The Labour-Plaid deal is the faintest outline of a Wales beyond neoliberalism

"On the surface, the deal announced this week between the two parties represents a real break with the status quo" *writes Sam Coates in an article on the website blog of* ***Undod****, the non-party Welsh socialist organisation supporting independence.*

"Bringing in rent controls, caps on second homes and new state-owned companies would mean a dramatic break with the idea that the 'market knows best', and that direct government action to protect people and communities is needed.

While Welsh Labour has traded on the mirage of 'clear red water', the reality has been a government that talks radical and acts slowly. The recently published *The Welsh Way* (with numerous contributions from Undod members) has finally laid bare the myth of Wales being more progressive than the rest of the UK.

Free lunches for all primary school children is a deserved victory for the alliance of civil society campaigners that have worked so hard. But any socialist government should never have let food poverty grow on its watch in the first place. It will cost something to implement, but fundamentally it doesn't challenge any powerful interests in Welsh society.

That's why the plans on second and holiday homes seem most significant. This is where the agreement does the most to challenge the rule of the market, but in most other areas the commitments are vague and could easily be left to gather dust in Cardiff Bay – like so many past promises.

Plans to cap the number of second homes, and using the planning system to stop the spread is the first real commitment to say that people and communities matter more than private profit. That makes it an even greater victory for Cymdeithas yr Iaith and other friends, and communities that have tirelessly fought for their very existence.

On a smaller scale, the very mention of rent controls, while currently weak, is a testament to groups like ACORN that have sprung up during the pandemic to organise working people. Plans for a community food strategy are encouraging and will hopefully lead to public procurement of locally produced food. Every school and hospital in Wales should be serving local produce.

As family farms are bought up for corporate carbon offsetting, the absence of land reform is disappointing. As Robat Idris outlines for Undod, this is essential to ensure Wales meets its climate change obligations whilst strengthening rural communities.

For everyone who wants a Wales that puts people before profit, this deal is the very start of that struggle, not the end. It represents the faintest outline of a Wales beyond neoliberalism that we must fight together to bring into full view. While only independence can create a Wales where our people not only survive, but thrive, this is a step to make full use of the powers our government already has.

Contrast this Labour-Plaid agreement, with the neoliberal announcement made by Keir Starmer this week. It's clear that there is desire in Wales for something better, and that the union won't offer that.

Powerful interests like the landlord lobby will do everything they can to stop this shift in our political direction, so it's up to us to pile the pressure on politicians. We must say 'go further' 'do it now, not after yet another investigation'

and not give them the benefit of the doubt that has allowed so much inaction from Cardiff Bay over the past two decades.

We will work with whoever wants to take advantage of this new opening. And we'll demand the radical action needed to realise the vision of this deal – join Undod today to be part of it."

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In Welsh. Original: https://undod.cymru/cy/2021/11/23/y-fargen-rhwng-llafur-a-plaid-ywr-amlinelliad-gwelwaf-o-gymru-y-tu-hwnt-i-neoryddfrydiaeth/#respond

Y fargen rhwng Llafur a Plaid yw'r amlinelliad gwelwaf o Gymru y tu hwnt i neoryddfrydiaeth

Ar yr wyneb, mae'r fargen a gyhoeddwyd yr wythnos hon rhwng y ddwy blaid yn cynrychioli toriad go iawn gyda pethau fel y mae nhw. Byddai dod â rheolaethau rhent, capiau ar ail gartrefi a sefydlu cwmnïau newydd sy'n eiddo i'r wladwriaeth yn golygu toriad dramatig gyda'r syniad mai'r 'farchnad sy'n gwybod orau', a bod angen gweithredu uniongyrchol gan y llywodraeth i amddiffyn pobl a chymunedau.

Tra bod Llafur Cymru wedi manteisio ar y rhith o 'ddŵr coch clir', y realiti fu llywodraeth sy'n siarad yn radical ond yn

gweithredu'n araf. Mae *The Welsh Way* a gyhoeddwyd yn ddiweddar (gyda nifer o gyfraniadau gan aelodau Undod) wedi dangos yn derfynol mai myth yw fod Cymru yn fwy blaengar na gweddill y Deyrnas Gyfunol.

Mae cinio am ddim i bob plentyn ysgol gynradd yn fuddugoliaeth haeddiannol i gynghrair o ymgyrchwyr cymdeithas sifil sydd wedi gweithio mor galed. Ond ni ddylai unrhyw lywodraeth sosialaidd erioed fod wedi gadael i dlodi bwyd gynyddu dan ei goruchwyliaeth yn y lle cyntaf. Bydd yn costio i'w weithredu, ond yn y bôn nid yw'n herio unrhyw fuddiannau pwerus yng nghymdeithas Cymru.

Dyna pam mae'r cynlluniau ar gyfer ail gartrefi a chartrefi gwyliau yn ymddangos yn hynod o arwyddocaol. Dyma lle mae'r cytundeb yn gwneud y mwyaf i herio rheol y farchnad, ond yn y rhan fwyaf o feysydd eraill mae'r ymrwymiadau'n amwys a byddai'n hawdd eu gadael i gasglu llwch ym Mae Caerdydd – fel cymaint o addewidion yn y gorffennol.

Cynlluniau i roi cap ar nifer yr ail gartrefi, a defnyddio'r system gynllunio i atal eu lledaeniad yw'r gwir ymrwymiad cyntaf i ddatgan bod pobl a chymunedau o bwys mwy nag elw preifat. Mae hynny'n ei gwneud yn fuddugoliaeth hyd yn oed yn fwy i Gymdeithas yr Iaith a chyfeillion eraill, a chymunedau sydd wedi ymladd yn ddiflino am eu bodolaeth.

Ar raddfa lai, mae hyd yn oed sôn am reolaethau rhent, er eu bod yn wan ar hyn o bryd, yn dyst i grwpiau fel ACORN sydd wedi codi yn ystod y pandemig i drefnu gweithiwyr. Mae cynlluniau ar gyfer strategaeth bwyd cymunedol yn galonogol a gobeithio y byddant yn arwain at gaffael cyhoeddus o fwyd a gynhyrchir yn lleol. Dylai pob ysgol ac ysbyty yng Nghymru fod yn gweini cynnyrch lleol.

Wrth i ffermydd teuluol gael eu prynu ar gyfer gwrthbwyso carbon corfforaethol, mae'r diffyg sôn am ddiwygio tir yn siomedig. Fel y mae Robat Idris wedi amlinellu mewn erthygl ar

gyfer Undod, mae hyn yn hanfodol i sicrhau bod Cymru yn cyflawni ei rhwymedigaethau newid yn yr hinsawdd tra'n cryfhau cymunedau gwledig.

I bawb sydd eisiau Cymru sy'n rhoi pobl o flaen elw, dim ond dechrau'r frwydr yw'r fargen hon, nid y diwedd. Mae'n cynrychioli'r amlinelliad gwelwaf o Gymru y tu hwnt i neoryddfrydiaeth y mae'n rhaid i ni ei ymladd gyda'n gilydd er mwyn ei sylweddoli yn llawn. Er mai dim ond annibyniaeth all greu Cymru lle mae ein pobl nid yn unig yn goroesi, ond yn ffynnu, mae hwn yn gam i wneud defnydd llawn o'r pwerau sydd gan ein llywodraeth eisoes.

Cyferbynnwch y cytundeb Llafur-Plaid hwn, gyda'r cyhoeddiad neoryddfrydol a wnaed gan Keir Starmer yr wythnos hon. Mae'n amlwg bod awydd yng Nghymru am rywbeth gwell, ac nad yw'r undeb yn cynnig hynny.

Bydd buddiannau pwerus fel undeb y landlordiaid yn gwneud popeth o fewn eu gallu i atal y newid hwn i'n cyfeiriad gwleidyddol, felly mae pentyrru'r pwysau ar wleidyddion i fyny i ni. Rhaid inni ddweud 'ewch ymhellach' 'gwnewch hynny nawr, nid ar ôl ymchwiliad arall eto' a pheidio â rhoi budd yr amheuaeth iddynt sydd wedi caniatáu cymaint o ddiffyg gweithredu o Fae Caerdydd dros y ddau ddegawd diwethaf.

Byddwn yn gweithio gyda phwy bynnag sydd am fanteisio ar yr agoriad newydd hwn. A byddwn yn mynnu y gweithredu radical sydd ei angen i wireddu gweledigaeth y fargen hon – ymunwch ag Undod heddiw i fod yn rhan ohoni.

COP26 Coalition – Final Press Statement

Responding to the Glasgow Agreement, the COP26 Coalition said:

> *"This agreement is an utter betrayal of the people. It is hollow words on the climate emergency from the richest countries, with an utter disregard of science and justice. The UK Government greenwash and PR have spun us off course.*
>
> *The rich refused to do their fair share, with more empty words on climate finance and turning their back on the poorest who are facing a crisis of covid coupled with economic and climate apartheid – all caused by the actions of the richest.*
>
> *It's immoral for the rich to sit there talking about their future children and grandchildren, when the children of the South are suffering now.*
>
> *This COP has failed to keep 1.5c alive, and set us on a pathway to 2.5c. All while claiming to act as they set the planet on fire.*
>
> *At COP26, the richest got what they came here for, and the poorest leave with nothing.*

The people are rising up across the globe to hold our governments and corporations to account – and make them act."

14.11.12

Glasgow COP26: Independence bloc on the 6 Nov March for Climate Justice

The Independence bloc on Glasgow's March for Climate Justice on Saturday 6 November will be marching for Climate Justice and for a Scottish Independence that takes effective action on climate, ends Scotland's role in fossil fuels and a new Scotland in solidarity with the Global South.

The slogan of the bloc is

It's Scotland's Oil – Keep It In The Soil

and the immediate demand will be for the Cambo oil field off the coast of Shetland to be stopped.

The slogan combines the demand popularised by the Scottish National Party in the 1970s with the demands of the climate movement and the COP26 Coalition calling the march for no new extraction of fossil fuels and a phasing out of existing extractions with a just transition for workers.

The bloc has been convened by the Radical Independence Campaign and will assemble at the Lord Roberts Statue in Kelvingrove Park from 11.30am. Lord Roberts was a British imperialist military figure who was integral to the suppression of India, Afghanistan, South Africa and Ireland during the British Empire. Campaigners will also call for recognition of Britain and Scotland's role in the imperialist domination of so many countries, a domination that has underdeveloped them economically. Financial reparations and the cancellation of debts are essential if these countries are to survive.

The bloc has been built by a Crowdfunder that can still be donated to.

Other Blocs on the march

The Independence bloc is one of around twenty on the demonstration. Full details of all the blocs and their assembly points are here:

You can find an overview of all the blocs and lead contacts here.

Facebook event page here: https://tinyurl.com/cud3j5be

List of blocs:

Indigenous bloc

Anti-Racist / Migrant Justice bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/857k7bmd)

Youth bloc

Trade Unions bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/jcbx5pup)

Communities bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/jvj5hvk8)

Extinction Rebellion bloc (FB event

– https://tinyurl.com/kf8mk8wv)

Faith and belief bloc

Independence bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/4jp2u5dr)

Climate Justice bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/487htbxs)

Health bloc

Farmers and Land Workers bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/ddh78hc)

Biodiversity & Nature bloc

Housing bloc

Cycling Bloc & Sustainable Transport bloc (FB event – https://tinyurl.com/fbvxzjz4)

See here for site maps of Kelvingrove Park and Glasgow Green, and the full Action Plan here.
There will also be a Southside feeder march which will assemble at 12noon at Queen's Park and join the main demo at George Square. Please see FB event: https://tinyurl.com/2au7djjz



Radical Independence Campaign on the march for Scottish Independence January 2020 (photo C Beaton)

Glasgow COP26: Join Fridays for the Future march Friday 5 November 11.00 Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow

Fridays for the Future have called a school strike for Glasgow on Friday 5 November to protest against climate change. There will be a march from Kelvingrove Park (Prince of Wales Bridge) to Glasgow City Centre starting at 11.00. Speakers include Greta Thunberg.

Details here: https://climatestrike.scot/strike/

@fff_scotland

#COP26 #UprootTheSystem#UprootTheCOP

Glasgow COP 26: INSIDE OUTSIDE – daily reports from the COP26 Coalition

INSIDE OUTSIDE brings you daily reports of developments at the Glasgow COP26. Brought to you by the COP26 Coalition and presented by Sabrina Fernandes and Iain Bruce, the programme will cover what is happening both inside the COP26 conference and outside in the streets and protests in Glasgow.

You can access the programme daily on You Tube at the COP26 Coalition channel: COP26 Coalition – YouTube

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Glasgow COP26: Zero Carbon by 2050 is far too late!!

If dire warnings resolved the environmental crisis we would be heading for victory *writes Alan Thornett*.

Boris Johnson tells us that we are heading for a new dark ages, which indeed we probably are. The UN Secretary-General has called it a “code red for humanity”. A report from the IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change), just before the Glasgow COP concluded that changes to the Earth’s climate are now “widespread, rapid, and intensifying”.

Such warnings are important, of course, but the gap between such words and action is enormous. At the moment we are heading for a 2.7 degC increase by the end of the century – which would be catastrophic – and that is only if countries meet all of the pledges they made in Paris.

The problem in Glasgow is not just whether an agreement is reached, or even whether it will be implemented, it is that the target that has been set by the elites – 'a 50 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and then 'net' zero by 2050' – was entirely inadequate before the conference opened.

The 1.5degC limit was a last-minute breakthrough at the Paris COP in 2015, and was agreed only as an aspiration and not a policy. Two years later (in October 2018) it was officially adopted in a Special Report on Global Warming published by the IPCC. The Report concluded that the 1.5degC limit was entirely possible within the laws of chemistry and physics but would require unprecedented effort in all aspects of society to implement. The IPCC also warned that we have just 12 years to do something about it, since a 1.5degC increase could be reached as soon as 2030.

After this the climate movement then adopted the slogan net zero by 2030 – which was adopted by the 2019 LP conference, for example, with the 'net' part hotly disputed. The resolution was supported by the UNITE union. Extinction Rebellion (XR) adopted it with a date of 2025.

Zero carbon by 2030, however, has been replaced in Glasgow by a demand for a '50 per cent carbon reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050'. The British government has adopted this position and according to Ed Miliband Labour has also, with 2040 instead of 2050.

We should reject the notion that that zero carbon by 2030 can't be done – from whoever it comes. It would, of course, need a dramatically new approach and degree of political will

commensurate with an existential threat. And it would have to be led by governments, who alone have the resources to do it. It means putting their economies on a war footing – a point made strongly (and bizarrely) by the heir to the British throne.

During the Second World War the British economy was taken over by the government and completely turned over to war production within months.

The USA acted in the same way once it entered the war. The US War Museum puts it this way: "Meeting these (wartime) challenges would require massive government spending, conversion of existing industries to wartime production, construction of huge new factories, changes in consumption, and restrictions on many aspects of American life. Government, industry, and labour would need to cooperate. Contributions from all Americans, young and old, men and women, would be necessary to build up what President Roosevelt called the "Arsenal of Democracy."

Leaving aside the jingoism, the scale of the ecological emergency also requires mobilisations of this kind which go way beyond anything that the free market can achieve – despite the profile it has been given in Glasgow.

It means forcing major structural changes at every level of society very quickly. It means a major transfer of wealth to the impoverished countries to facilitate their transition and lift them towards western levels of development. It also means major reductions in energy usage and wastage alongside renewable energy. It also means recognising that this decade – the 2020s – is crucial in all this. Once we go beyond this decade the problems escalate and the task becomes more difficult.

As Greta Thunberg insisted in the Guardian last month: "Science doesn't lie. If we are to stay below the targets set

in the 2015 Paris agreement – and thereby minimise the risks of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control – we need immediate, drastic, annual emission reductions unlike anything the world has ever seen. And since we don't have the technological solutions which alone will do anything close to that in the foreseeable future, it means we have to make fundamental changes to our society."

Increasing public support

Last month a poll of 22,000 people, conducted by Demos, found that up to 94% public supported radical action to stop climate change including a carbon tax on industry, a levy on flying, a speed limit of 60mph on motorways, and a campaign to reduce meat eating by 10%. Last week another poll of 35,000 people, this time by GlobeScan, found that a big majority want their governments to take tough action against climate change.

Protest actions have also greatly increased. Not only those around the Greta Thunburg, the remarkable school strikes, and the Fridays for Futures movement, but around XR and Insulate Britain who have played a major role in the run-up to Glasgow.

Last week 49 members of Insulate Britain were arrested after the group blocked three major junctions in London as part of an ongoing campaign in defiance of injunctions banning them from protesting anywhere on England's strategic road network. The group, is calling on the government to commit to insulate all British homes by 2030 as a key step to tackling the climate crisis. Along with XR in particular they have played a major role in mobilising public opinion in the run-up to Glasgow.

Alongside this science is telling us that we have 10 years to hold the global temperature increase to a maximum of 1.5degC. After that a dangerous and irreversible feedback process could take un-challengeable control.

How all this will affect the outcome in Glasgow, however, remains to be seen over the next two weeks. Many world leaders, heading for summit, were already more concerned with how they can get away with pledging as little as possible and how many loopholes and excuses they can deploy to avoid serious action.

Johnson – a dangerous liability

Any gains that might come out of this conference will be in spite of Boris Johnson, who was deeply discredited on environmental issues well before he got there – even in capitalist terms.

He acts as if he is a lifelong environmentalist dedicated to the defence of the planet when most of the time he acts as a climate sceptic and runs a party that is stacked out with climate sceptics. Other than supporting electric cars – though in a totally under resourced way – his domestic record on environmental issues is appallingly

In the UK budget last week – you couldn't make it up – he actually reduces the tax on domestic air travel– a more direct snub to COP26 it is hard to imagine. He is also supporting the development of a major new oil field in the North Sea off Shetland [Cambo] with an estimated capacity of more than 1,000-bn barrels. He continues to defend the opening of a new deep coal mine in Cumbria – which he claims is nothing to do with him. (Britain is currently producing 570m barrels of oil and gas a year and has a further 4.4bn barrels of oil and gas reserves to be extracted from its continental shelf.)

His huge road building programmes, alongside airport expansions, are still on his government's agenda. He cut Britain's foreign aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of GDP in advance of this COP26. His government has refused to prevent the water companies dumping millions of tonnes of raw sewage a year into UK rivers making them amongst the most polluted in

Europe.

His biggest lie, however, is his oft repeated claim that Britain has reduced its carbon emissions by 44 per cent since 1990.

This is only true if you exclude the embedded emissions that Britain has exported to China and India and other developing countries as a result of massive de-industrialisation. The emissions from which now appear in the carbon budgets on those countries not the UK. Britain also excludes from its figure carbon emissions from to major emitters, aviation and shipping. These exclusions have a huge effect, amounting to around 50 per cent of Britain's carbon budget.

(Johnson also arrived at the G20 in Rome banging his little Englander drum after flouting the agreement he signed with the EU in terms of the access of goods into the north of Ireland and French fishing rights around the Channel Islands, in order to boost his support amongst UK Brexiteers.)

Conclusion

Despite it self-evident weakness, and its inability to reach conclusions and take actions commensurate to the problem the COP conferences are important in raising global awareness of the problems and as a focal point of struggle for real and decisive action. The climate movement is right to take these conference seriously and to place demands on them that would begin to have positive results. Those who argue that we (the movement) should have nothing to do with the process should think again.

Stopping climate change and environmental destruction, however, will not be resolved by COP conferences but will require the broadest possible coalition of forces ever built – and the struggle around the COP conferences is important in building such a movement.

Such a movement must include vast range of activists from those defending the forests and the fresh water resources to those that are resisting the damming of rivers that destroy the existing ecosystems. It must include the indigenous peoples who have been the backbone of so many of these struggles along with the young school strikers, and those supporting them who have been so inspirational over the past two years. And it should include the activists of XR who have brought new energy into the movement over the same period of time.

It will also need to embrace the more radical Green Parties alongside the big NGOs such as Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, WWF, the RSPB, which have grown and radicalised in recent years alongside the newer groupings that have come on the scene such as Avaaz and 38 Degrees. These organisations have radicalised, particularly in the run up to Paris, and have an impressive mobilising ability. Such a movement has to look wider, to embrace the trade union movement, and also the indigenous peoples around the world along with major social movements, such as La Via Campesina and the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST).

The involvement of the trade unions is also crucial, though it remains difficult in such a defensive period. Progress has been made, however, via initiatives such as the campaign for a Million Green Jobs in Britain, which has the support of most major trade unions and the TUC, and the 'just transition' campaign (i.e. a socially just transition from fossil fuel to green jobs) which has the support of the ITUC at the international level, and addresses the issue of job protection in the course of the changeover to renewable energy. This opens the door for a deeper involvement of the trade unions in the ecological struggle.

The real test, however, will be whether it can embrace a much wider movement as the crisis develops drawing in the many millions who have not been climate activists but are driven to

resist by the impact of the crisis on their lives and their chances of survival.