

Capitalism threatens the planet and the survival of humanity: Only the struggle of the world proletariat can put an end to this threat

Over the past few months, there have been successive demonstrations by young people in 270 cities around the world protesting against the deterioration of the climate and the destruction of the environment.

Young people are taking to the streets to express **their fully justified concern** for the future of the planet and the human species itself, a future increasingly compromised by the effects of a production system that destroys the natural environment (while destroying the lives of millions of human beings through exploitation, war and the misery it causes) and causes changes in the planet's climatic, atmospheric and reproductive conditions with ever more catastrophic consequences.

Similarly, they express **their indignation** at the cynicism and hypocrisy of the leaders who have their mouths full of statements expressing "their concern" for the "environmental problem" and who organize countless forums (Kyoto, Paris, etc.) to adopt spectacular and ineffective "measures" while at the same time, in the service of their imperialist and economic designs, they only aggravate the deterioration of the planet further.

The trap of the movement "for the climate"

We fully share the concern and indignation of these tens of thousands of young people, but we must ask ourselves whether this movement, in its objectives, approaches and methods, is a real struggle to solve the problem, or whether it is a trap that can only lead them to discouragement and bitterness about being used and misled.

The history of the past 100 years is full of this kind of repugnant deception perpetrated by governments and parties that serve capitalism. In the 1930s and 1980s, major "peace" demonstrations were organized by governments and "democratic" parties, and experience has shown that this was a terrible manipulation because **with these "pacifist" mobilizations they were preparing for war:** the Second World War with its 60 million dead or the countless local wars that continue to cover with death, ruins and pain in many places on the planet.

The current demonstrations focus on "asking the authorities to do something", to put pressure on them, even to fill their computers with emails, tweets etc. full of threats.

But it is these same authorities that, in order to defend the capitalist interests of maximum profit and the occupation of strategic positions on the world market, adopt measures that only aggravate the deterioration of the climate and the environment. Such an approach of "pressure" on governments to "move" is like asking a hacker to take care of computer security or a fox to take care of the chickens.

State leaders are not "at the service of citizens" nor do they seek to "listen to their demands". The state is not the organ of the "people" but the exclusive and exclusionary machine that defends the interests of each national capital, of the minority that exploits us and is responsible for environmental degradation.

The initiators of the movement denounce the fact that "for 40 years, political parties of all colours have been losing the war against climate change!" These parties only promise and mislead the public, while in practice they make economic, military or warlike decisions that contribute to the destruction of the planet. An 18-year-old high school student from Geneva denounced this farce: "*There is a great deal of mistrust in institutional politics, but also in environmental organisations like Greenpeace, which are perceived as too moderate and institutionalised*".

The demonstrations focus on conducting "conversations" with ministers, parliamentarians, pressure groups and environmental activists. This only serves to wash the face of the democratic state and to get lost in the maze of laws and government policies. Attempts at "dialogue" with political spokespersons only lead to grandiloquent promises that do not solve anything.

The motto of the demonstrations is to "Save the climate, change the system", a vague formula that translates into "getting down to business" and getting lost in a series of local or regional measures that solve absolutely nothing and cause fatigue and disappointment.

In different schools, for example, "climate committees" have been created to develop "climate projects" per school. Under the slogan "Change the world, start with yourself", the proposed objective is to reduce your own "ecological footprint".

This kind of orientation is particularly perverse because **it makes us feel responsible for the climate catastrophe**, transforming a historical and global problem caused by capitalism into a "domestic" problem caused by individuals. Reducing our "ecological footprint" would mean using less water to wash dishes, showering only once a week and not flushing the toilet.

This approach of "empowering people" is particularly dangerous. First, because it serves to exonerate capital, and the states and governments that serve it, from any liability.

Secondly, because it makes these thousands of young people who are today schoolchildren or students but who will tomorrow be workers or unemployed, "citizens" who "demand from their governments". This leads to a false image of the society in which we live: it is not formed by "free and equal citizens" but by social classes confronted with antagonistic interests: a minority, the capitalist class, which owns almost

everything and is increasingly rich, and an immense majority, the proletariat, which owns nothing and is always poorer.

And, thirdly, and most importantly: the individualistic approach of “let us each do something for the climate” leads to division and confrontation within the working class itself. When car factories or other industrial or logistical branches are closed in the name of the “climate fight”, the authorities will point the finger at workers who resist dismissals by denouncing them as accomplices in the degradation of the climate.

With the same approach, but reversed (“let’s stop talking about climate change and keep jobs”), populist demagogue Trump won many votes in the stricken industrial states of the American Midwest (“the rust belt”) that allowed him to win the presidential election.

It is a dilemma in which they want to trap us: to maintain employment at the expense of the climate or to lose living conditions and employment itself in order to “save the planet”? It is a vicious trap with which capitalism saves its selfish interests wrapped in the attractive flag of “saving the planet”.

The alternative is in the hands of the world proletariat

The problems of the destruction of nature, depletion of natural resources, deterioration and global warming **can only be solved on a global scale**. The bourgeoisie cannot and will not do so because, in capitalism, the nation-state is the highest form of unity it can achieve. As a result, nations clash like vultures, however “green” their governments may be, despite the existence of international conferences and supranational organizations such as the UN or the European Union.

International organizations such as the United Nations do not aim to “solve the problems of the world’s population”. There is no “international community of nations”. On the contrary, the world is the scene of a brutal imperialist confrontation between all states and a competition to the death to make the most of it. The UN or the multitude of international “cooperation” organizations are havens of thieves used by each national capital to impose its own interests.

The only class that can affirm a true internationalism is the working class.

What social forces can achieve such fundamental change? Unlike the bourgeoisie, the working class is able to unite at the global level, to overcome divisions and oppositions between nation-states and has no privilege to defend in today’s exploitative society. It is only within the framework of a revolutionary struggle of the world working class that environmental problems can be tackled.

The working class has no interest, as the most exploited class in society, in defending this decadent system and, on the other hand, because of the associated way in which it is organized in capitalism, it can sow the seeds of another society, a society that does not impose a division between peoples, between nature and the products that flow from it, between man and his natural environment. When the working class asserts itself as an autonomous class by developing a massive struggle, on its own class ground, it drags behind it an ever

larger part of society, behind its own methods of struggle and unitary slogans and, finally, its own revolutionary project for the transformation of society.

The movement against global warming is developing in a context of an almost total absence of struggles by the working class, which is also facing a loss of self-confidence and even of its own class identity. As a result, the working class is not yet in a position to answer the question that some of the participants in the climate movement will ask themselves, namely that of a future perspective in the face of a capitalist society heading towards the abyss.

What can we do about it? It is not a question of doing nothing, it is a question of rejecting the pretext of “doing something” to support, with this pretext, the parties and governments that serve capitalism.

Indignation and concern for the future of the planet will begin to find a historical framework for responding with the development of the struggles of the world working class against attacks on its living conditions, redundancies, etc. because there is a unity between the struggle against the effects of capitalist exploitation and the struggle for its abolition.

The young people who participate in the movement must understand that they are not “future citizens” but, in their vast majority, future precarious, future unemployed, future exploited, who will have to unite in their struggle against capitalist exploitation the fight against war, environmental catastrophe, moral barbarism, etc. that this system of exploitation permeates all its pores.

This is what the movement against the First Employment Contract in France in 2006 or the Indignés **movement** in Spain and other countries began to do, albeit very timidly, in 2011. These were youth movements that saw their future not as “free and equal citizens” but as exploited people who must fight against exploitation and ultimately abolish it.

In capitalism, there is no solution: neither to the destruction of the planet, nor to wars, nor to unemployment, nor to precariousness. Only the struggle of the global proletariat with all the oppressed and exploited of the world can open the way to an alternative.

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Copenhagen Summit: Save the planet?

No, they can’t!

<https://en.internationalism.org/ir/140/copenhagen>

Capitalism and climate change: more evidence of the growing disaster

<https://en.internationalism.org/icconline/201809/16578/capitalism-and-climate-change-more-evidence-growing-disaster>

Ecological crisis: myth or real menace?

<https://en.internationalism.org/wr/317/eco-disaster>

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