuestran que los pueblos de la región quieren darle vuelta a la página de décadas de políticas económicas neoliberales que sólo generan pobreza, violencia, exclusión racial y destrucción de la madre tierra. Nos solidarizamos con todas sus luchas y con la huelga liderada por los indígenas en Ecuador”.

Initial list of Signatories (22 June 2022/22 junio 2022)

Miguel Urbán, Member of European Parliament/Eurodiputado, Anticapitalistas (Spanish State/Estado Español)

Martín Mosquera (Argentina)

Senador Rafael Bernabe (Puerto Rico)

Luis Bonilla. Otras Voces en Educación (Venezuela)

Olmedo Beluche por el Polo Ciudadano (Panamá)

Josefina Chávez (México)

Eduardo Lucita , EDI, (Argentina)

Eric Toussaint, Portavoz de CADTM (Belgium/Bélgica)

Edgard Sánchez (México)

Manuel Rodríguez Banchs. Democracia Socialista (Puerto Rico)

Joao Machado Borges Neto (Brazil/Brasil)

Tárzia Maria de Medeiros (Brazil/Brasil)

Stalin Pérez Borges. LUCHAS (Venezuela)

Ana Cristina Carvalhaes Machado (Brazil/Brasil)

Fernanda Melchionna, diputada federal/PSOL Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil/Brasil)

Sâmia Bomfim, diputado federal/PSOL São Paulo (Brazil/Brasil)

Vivi Reis, diputada federal/ PSOL Pará (Brazil/Brasil)

Luciana Genro, diputada estadual/ PSOL Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil/Brasil)

Roberto Robain, dirigente del MES/PSOL /concejál de Porto Alegre (Brazil/Brasil)

Israel Dutra, Secretario general del PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Pedro Fuentes, dirigente del MES/PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Bruno Magalhaes, dirigente del MES/PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Philippe Pierre-Charles Groupe Révolution Socialiste (Martinique/Martinica)

Daniel Libreros. Movimiento Ecosocialista (Colombia)

Franck Gaudichaud France Amérique Latine (France/Francia)

Béatrice Whitaker (France/Francia)

Pierre Rousset, NPA, (France/Francia)

Richard Neuville, ENSEMBLE (France/Francia)

Renato Roseno, diputado de Ceará/PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Mario Barreto, presidente de PSOL Río de Janeiro (Brazil/Brasil)

Nadja Carvalho, Isabel Lessa y Fernando Silva del Directorio Nacional del PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Mike Picken, ecosocialist.scot (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

Iain Gault, ecosocialist.scot (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

Terry Conway, Anti\*Capitalist Resistance (England/Inglaterra – UK)

Iain Bruce, journalist/periodista (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

Frances Curran, Former member of Scottish Parliament/Socialists for Independence (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

Jim Bollan, Councillor – West Dunbartonshire, (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

Stephen Smellie, Unison Scotland (personal capacity) (Scotland/Escosia – UK)

John Rees, socialist activist (England/Inglaterra – UK)

Barry Sheppard (USA)

Jeff Mackler, National Secretary Socialist Action (USA)

Mónica Baltodano, Integrante de la Articulación de Movimientos Sociales (Nicaragua)

Oly Millán, Integrante de la Plataforma Ciudadana en Defensa de la Constitución (Venezuela)

Tarcísio Mota, Chico Alencar, Monica Benício y William Siri, councillors/concejales/as de Rio de Janeiro (Brazil/Brasil)

Mônica Francisco, State Deputy /diputada de estado Rio de Janeiro (Brazil/Brasil)

Orlando Barranté, Movimiento de Trabajadores y camponeses – MTC (Costa Rica)

Luana Alves, City Councillor/Vereadora São Paulo, Executiva nacional do PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Humberto Meza, Comité Brasileño de Solidaridad con Nicaragua (Brazil/Brasil)

Fernando Carneir, city councillor/ vereador Belém-Pa PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Aurelio Robles, Coordinador del Movimiento Alternativa

Socialista-MAS (Panamá).

Mariana Riscalì, Nat Sec Finance/Secretária Nacional de Finanças do PSOL (Brazil/Brasil)

Monica Seixas, deputada estadual São Paulo (Brazil/Brasil)

Mariana Conti – City Councillor/Vereadora Campinas, São Paulo (Brazil/Brasil)

Fábio Felix, Dep. Distrital Brasília (Brazil/Brasil)

Josemar, City Councillor/Vereador São Gonçalo RJ (Brazil/Brasil)

Pedro Ruas, City Councillor/Vereador Porto Alegre RS (Brazil/Brasil)

Jurandir Silva, City Councillor/Vereador Pelotas RS (Brazil/Brasil)

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## **“Socialism: Endorsed by James Connolly” tee shirt and other new items at Calton Books, Glasgow**

In his tour of TV studios this week, RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch was asked on ITV’s Peston show who his political hero was and immediately answered “James Connolly”.

The presenter looked quizzical and Lynch had to explain that Connolly was an “Irish, Socialist, Republican ... trade unionist ... hero of the Irish Revolution”.

*“Who’s your political hero?”*

*“James Connolly, an Irish socialist republican”*

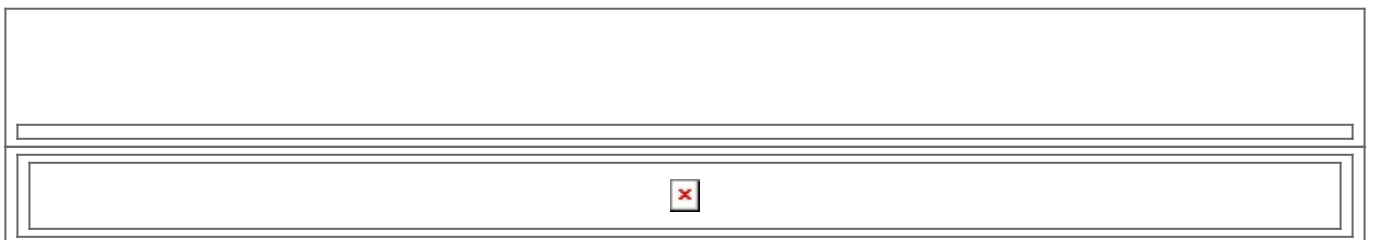
<https://t.co/JAUkY9G5Nd>

– Ronan Burtenshaw (@ronanburtenshaw) [June 22, 2022](#)

Although of Irish descent and describing himself as an “Irishman”, Connolly was also a Scot, born in Edinburgh, he spoke with a Scottish accent throughout his life. After serving in the British Army and deserting, he became a socialist and the secretary of the Scottish Socialist Federation, standing for local elections. He moved to Dublin for work at the age of 27. In Ireland he founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party. After several years working in America he returned to Ireland and helped found the Irish Labour Party before opposing the First World War and taking part in the Easter Rising against British rule over Ireland in 1916. He was executed by the British State for his part in the Rising.

ecosocialist.scot thought it was therefore highly appropriate that this week, Calton Books in Glasgow launched a new tee shirt: “Socialism – endorsed by James Connolly”. It looks like we are going to have more RMT picket lines over the summer before their battle is won, so what could be a better picket apparel than this Socialism – Connolly tee shirt?

We encourage all our readers to get down to Calton Books in Glasgow’s east end – the **‘best wee radical bookshop in the world’** – and get themselves kitted out for a summer of protest, alongside many of their other new items.



## SOME OF THE NEW ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM CALTON BOOKS



Calton Books quality postcards now available including We Still Hate Thatcher!

*As always many thanks for supporting the 'best wee radical bookshop in the world'!*

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# For an Ecosocialist Degrowth

Degrowth and ecosocialism are two of the most important movements—and proposals—on the radical side of the ecological spectrum. Sure, not everyone in the degrowth community identifies as a socialist, and not everyone who is an ecosocialist is convinced by the desirability of degrowth. But one can see an increasing tendency of mutual respect and

convergence. Let us try to map the large areas of agreement between us, and list some of the main arguments for an ecosocialist degrowth:

1. Capitalism cannot exist without growth. It needs a permanent expansion of production and consumption, accumulation of capital, maximization of profit. This process of unlimited growth, based on the exploitation of fossil fuels since the eighteenth century, is leading to ecological catastrophe, climate change, and threatens the extinction of life on the planet. The twenty-six UN Climate Change Conferences of the last thirty years manifest the total unwillingness of the ruling elites to stop the course toward the abyss.

2. Any true alternative to this perverse and destructive dynamic needs to be radical—that is, must deal with the roots of the problem: the capitalist system, its exploitative and extractivist dynamic, and its blind and obsessive pursuit of growth. Ecosocialist degrowth is one such alternative, in direct confrontation with capitalism and growth. Ecosocialist degrowth requires the social appropriation of the main means of (re)production and a democratic, participatory, ecological planning. The main decisions on the priorities of production and consumption will be decided by people themselves, in order to satisfy real social needs while respecting the ecological limits of the planet. This means that people, at various scales, exercise direct power in democratically determining what is to be produced, how, and how much; how to remunerate different kinds of productive and reproductive activities that sustain us and the planet. Ensuring equitable well-being for all does not require economic growth but rather radically changing how we organize the economy and distribute social wealth.

3. A significant degrowth in production and consumption is ecologically indispensable. The first and urgent measure is phasing out fossil fuels, as well as the ostentatious and



wasteful consumption of the 1 percent rich elite. From an ecosocialist perspective, degrowth has to be understood in dialectical terms: many forms of production (such as coal-fired facilities) and services (such as advertisement) should not only be reduced but suppressed; some, such as private cars or cattle raising, should be substantially reduced; but others would need development, such as agro-ecological farming, renewable energy, health and educational services, and so on. For sectors like health and education, this development should be, first and foremost, qualitative. Even the most useful activities have to respect the limits of the planet; there can be no such thing as an “unlimited” production of any good.

4. Productivist “socialism,” as practiced by the USSR, is a dead end. The same applies to “green” capitalism as advocated by corporations or mainstream “Green parties.” Ecosocialist degrowth is an attempt to overcome the limitations of past socialist and “green” experiments.

5. It is well known that the Global North is historically responsible for most of the carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere. The rich countries must therefore take the larger part in the process of degrowth. At the same time, we do not believe that the Global South should try to copy the productivist and destructive model of “development” of the North, but look instead for a different approach, emphasizing the real needs of the populations in terms of food, housing, and basic services, instead of extracting more and more raw materials (and fossil fuels) for the capitalist world market, or producing more and more cars for the privileged minorities.

6. Ecosocialist degrowth also involves transformation, through a process of democratic deliberation, of existing consumption models—for instance, an end to planned obsolescence and nonrepairable goods; of transport patterns, for instance, by greatly reducing the hauling of goods by ships and trucks (thanks to the relocalization of production), as well as airplane traffic. In short, it is much more than a change of

property forms, it is a civilizational transformation, a new “way of life” based on values of solidarity, democracy, equaliberty, and respect for Earth. Ecosocialist degrowth signals a new civilization that breaks with productivism and consumerism, in favor of shorter working time, thus more free time devoted to social, political, recreational, artistic, ludic, and erotic activities.

7. Ecosocialist degrowth can only win through a confrontation with the fossil oligarchy and the ruling classes who control political and economic power. Who is the subject of this struggle? We cannot overcome the system without the active participation of the urban and rural working class, who make up the majority of the population and are already bearing the brunt of capitalism’s social and ecological ills. But we also have to expand the definition of the working class to include those who undertake social and ecological reproduction, the forces who are now at the forefront of social-ecological mobilizations: youth, women, Indigenous peoples, and peasants. A new social and ecological consciousness will emerge through the process of self-organization and active resistance of the exploited and oppressed.

8. Ecosocialist degrowth forms part of the broader family of other radical, antisystemic ecological movements: ecofeminism, social ecology, Sumak Kawsay (the Indigenous “Good Life”), environmentalism of the poor, Blockadia, Green New Deal (in its more critical versions), among many others. We do not seek any primacy—we just think that ecosocialism and degrowth have a shared and potent diagnostic and prognostic frame to offer alongside these movements. Dialogue and common action are urgent tasks in the present dramatic conjuncture.

1 April 2022

Signatories: Michael Löwy, Director of Research Emeritus, CNRS, Paris, author of *Qu’est-ce que l’Ecosocialisme?* (Paris, Le Temps des Cérises, 2020); Bengi Akbulut, Concordia

University, Montreal; Sabrina Fernandes, Doctor of Sociology, ecosocialist organizer, post-doctoral fellow at the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and producer of Tese Onze. Giorgos Kallis, professor at ICTA-Barcelona, and author of The Case for Degrowth (Polity Press, 2020).

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## Bodies United

[red clydesider](#) reports on the ongoing struggle for bodily autonomy and specifically the fight for safe zones around abortion services and health clinics in Scotland.

The latest attack on reproductive rights in the United States of America has stirred a fury that has leapt beyond the borders of the troubled republic. This is no surprise. Whatever happens, over there have repercussions that are felt all across the globe, and these latest events show how easily cherished democratic and civil liberties can be rolled back by determined reactionaries and fundamentalists. As such, they stand as a stark warning to the rest of the world. Whatever has been gained by struggle, can only be protected and sheltered by struggle. This fact cannot be ignored.

Here in Scotland, anger at the assault on Roe vs Wade has mingled with a home-grown cause, the fight for buffer zones around healthcare sites offering abortion services that would insulate them from anti-abortion protests. Since 2017, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service and Back Off Scotland have recorded a series of repeated protests at seven different hospitals and clinics across Scotland. Just this year, there

was a candlelight vigil of around one hundred people outside the Maternity Wing of Glasgow's Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, and in recent months smaller pickets by preachers have been plaguing clinics like Sandyford, with those using the clinic being harassed and condemned as they approach the building.

To address this, the Green MSP Gillian Mackay has proposed a bill for the Scottish Parliament to establish legally protected safe access zones of a perimeter of 150m for abortion clinics and healthcare settings, in order to protect the persons and the privacy of those going to these clinics for abortions. Within the buffer zones, the bill aims to prohibit behaviour such as impeding or blocking somebody's path or an entrance to abortion services, intimidating or harassing people, and photographing or filming a person within the zone. There is currently [a consultation](#) for the bill taking place online.

As the consultation progresses and the bill moves through parliament, however, there is still a continuing menace being faced by clients of clinics all across Scotland, as at Sandyford, where the previously mentioned religious protesters have tended to make so much noise that the staff within cannot actually give consultations, check-ups and treatment to patients, healthcare that also includes rape counselling and sexual health services for the LGBTQ+ community. Action must therefore be taken in the meantime to give clinics support, protection and solidarity against harassment. As the feminist movement agitates for political change at the level of rights and legislation, there must also be a spirited defence of treatment at the ground level.

Beth Douglas is a woman that has been involved with great energy in exactly these struggles, and it's for that reason that I sat down to talk with her about the fight for buffer zones.

To begin with, I asked Beth about who she is, and what she does. In the broadest terms, she describes herself as an activist, with a particular focus on equality campaigning and bodily autonomy. In addition to her work on the abortion rights issue, she fights for trans health care and for the destigmatisation and decriminalisation of sex work. In more narrow party terms, or, as Beth put it, "If you want to push me into a box", she is a member of the Scottish Green Party and a co-convener of its LGBTQ+ wing, the Rainbow Greens.

Not just this, but she has long been active in protest against how Pride marches are often co-opted by corporate money and used as an image-laundering opportunity for big business and the state, particularly arms traders and the military. Indeed, those of you who followed or participated in Glasgow's radical scene in the 2010s may remember her as one of the "Pride Five", who were unjustly arrested at Glasgow Pride 2017 for protesting against capitalist influence on the event and the participation of a Police Scotland bloc in the march. Perhaps a few of you may even have been there at the courtroom solidarity demonstrations.

And, as you may have gathered from her advocacy for trans health care, Beth is a transgender woman. How does this facet of her identity shape her conception of feminism? What perspectives does she, a trans woman, bring to this movement? And in what ways do the struggle for trans rights link up with the struggle for abortion rights? I was particularly interested to find out, so I got right into the questions about her work and her views.

As for many of us, American events have been a painful sight for Beth to witness. But it isn't simply a well-meaning sympathy that spurs her into action around abortion rights. What primarily drives her is her own experience of the ways in which society constricts bodies to fit rigid gender and sexual norms.

“As a trans person,” Beth says, “I am very used to being told by the state what I can and cannot do with my body,” so she is eager to fight against any attempt by the state to tell others what they are allowed to do with theirs.

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Additionally, she recognises that these political issues are not neatly separated from each other: “We are about to see millions of people lose their right to reproductive healthcare across America, and it is horrific to see people being robbed of their bodily autonomy. And even though I will never need to have an abortion, it still has a knock-on effect and matters to me.”

The strengthening of patriarchal state control over bodies, the denial of free choice for people to make decisions about themselves, only gives the state a stronger position from which to police other aspects of gender and sexuality, to keep anyone who dissents from a strict patriarchal idea of “proper” gender and sexual roles in line by force. Therefore, Beth concludes that “if you weaken bodily autonomy on abortion you weaken it for trans people too and vice versa”.

It is a stance that calls to mind that slogan of the workers’ movement, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” or the admirable sentiment of old Bakunin, that the freedom of others, far from negating or limiting my freedom, is, on the contrary, its necessary premise and confirmation. These are fine socialist principles from which to go forward, and they animate Beth’s political practice.

To return to actions of solidarity: It is with a grimace that Beth concedes that “unfortunately, American politics are global politics.” Indeed, one can scarcely avoid being shaken

by even the slightest stumbles of an imperial giant.

Feeling those tremors, Beth really wanted to do something to show solidarity with her American sisters. So, she and another trans woman, Heather, got together a demonstration at the United States Consulate after the Edinburgh May Day march on May 7th. With a couple of days' notice, the demo brought together about eighty people, and the speakers included activists from Backoff Scotland, the Green MSP Gillian MacKay and a member of the Scottish Trans Alliance.

People from the crowd also took the mic, and some of them were Americans who spoke about how they felt sad and desperate for their loved ones over there, and how they felt scared to go back to their home country because of the way things are going.

Not only this, but speakers from the crowd also talked about how they themselves had been confronted by bigoted protesters on their way into healthcare settings when going in for not just abortions, but for STI checks, menopause checks, and HIV check-ups and rape counselling.

Testimony like this served to underline the contributions of Gillian MacKay and Backoff Scotland, who raised the demand for Buffer Zones in their speeches. It wouldn't even be a week before yet more service users were being harassed outside clinics, as would happen to someone close to Beth just days after the consulate demonstration.

Beth's friend was on their way to the Sandyford clinic to receive rape counselling, and right outside the building were two religious preachers, who yelled at them to "stop killing babies!" as they entered. The two preachers had their own sound system, and they were so loud that Sandyford couldn't offer care on one whole side of their building for that day.

Hearing of this from her friend, Beth was furious and immediately went over to Sandyford to film the preachers and

expose what they were doing on social media. This footage would quickly find its way to the national press, and with the word getting out on Twitter, more counter-protesters came down to join Beth and help drown out the preachers. She remembered hearing “a whole cocktail of bigotry coming out of these men’s mouths”, including rants about Islam, and at one point when some gay men came out of Sandyford and were told by the preachers that “they had chosen a life of sin.”

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Eventually, faced with opposition from the crowd, the preachers packed up and left. “In the end,” says Beth, “it wasn’t the police who moved these bigots, but the people who showed up and argued with them. The whole time the police didn’t take action”. That kind of inaction, Beth argued, shows why buffer zones are hugely important: “The patients who use Sandyford, whatever they are using the clinic for, are just trying to get healthcare, and if we allow people to stand outside and harass them then we are denying their right to healthcare.”

It wasn’t long before Beth was back at the United States Consulate agitating on this theme again. After the first consulate demo, there was an American woman named Lindsay Jaacks who wanted to organise another protest at the consulate in a week’s time. She asked Beth and Heather for help, so Beth got the Scottish Activist Legal Project (SCALP) involved to do legal observing. Thinking of how the Irish police have consistently hassled and targeted abortion protesters over there, Beth was keen to involve SCALP going forward.

Demo two had a similar number of people, but a different crowd. Following on from Edinburgh May Day, demo one was



mostly younger people, but at the second demo, there were some new faces. Now, while the first protest was taking place, gender-critical activists were not present, instead holding a lunch meetup over on Glasgow Green, a tradition inaugurated by the ultra-rich Blairite J. K. Rowling and aped by her middle-class adherents.

When Beth expressed surprise and disappointment on Twitter that, in a situation when women's rights are being rolled back, gender-criticalists are more focused on hobnobbing and complaining about the Gender Recognition Act than showing up to demonstrations, she was met with odd accusations her criticisms amounted to "daring to tell women they couldn't have lunch."

In any case, it seems the consciences of some gender-criticalists were stung into action by this, and they turned up to the second demo at the consulate. This is something Beth welcomed: "It doesn't matter if they hate me or not, the important thing is we work together to protect the very concept of bodily autonomy- You can't attack the bodily autonomy of one group and expect it to remain for yourself."

*"It doesn't matter if they hate me or not, the important thing is we work together to protect the very concept of bodily autonomy- You can't attack the bodily autonomy of one group and expect it to remain for yourself."*

Unfortunately though, when Beth spoke on the microphone, to talk about how the American religious right has been using its money and resources to stoke division in the feminist movement, and about how when bodily autonomy is weakened for one group it is for all groups, she was heckled by the gender-criticalists in the crowd.

The heckles were predictable, simplistic and parochial. To Beth's linking of struggles, she heard shouts that the issue "was just women's' bodies" and women's' bodies alone. When

Beth spoke about showing solidarity with our trans brothers and non-binary siblings, who also need the right to abortion, the gender criticalists shouted “they’re women!”

The first set of heckles can easily be dispensed with by pointing out that, given, as we have seen, that the range of treatments impacted by anti-abortion protests goes beyond abortion to HIV check-ups, rape counselling, LGBTQ+ health services and so on, it is clear that the Buffer Zone struggle is overall a fight against a generalised assault on reproductive/sexual healthcare which expresses itself primarily as an abortion rights issue.

The gender-criticalists who shout about the issue just being women’s’ bodies have not paid close enough attention to what is happening at Sandyford and elsewhere. Additionally, they wilfully ignore that the abortion struggle is an issue closely tied to all other struggles against rigid patriarchal gender and sexual norms and that it represents one front in the fight to resist a largescale reaction by the patriarchy against any challenge to its power.

Is it a coincidence that the same Republican Party zealots leading the charge against abortion in the United States are also the same bigots stoking a panic about LGBTQ+ people? That these are the same Jim Crow capitalists that ruthlessly oppose the Black Lives Matter movement, striking workers and tenants unions? Of course not!

As for the second set of heckles, Beth is frustrated about how the gender criticalists are obsessing over whether trans men are actually women, and so making the struggle about identity rather than rights- In doing so, she argues, “you are changing the argument from ‘Everyone deserves abortion’ to ‘Are trans men actually women’”. She considers it a distraction from the real core of the issue, one that is utterly pointless given the high stakes and the urgency of the situation.

*the heckling behaviour of the gender-criticalists toward Beth provides a clear example of unsystematic, narrow, single-issue thinking that fails to connect movements into a robust united front, and which foolishly rejects solidarity from other oppressed groups.*

In summary, the heckling behaviour of the gender-criticalists toward Beth provides a clear example of unsystematic, narrow, single-issue thinking that fails to connect movements into a robust united front, and which foolishly rejects solidarity from other oppressed groups.

Thankfully, a better example of political unity was close at hand. Another important event Beth wanted to highlight was the Trans Pride march in Paisley on the 20th of May. Members of the Scottish Greens, along with members of other parties, brought along a banner reading "Trans and Queer People Support Buffer Zones" and took it on the march.

"It was very heart-warming to see how many people marched behind that banner," Beth recalled, speaking of the warm response they got from attendees of Trans Pride. For her, the march served as a clear marker that the trans community is ready to support abortion rights and back the demands of the feminist movement for the protection and the advancement of those rights.

"This is how solidarity is supposed to work." Beth feels that for some lefties, "Solidarity has become the new 'thoughts and prayers,' a slogan you can say as a token gesture of support without actually doing anything. "True solidarity," Beth argues, "is waving your flag for one group but campaigning for another, whether that's trans people fighting for the bodily autonomy of all people, or lesbians and gays supporting the miners' strike", a clear nod to the legendary Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) group of the 1980's.

So, where next for the struggle from here?

Since my interview with Beth, she certainly has been busy, organising further demonstrations against the continued targeting of the Sandyford Clinic by fundamentalist preachers. While buffer zones are being sought through parliament, it is essential that the movement is able to organise for the protection of abortion clinics wherever and whenever.

Along with concrete defence of clinics goes the agitation for political change. Beth called on everyone reading this article to fill out the consultation as soon as possible: "We need as many people filling it in as we can!" The link can be found below, and I emphatically urge all of you reading this to complete it, and help show the Scottish Parliament how crucial Buffer Zones are.

With the Summer Pride season coming up, Beth was keen to spread the call for buffer zones all over Scotland. "We're going to keep using that buffer zone banner. It's important it goes to as many prides as possible." She aims to bring the buffer zone struggle wherever it can be brought, to demos, marches and events of all sorts. "We really need to get around and defend the idea of bodily autonomy wherever it is threatened regardless of who or where. If you can deny that to someone you can deny anything to them."

I ended by asking Beth how people can show support for the cause and how they can keep up to date with her. Her first port of call was the Safe Access (Abortion Services) Scotland Bill Consultation, which can be found [here](#) The Consultation runs until the 6th August 2022. Once again, Beth was eager to point people in its direction. "It is important that as many people fill in the buffer zone consultation as possible," Beth said, and she implores all of you to take part in it as soon as you can. As well as that, she directs everyone reading this to follow and support the work of [Back Off Scotland](#).

If you want to keep up with Beth's own work, check out Beth's [Twitter](#), her recent article for [Ungagged](#) and

the [Twitter](#) of the Rainbow Greens.

# The Overturn of Roe vs Wade: The Struggle for Reproductive Justice in the US

Thursday 30 June 2022 on Zoom, 19:30 BST

## Speakers:

**Zora Monico** *Michigan Coalition for Reproductive Liberation*

**Kerry Abel** *Chair, Abortion Rights (UK)*

**Beth Douglas** *Trans campaigner focusing on bodily autonomy*

please register in advance at: <https://bit.ly/usabortionrights>



**ANTI-CAPITALIST RESISTANCE**

And finally, if you want to hear from the woman herself, make sure to come along to Anticapitalist Resistance's Zoom meeting, "The Overturn of Roe vs Wade: The Struggle for Reproductive Justice in the US" which takes place on June 30th at 7.30 pm. The speakers include Zora Monico, an activist with the Michigan Coalition for Reproductive Liberation and co-founder of WVN, Whenever We're Needed, Kerry Abel, Chair of Abortion Rights UK, and Beth Douglas whose work you are quite acquainted with by now. Signup [here](#) and share on [Facebook](#).

# Left and independentists advance in French elections

The population of the French state go to the polls for the fourth time this year in the second round of the legislative elections on Sunday 19 June. While the right wing Macron won the Presidency again, this was against the far right challenger despite the strong showing of the left. However in the parliamentary elections the left has organised better, into a new coalition known as NUPES (pronounced 'noop') led by Jean Luc Melenchon. NUPES is putting up a strong challenge to the Macron Presidency and stands to be at least the main opposition, and possibly even the majority grouping in the National Assembly.

Of particular interest in Scotland will be the election campaign in France's colonial possessions in South America and the Pacific. In Guyane (French Guiana), the left and independentist movements had a strong showing in the first round in one of the constituencies with only candidates of the left going through to the next round in one of the two constituencies and NUPES are challenging Macron's candidate in the other (see article on Guyane [here](#) – in French at present, we will try to get English language updates shortly). In Kanaky in the Pacific, the independentist forces of the FLNKS (Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front) have succeeded in being the challenger to Macron in the second round.

[ecosocialist.scot](#) is pleased to republish two articles explaining the latest situation – one by fellow [Fourth Internationalist](#) Dave Kellaway, originally published on the website of [Anti\\*Capitalist Resistance](#) (a new revolutionary organisation in England and Wales), and the other an article on the Kanak elections originally published by [L'Anticapitaliste](#) and translated by [International Viewpoint](#).

# Setback for macron in 'third round' of french elections



Dave Kellaway reports on the first round of the French parliamentary elections.

14 Jun 2022

Gérald Darmanin, the French interior minister, the same politician who blamed the Liverpool fans for the debacle of the Champions league final a few weeks ago, did his best to massage the election results. He tried to define some left candidates as not really being part of the left coalition so that the overall vote for the coalition was reduced. Respected news outlets like Le Monde did not stand for it and declared the New Popular Ecological and Social Union (NUPES) the winners by a small margin. No wonder Darmanin was trying to fiddle the figures; this is the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic that a recently elected president has failed to come first in the parliamentary elections that immediately follow the Presidential race.

The margin of victory for the coalition led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon was around half a percentage point. NUPES scored 26% followed by Macron's Ensemble on 25% and Le Pen's far right National Rally (RN) came in at just under 20%. French politics is still currently structured around these three political blocs. The traditional conservative party which came out of the Gaullist tradition, the Republicans (LR), got 11%.

Notable successes for the left included the election of Danièle Obono, a black woman leader of the LFI who had

received much abuse from the right and the first place of Stéphane Ravacley, a left wing baker who did a successful 11 day hunger strike to stop his 18 year old Guinean apprentice being deported. He beat Macron's candidate.

Since it is a first past the post electoral system over two rounds, the popular vote will not translate into the same proportion of seats. At the moment NUPES is projected to get between 150 and 190 seats whereas Ensemble is predicted to get between 255 and 295. A working majority is 289 so at the moment it is likely, but not certain, that Macron will just about do that. Of course Macron could govern without 289 seats by doing deals with the other blocs, particularly the LR, but it would make it more difficult to get controversial legislation through like increasing the retirement age.

The limits of Macron's popularity were seen in the elimination of the former hated Minister of Education, Blanquer, in the first round.

The limits of Macron's popularity were seen in the elimination of the former hated Minister of Education, Blanquer, in the first round. His attacks on teachers have received their just desserts. Macron has still failed to create a solid political base. His success has always been based on skilful manoeuvring, taking advantage of the crisis and decline of the mainstream left and right of centre parties. At the same time the rise of the hard right and fascists allow him to present himself as the safe alternative to the extreme right. Today he is trying to extend the notion of bullwark against extremes by red baiting Mélenchon. His ministers keep talking about a French Chávez or a risk to the French role in the European Union.

Despite the good showing of the left, particularly compared to 2017 when there was no unity among the left and ecologists, the slogan put forward by the France Unbowed (La France Insoumise – LFI) of 'Mélenchon Prime Minister!' will not



become reality. It will be the main opposition bloc in parliament and its political centre of gravity will be more radical than the previous social liberal Socialist Party. The LFI will have the biggest number of MPs within the left/ecologist alliance. On paper the LFI has an even more radical left social democratic programme than Corbyn's.

Only 47% of the French electorate bothered to vote, a new low for these elections. This expresses a real disgust at and alienation from the political system. It also shows both the difficulty and opportunity for the left coalition. Even before the first round, the left recognised that one way of completely blocking Macron was to convince the abstainers to vote for progressive reform. Current projections of seats could change significantly if there were to be a big mobilisation and a cut in the rate of abstention. Mélenchon made his post election speech centre on the notion of 'deferlement' – general mobilisation for the second round.

Only 47% of the French electorate bothered to vote, a new low for these elections. This expresses a real disgust at and alienation from the political system.

Although the NUPES are through to the second round in over 300 seats, there is a much smaller stock of potential votes from those parties which did not make it through. NUPES already regrouped the whole of the left except for candidates of Lutte Ouvrière (Workers Struggle), which always rejected the coalition, and the few supported by the NPA (New Anti-Capitalist Party), which generally voted for NUPES except where social liberal PS candidates were standing. These currents only got about 1.4% of the vote and so will not weigh heavily.

On the other hand, Macron can expect to pick up a good part of the LR vote whether its candidates are standing against NUPES or the hard right RN. Where NUPES are running off against the RN the LR vote is more likely to go to the hard right. Leaders

of Macron's coalition have been much more ambivalent about supporting NUPES candidates against the RN as a 'republican duty'. Some have come out clearly for a NUPES vote while others say that it has to be on a case by case basis since some NUPES candidates do not share 'republican values'. Of course, Macron was happy to bleat on about solidarity with republican values when he relied on left voters voting for him in the second round of the presidential elections in order to defeat Le Pen.

The near 20% for Le Pen is much better than in 2017 and is a success for her reactionary current. It will help to further embed her hard right politics in the political institutions. This time she is more confident about getting the 15 seats needed to have an official parliamentary group which confers definite advantages. It will further change the relationship of forces between her current and the mainstream rightwing. Her absolute refusal to make any agreement with the pro-Vichy, fascist Éric Zemmour has paid off politically. He even failed to make the second round in a constituency where he had done well in the presidential elections. It looks like he is very much a busted flush – a balloon pumped up by the media in the preliminary phase of the presidential elections. Le Pen's continued threat to the left is her popularity among some working class communities.

Any weakening of the dominant class enemy is always helpful to working people's struggle to defend their gains and build a fairer society.

Any weakening of the dominant class enemy is always helpful to working people's struggle to defend their gains and build a fairer society. Macron has to get his reforms through parliament and therefore a working majority is important. It is a practical motivation for people to vote left in the second round. Even if, as likely, NUPES fails to block Macron in parliament, the fact of having around 100 MPs on a radical left position could well help any mobilisations. The social

liberal PS will not be the leadership of the left.

The anti-capitalist and revolutionary left will be doing their best to mobilise for the second round but will also be calling on NUPES to develop the struggles outside parliament. If you cannot stop reactionary bills going through parliament, you have to do it by mobilising forces on the streets. In recent decades, France has seen various neo-liberal reforms, including by Macron, stopped by mass demonstrations and strikes. Progress in the unity of the left and greens can give confidence to such movements.

Dave Kellaway is on the Editorial Board of Anti\*Capitalist Resistance, a member of Socialist Resistance, and Hackney and Stoke Newington Labour Party, a contributor to [International Viewpoint](#) and [Europe Solidaire Sans Frontieres](#).

Originally published here:  
<https://anticapitalistresistance.org/setback-for-macron-in-third-round-of-french-elections/>

## **Kanak independentists present common candidates for legislative elections**



WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE 2022, BY USTKE

The French elections also concerned the French overseas départements and collectivities such as Kanaky (New Caledonia) in the south-west Pacific Ocean. The results of the vote on 12 June showed that the independendist forces grouped under the FLNKS (Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front) banner had achieved their first goal – to be present in the second round, despite the very low turn out of barely one-third of registered voters. The archipelago is divided into two constituencies, in both cases the run off is between the candidate of Macron's grouping (Union loyaliste-Ensemble) and the FLNKS candidate.

At a press conference on Tuesday 17 May at Karigou in the town of Dumbéa, the Kanak independence movement announced the names of its candidates for the June 2022 legislative elections. Grouped around Wasissi Konyi, representative of the Palika in the political bureau of the FLNKS, the independentist candidates presented themselves, along with their alternates. Why were they standing? What were their goals?

“The independence movement must be represented in the National Assembly, it must be in the negotiations with the French government when they start. The independentists will ask for bilateral discussions,” announced the spokesperson for the Front. Following the last two congresses, that of the FLNKS and the popular congress, on 7 and 8 May at the N'Dé tribe, the independentist, progressive and nationalist forces made this commitment, and they reaffirmed that “the Nouméa Accord is a process of decolonization, the country is on the road to emancipation” . “The goal is to get into the second round, it is completely achievable,” indicated the FLNKS spokesperson, before the candidates took the floor to introduce themselves and explain their participation in these national elections.

*“In the National Assembly, our independence movement is not represented”*

In the first constituency (Nouméa, Îles-des-Pins, Loyalty Islands): Wali Wahetra, representative of Palika in the Province of the Islands at the congress, originally from Drehu, has been a teacher for thirty years. In the Congress, she is the Vice-Chair of the Education and Culture Committee. "It's a huge responsibility. The independence movement has chosen us to be ambassadors". During her speech, she recalled the five positions on which the Front and its allies agreed: "Challenging the political legitimacy of the last referendum consultation; the accession of New Caledonia to its full and entire sovereignty by the transfer of the last remaining powers; the non-negotiable maintenance of the achievements of the Nouméa Accord, which is guaranteed by the principle of irreversibility; maintaining New Caledonia on the list of countries to be decolonized; a categorical refusal to choose a new status within the French Republic. The bilateral format was recorded at the N'Dé congresses," she said. "The first constituency is represented by Nouméa, Île-des-Pins and the Loyalty Islands. The delimitation of boundaries (decided by the then Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua in 1986) is totally iniquitous and unjust. We want to call on the solidarity of the New Caledonian people, if they have the values of democracy at heart. In the National Assembly, our independence movement is not represented. We would like to go there to have our own say. The last Kanak deputy who went to the Assembly was Rock Pidjot in 1986 and since then the independentists have never been able to be elected because of these boundaries. This is partisan and completely unfair. It is a colonial attitude of the French state..."

*"We must tell the ordinary Caledonian that they must no longer be afraid"*

Her alternate is Jean-Fidéli Malalua, fourth Vice President of the USTKE (Union of Kanak and Exploited Workers). He has been active in the trade-union movement for fifteen years. He says he is "battle-hardened from politics and especially from

social questions” . He is of Futunian origin, he was born in La Foa in 1973. “I have taken up a cause that corresponds to my convictions, it is the struggle of the Kanak people. I’m not hiding from you that it’s not easy” . Questions might arise. “Why go to the National Assembly if you are asking for independence? Why participate in these elections? It is precisely the opportunity to go there to give a certain tone to the vision of the country and to give our point of view to the elected members of the National Assembly, but especially to Caledonians of all ethnic groups. As a non-Kanak and especially one of our generation. This country is viable together. We have to tell the average Caledonian that they don’t have to be afraid anymore. We need respect from the Caledonian voters ... In the word independence, there are clichés that scare people... In Kanak and Oceanian culture, the search for consensus means that we have to discuss anyway...,” he explained, saying that the politics of fear would lead nowhere. “The mosaic of communities gathered around an independence project is not exclusive. It is a common project and of general interest,” he concluded.

*“We are proud to be in this fight”*

In the second constituency (the municipalities of Grand-Nouméa and the rest of the territory), the candidate is Gérard Reignier, former head of the Union Calédonienne and the FLNKS. “What we want is to have a representation in the National Assembly to make heard the voice of independentists and nationalists, of those who want this country to become a nation with all its populations in a common destiny”. “The load is heavy but the combat is beautiful,” he said. “We are proud to be in this fight. We hope to win and bring back some truth to the National Assembly... We have the duty to inform the French political class, but also French public opinion, which is in favour of the full sovereignty of our country. The words liberty, equality, fraternity should not be besmirched. Perhaps France will be less beautiful without New Caledonia,

