Hard Right Fails To Make Breakthrough in Spanish State Election

*Dave Kellaway writes for Anti*Capitalist Resistance on the general election in the Spanish state.*

On Spanish TV on Sunday night, you had the rather bizarre spectacle of both major parties claiming victory.

The conservative People's Party (PP) did become the largest single party but was 40 seats shy of a governing majority on its own. It is 7 seats short of a working coalition if it allied with the neo-fascist Vox (Voice). It had already done so in a number of regional parliaments after its clear victory in the May local and regional elections. Its leader, Feijoo, is proclaiming his right to try to form a government as the largest single party and denouncing attempts to stop him as blocking democracy. But he does not have the numbers and in politics that is what counts. It is unlikely that he can put together a coalition with Vox, which has called for the banning of nationalist parties, while at the same time bringing on board pro-independence parties in the Basque country.

Spanish State General Election Results, July 23, 2023

Party	% vote	seats	2019 %	2019 seats
PP (conservative)	33.1	136	20.8	89
PSOE (social liberal)	31,7	122	28.0	120
Vox (post/neo fascist)	12.4	33	15.1	52

Sumar (radical left coalition includes Unido Podemos, Compromis, Mas Pais etc)	12.3	31	12.9 (only Unido Podemos)	35 (=same parties as in Sumar now)
ERC (Catalan nationalist)	1.9	7	3.6	13
Junts((Catalan nationalist)	1.6	7	2.1	8
EH Bildu (Basque Nationalist left)	1.4	6	1.1	5
PNV (Basque Nationalist mainstream)	1.2	5	1.6	6

You need 176 seats to form a government.

On the other side, Sanchez, the leader of the social liberal PSOE (Socialist Workers Party), was exultant in his post-election speech. His party had won a million more votes than in the last general election in 2019 and two more seats. Opinion polls had predicted a significantly larger (+3% more) gap between the PSOE and the PP. The PP had centred their campaign on burying Sanchismo, organising a cultural war on his party's measures in favour of trans, gays, and women. The rise of Vox to its right has meant it has adopted some of its reactionary policies.

Sanchez had gambled by calling this early election; he could have waited until later in the year. A defeat could have meant a challenge to his leadership. Undoubtedly, the strident calls to block the Francoist revanchists of Vox helped mobilise a significant part of the PSOE base. He has indicated that he will look to re-establish his coalition government. Already, he benefits from the support of some Basque and Catalan nationalists. The PSOE really needs to get at least the abstention of the Junts Catalan nationalists. Despite losing a seat and seeing the PSC (PSOE in Catalonia) and Sumar do well in Catalonia, Junts could now have a kingmaker role. Their leader, Puigdemont, has been persecuted by the Spanish state

for his role in organising the unauthorised independence referendum in 2017. He is in exile in Belgium. The leader of Junts has already said they will not provide their support to Sanchez without something in exchange.

Yolanda Diaz, the leader of Sumar (Come Together), the new radical left coalition set up by her without the initial support of her Unidos Podemos leadership comrades, was also happy with the results. Sumar had just failed in its bid to beat Vox into third place and won fewer votes and seats than these components achieved in 2019, but it was a solid result that gives the formation some leverage in forming future coalitions with the PSOE. Yolanda claimed credit for helping to push back the neo-fascists, and certainly her campaign did mobilise around that issue.

Sumar, nevertheless, is far from the same political current that Podemos was at its height following the explosion of the 15M Indignados (angry ones) movement in 2011. Then there was a link between the new political current and a new, vibrant movement in the communities. Podemos wanted to replace the PSOE, not become its left satellite and coalition partner. In the 2016 general election, it was a point or so behind the PSOE at 21%. It argued then for a ‘rupture’ with the post-Franco regime established in 1978. Podemos was sympathetic to a radical new deal for the nations within the Spanish state and was anti-monarchy. Yolanda Diaz created Sumar as a further moderate iteration of a Podemos that had already moved right by becoming a coalition partner and taking ministerial posts. It represents the integration of the left of the PSOE into the institutions. Mobilising against Vox was important, but the anti-fascist campaign also helped to drown out any critical balance sheet of the real character of the PSOE/Sumar coalition. Some commentators on the left in Britain have tended to leave out this analysis.

During this election, Sumar put forward some more radical proposals than Sanchez, such as a large ‘inheritance’ grant of

20,000 euros for each 18-year-old. Such a measure looks positive, but it places redistribution within an individualist framework that does not particularly challenge capitalist society. The money does not alter in any way how resources are produced and distributed, unlike measures that take industries or utilities into common ownership. The left would not necessarily oppose such a measure; it involves some redistribution, clearly, but like universal basic income, it is a measure that the bosses can live with, and it even stimulates capitalist consumption.

Pushing back the neo-fascist Vox (which lost 3% of its votes but nearly half its seats) was a positive outcome of this election. It demonstrates that advancing fascism is combatable and that the hard right's takeover of Europe is not an inevitable process. Unlike Starmer, Sanchez vigorously defended his progressive legislation against the PP/Vox cultural wars, demonstrating that you do not have to give ground on these issues. For example, in its Valencian stronghold, Naquera, where it had banned the LBGTQ+ flags, it lost the majority it had won in the local elections.

However, Vox will continue to govern in coalition in a number of regions, and its base has been consolidated. The impact its reactionary policies have had on a resurgent PP is another way to measure its political success. The latter, despite failing to get a majority, is now the largest party and has mopped up practically all the electoral support that the neo-liberal centrist party, Cuidadanos, formerly enjoyed.

Today, Sanchez is looking to knit together a new coalition. One problem is that all the small nationalist parties *(See: *Note)* that facilitated his previous investiture have lost seats except EH Bildu, the more left wing of the Basque parties. He really needs Puigdemont's Junts to come onside, but Sanchez is wary of conceding too much to a leader that he has done nothing to free from exile in Belgium. Junts are demanding an amnesty for Catalan political prisoners and a

referendum. It is not in a rush to deal with Sanchez, and they say they are unperturbed by a stalemate situation (El Diario, July 25). Already, there have been more Spanish general elections in recent times than elsewhere in Europe, and we could be heading for another one in a few months if no agreement is made.

The PP is desperately claiming some legitimate right to form a government as the largest party. After making a whole campaign around smashing Sanchismo, it is now asking the PSOE to allow it to govern. Apart from Vox, it is seeking the support of the moderate Basque PNV party, the Canary Coalition, and the UPN, a conservative party in Navarra. Sources suggest the numbers do not add up since the PNV has already said no. There may be some recriminations in the PP ranks over whether the alliance with Vox in regional governments had a negative effect on the general election.

The likely scenario is a new Sanchez-led coalition, which will be weaker given the surge in PP support, or new elections. Sanchez stated today that he is confident of rebuilding his coalition and that there will be no new elections. Feijoo's PP and Vox will focus on Sanchez's greater dependence on nationalist parties in order to mobilise conservative popular opposition to any new coalition. Despite Sanchez's reassurances, there could be greater political instability.

This election has confirmed a return to more of a two-party system, with the PP and PSOE taking 65% of the vote. It had fallen below 50% at one stage with the emergence of Podemos and Cuidadanos. It will be interesting to see how Sumar develops. Will it be able to consolidate its disparate forces into a coherent political current? Will there be democratic internal structures—currently it is organised in a top-down way through apparatus-to-apparatus discussions mediated by the personality of Yolanda Diaz? Will there be pressure for some of its forces to be absorbed by the PSOE? Can Sumar be a party or movement where revolutionary socialists can organise, as

was the case with Podemos for some time?

For people suffering from the cost of living crisis, poor or expensive housing, and deteriorating public services, the PSOE/Sumar government has not altered a great deal apart from some tweaks in the labour laws and progressive reforms on gender rights or on the historical truth about the Civil War. Abstention remains at 34%, which confirms the trend of recent years where many working people are alienated from the political system. The new situation, which is very polarised on the institutional level, is unlikely to change this. Building self-organisation outside of institutions to defend living standards and make social gains remains a key priority. The unions have been pretty much integrated into the government's reformism without reforms. Recapturing the dynamic of the Indignados movement and the political radicalism of the early Podemos current is more important than ever.

26 July 2023

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**Note: The Catalan left wing anticapitalist group Popular Unity Candidacy (Catalan: Candidatura d'Unitat Popular, CUP) lost votes and its two seats in the Cortes, while the Republican Left of Catalonia (Catalan: Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya, ERC), aligned with the SNP, lost 6 seats and fell to 7 seats, its lowest number of seats since 2011. The gainer in Catalonia was the PSC, the name the PSOE adopts in Catalonia. However, the left wing Galician Nationalist Bloc (Galician: Bloque Nacionalista Galego, BNG) increased its vote share and held on to its single seat and, as the article explains, the more left wing of the Basque independentist parties EH Bildu (Euskal Herria Bildu – English: Basque Country Gather or Basque Country Unite) gained 1 seat. [Note*

from ecosocialist.scot editors]

Marching to keep Wales nuclear free

Sean Thompson reports
Campaigners from Welsh anti-nuclear groups will march the 44 miles from Trawsfynydd to the Eisteddfod at Boduan next month in support of a nuclear free Wales and against plans to site the new generation of Small Modular Reactors that are under development at the decommissioned nuclear plants at Trawsfynydd in Gwynedd and Wylfa in Ynys Mon (Anglesey).

The march will arrive at the Eisteddfod on August 6 and a rally will be held there.

The march to the Eisteddfod site will take four days and along the way participants will run stalls, distribute leaflets, and host film screenings as part of their protest against new nuclear projects being developed in the north of Wales.

March organiser Sam Bannon from CND Cymru said: "In collaboration with People Against Wylfa B (PAWB) and the Society for the Prevention of Everlasting Nuclear Destruction (CADNO), this action will demonstrate our opposition to the rehabilitation of this unsafe, costly, and antiquated form of energy production that distracts from the goal of zero net carbon emissions and contributes directly to the production of nuclear weapons.

“In CND Cymru, we recognise the need for a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels. And so, in showing our opposition to SMR’s, we are also advocating for a green new deal for Cymru. Harnessing the power of our abundant natural resources using truly sustainable means and investing in energy storage technologies, would without any doubt be cheaper, quicker, and safer as well as creating considerably more employment for people in Wales.”

The marchers have the support of Welsh Nuclear Free Local Authorities, who oppose both the proposals for Trawsfynydd and Wylfa and the Westminster government’s plans to develop 24 gigawatts of nuclear power generating capacity in the UK by 2050.

Councillor Sue Lent from Cardiff, Chair of the NFLA Welsh Forum added: “Nuclear projects are notorious the world over for being delivered very late and way over budget. Bechtel and Westinghouse have been involved in the development of two new reactors at Vogtle in Georgia. Construction there started in 2009, yet only this year will both reactors come on stream, and the project is being delivered at a cost approaching US$30 billion (£23 billion), over double the original budget.

“Wales has wind and rivers, and a long coastline. Imagine what could done with £23 billion, if it were invested not only in a national programme to insulate every home in Wales to the highest standard to reduce fuel consumption and energy bills, but also in renewable energy technologies to generate and store clean sustainable electricity from wind turbines, micro hydro-electric schemes, and from wave and tidal power projects, drawing on the natural resources with which our nation is blessed?”

“Instead of nuclear, we want to see investment in Wylfa and Trawsfynydd so they can be transformed into sites of engineering excellence for the development and deployment of renewable technologies and storage solutions.

“Wales can derive a lot more electricity far more quickly and at much less cost, without creating ugly new nuclear power plants that contaminate their environment, operate at risk, and leave a costly legacy of deadly radioactive waste in their wake. Let’s do this – let’s keep Wales nuclear free.”

Republished from Red Green Labour: https://redgreenlabour.org/2023/07/23/marching-to-keep-wales-nuclear-free/

Photographs from: https://www.stop-wylfa.org/

Anticapitalistas (Spanish State) – Statement on the General Election to be held on Sun 23rd July

*Dave Kellaway of Anti*Capitalist Resistance translates the Anticapitalistas (Spanish State) statement on the upcoming*

general election (Sun 23 July).

The rise of reactionary political currents in the Spanish state is significant for the July 23 general election. This growth in political reaction is a global trend. The immediate factor behind this snap election was the electoral defeat of the progressive bloc in the May 28 regional and local elections, which changed the political situation. Although the results were relatively close between the PP (People's Party, the mainstream conservatives) and the PSOE (Socialist Workers Party, the traditional social democrats), the electoral arithmetic has generated a major shift. We saw the resounding collapse of Unidas Podemos (groups to the left of the PSOE but in full coalition government with it) and the decline of the PSOE, which led the PP to win many provincial capitals and Autonomous Regions. This changed the political cycle and led Pedro Sánchez to call a general election.

The reactionary turn in the situation has underlying causes. The first and most decisive is to be found at the international level, in a succession of defeats and capitulations of the left that emerged after the 2008 crisis and which have provoked the rise of a new right: from Syriza in Greece to the integration of Podemos into a government with the PSOE, passing through Corbynism or Sanders. The feeling that remains is that the left is not capable of consolidating stable mass projects or putting forward a programme that it can implement. So the crisis within the left is the first cause.

Another underlying reason has to do with fear: war, the geopolitical reordering of capitalism, and the ecological crisis generate a sense of the end of an epoch. Inequality is increasing in the countries of the capitalist centre; whole areas of the world are being thrown into chaos by capitalism; and new powers are disputing hegemony with the old ones. It is clear to the middle classes: law and order must be imposed within each country in order to be in a better position to

maintain relative privileges in a world in flames. The working class and the oppressed lack strong political organisations and do not have a strategic perspective to fight capitalism. But the rebellions continue, albeit without clear political direction: France took over from Chile, Chile from the black people in the USA… and so on and so forth.

In Spain, the transformation of Podemos into a more institutionally integrated and less radical force and the defeat of the pro-independence cycle have been the determining factors within the progressive bloc. The emergence of VOX (the voice of hard-right post-fascists) and the rise of the PP are the reverse of this pendulum. The progressive coalition government formed in 2018 was not the beginning of a period of great change. It was rather the end of the hope that 15M had opened up. [15th May is the name given to the Indignados movement, huge street mobilisations, and radicalisation that erupted in 2011 and led to the creation of the radical left Podemos-Tr] The progressive government has tried to promote a policy of modernisation of Spanish capitalism, which we have described as “reformist without reforms” Far from seeking a recomposition of capitalist society on the basis of a certain redistribution of wealth, they have maintained at all costs a policy that preserved corporate profits in a context of “Keynesianism without growth or redistribution”. Related to this policy, which reflects and feeds the current dynamics of capitalism, military spending is brutally increased, the pro-security reinforcement of the state is promoted, the terrain of protest is created, territorial autonomy is defended, and migrants are attacked.

In this sense, despite the big speeches, the progressive government has not fulfilled its promises in terms of legislation on labour reform, pensions, the gag law, housing, etc. It has objectively implemented a reinforcement of the authoritarian drift of the state on migration; it has aligned itself with Western imperialism, where it plays a subordinate

role (Sahara, the war in Ukraine, etc.). The government has applied the economic policy of capital: inflation has eaten into wages, and the working class is no stronger socially than when this legislature began. The great historic task of tackling the climate crisis has been postponed and handed over to big business, thus promoting 'green capitalism'. Even in areas where certain advances have been made, such as feminism and LGBTI rights, these are fragile and threatened, among other things, by the co-option and institutionalisation of social movements.

The rise of the right in the Spanish state is part of this context: insecurity about the future, hegemony of the old middle classes in the political field, reaction against the processes of social mobilisation of recent years. In a distorted way, this right has been moulded by its reaction to the progressive bloc. It feeds off the chronic crisis, the need to preserve order because change can only be imagined to be worse, and the structural weakening of workers' organisational capacity. The underlying negative process inexorably advances while progressivism suffers and agonises as it "manages the existing situation".

We do not want a single vote to go to the right. We do not want the Popular Party and VOX to get into government. But, beyond the individual vote of each one, we cannot close our eyes to the left parties' politics of renunciation, which have already demonstrated in government that they are incapable of fulfilling their promises and of confronting the economic powers in order to defend the interests of the working class. Where they exist, we call on voters to vote for candidates who express a clear position against the reactionary wave but also a rejection of capitulations and alliances with social liberalism and who defend freedom and self-determination. So we call for a vote for the CUP (a Catalan left independence current). This is despite our differences with them regarding their overly complacent policy with the rest of the pro-

independence bloc and on more strategic issues. We will also vote and build Adelante Andalucía (Forward Andalucia), which aims to build an ecosocialist and feminist current among Andalusian workers against the regime of 78 (the government that led the compromised and moderate transition from Francoism to Tr). It will highlight the secular oppression suffered by this territory.

On the 23rd of July, we will know what the new political framework is in which we will have to operate. If progressivism resists, the onslaught of the right will not cease, and we have no confidence that the necessary transformation will be undertaken. If the right wing governs, a redoubled offensive against the working class and the rights of women, LGBTI people, migrants, and all the exploited and oppressed is coming. Whatever happens, we will fight together with many more people. But resistance cannot be simply taking to the streets; the travails of progressivism are making it clear to us that we need a left independent of the regime, as loyal to the subordinate classes as the right wing is to the capitalists. This project for Anticapitalists is called ecosocialism, and it will have to be built through social resistance and also by drawing the relevant lessons on the political terrain: neither resigning ourselves to the lesser evil nor letting history continue to be dictated by the same old, same old politics.

Picture: CUP (Popular Unity Candidacies) Catalonia election banner: https://cup.cat/

Spanish State General Election Sunday 23 July – Can The Right Be Stopped?

*Dave Kellaway of Anti*Capitalist Resistance assesses what is at stake in Sunday's general election in the Spanish state.*

With under a week to go, the polls continue to give the mainstream conservative party, the PP (People's Party), a lead of four percentage points over the governing PSOE (Socialist Workers Party–social democratic). Sanchez, the current Prime Minister, may still scrape through, but it cannot be excluded that the PP may get a majority on its own–the electoral system disproportionately benefits the rural seats where the conservatives are stronger–but it is likely that it will have to rely on the support of the hard-right, post-fascist Vox (Voice party). At the moment, this group has many direct links with the fascist Francoist regime (Franco only died in 1975). This makes it less post-fascist than groups like Meloni's Fratelli d'Italia in Italy.

Already, Vox has gone into government with the PP in several regions following the recent elections. Open attacks have been stepped up on women's right to control their own bodies, against gay and trans people, and to stop the law on memory that helps provide the truth about the Franco regime's repression. It looks likely that despite PP leader Feijoo's election bluff at getting his own majority, he will deal with Vox to form a government.

As we see elsewhere in Europe, there is an interaction between the mainstream right and the hard-right post-fascists, whereby they both influence each other. The mainstream takes on more and more hard-right policies, particularly those linked to culture wars and anti-migrant racism. The post-fascists try to

look a bit more like the mainstream right wing by reducing and minimising their links with a fascist past, which keeps any militia-style organising well out of sight. Indeed, Vox, like the Fratelli in Italy or the RN in France, prioritises getting influence inside the police and army.

Party	% vote	seats
PSOE	28.2	101-109
PP	32.0	130-138
Vox	14.1	35-41
Sumar	14.0	34-40
Others (nationalists mostly)	11.7	32-40

Source: Simple Logica, July 17 (in El Diario)

Sanchez has gambled with this snap election. He could have waited until the end of the year. He hopes to take advantage of a reflex among progressive forces against the entry of the post-fascist Vox into regional and local governments. Maybe he thinks that he has a better chance of generating that reaction during the initial stages of the formation of these governments before the outcry dies down. Certainly, he is risking his political career if he is defeated. It is still too close to call, and it may all end with an unstable political deadlock that will mean going to the polls again in the short term.

The right-wing forces have benefited from the collapse and dissolution of the so-called modernising centre-right Cuidadanos party. The latter’s votes have mostly transferred to the PP. Although there is much talk of Vox, the main increase in votes, according to the surveys, has been for the PP rather than the post-fascists. Vox is forecast to get fewer seats at the moment than the 52 it got last time. The PP, on the other hand, is predicted to increase its seats from 88 to over 130. The main focus of Sanchez’s campaigning has been on the right-wing threat rather than proposing any sort of policy that will decisively deal with the cost of living crisis or

the need for greater social spending. Upping the verbal ante of anti-fascism and the threat to democracy did not really work in the last general elections in France and Italy. Maybe the massive increase in abstention and alienation from the political process makes such invocations less convincing.

What about those currents to the left of the PSOE?

Podemos was a political current that built itself on the radical street mobilisations of the Indignados 15M movement in 2011. Its founders included the revolutionary Anticapitalistas current. Its political programme called for a clear break with the existing regime and for a new arrangement for the nations (like Catalonia and the Basque Country) of the Spanish state. Its strategy was to build a new sort of movement quite distinct from the traditional PSOE or PP. Iglesias, its charismatic leader, called on its militants to overtake the PSOE at the ballot box. Now it has come full circle. It built itself on a different trajectory from the old CP United Left, which acted as a left satellite ally of the PSOE; some of its founders, like Iglesias, had personally broken with that tradition. Yet by 2018 and the victory of the PSOE in the general election, Podemos had jumped back on the old bus and fully joined up with the PSOE government. Podemos leaders had their ministries, there were many career openings for its cadres, and its apparatus could be consolidated. As day follows night, this turn logically meant that forces inside Podemos would complete the ideological trajectory towards more moderate policies.

So Yolanda Diaz, who was a deputy prime minister and a Podemos leader, launched a new political movement called Sumar (Come Together) and laid down an ultimatum to her comrades: Join me

in a new broader electoral coalition. Unlike the foundation of Podemos with congresses, motions, programmes, and debate, this new movement seems to be entirely built around Diaz. Podemos was never that democratic, but Sumar seems worse. Diaz's rhetoric about building a new progressive movement does not extend much reflection about the active involvement of activists in how their organisation is run. Melenchon's France Insoumise has similar problems with internal democracy, and this issue has been mostly unresolved in all the new left radical movements in the last decade. Syriza's leadership in Greece was able to ignore the majority position of the membership over its policies.

Despite quite a lot of rancour, especially around whether you were given a winnable seat on the Sumar slate, Podemos agreed to follow Diaz. The old United Left ally and an earlier moderate split from Podemos, Errejon's Mas Pais, were Sumar supporters from the start. Currently, Sumar is competing with Vox for third place on around 13–14%, which is roughly the score Unidad Podemos got last time. It does not appear that Sumar is tapping into any new areas of support. From its origins in Podemos, a new political current based on a movement from below and with a view of breaking with the system, Sumar has become mostly about fighting over which positions you can hold on to in the institutions.

The left campaigns to prevent a PP/Vox government; indeed, it defends the reforms made by the PSOE/UP government in the realm of democratic, labour, or LBGTQ rights. But it refuses to be silent on the record of this government—for example, Sanchez did nothing to stop the massacre of migrants in Melilla in 2022. Reforms to the notorious Mordaza or Gag Law are limited; it still gives police the right to interpret 'lack of respect' or 'disobedience'. The changes to the pro-business labour laws did restrict the use of temporary contracts, but much of the previous right-wing law remained on the statute book. The continuity with the PP's labour reform

is such that Mariano Rajoy, the right-wing prime minister who oversaw the law, told the conservative ABC newspaper that the PSOE and Podemos “left the labour reform where it was.” The reforms to housing law do cap rents at 3% and give some more rights to renters, but the government has done little to build more social housing.

Former Labour Party Prime Minister Gordon Brown, in an article in the Guardian, correctly warns of the international threat of far-right and neo-fascist forces. He shows how Vox is calling for nationalist parties to be outlawed and wants to weaken laws and policies on domestic violence. However, the whole article uncritically hails Sanchez as a champion of progressive forces. a defender of migrants (Melilla?) and an opponent of neo-liberal austerity.

Radical left currents that win seats in parliament do not have to go into coalition with social liberal parties like the PSOE. They can still prevent the election of right-wing governments and allow mainstream left-of-centre parties to form governments. In Portugal, the Left Bloc did precisely that while not going into coalition. It is also possible to negotiate around certain measures in exchange for your votes. At the same time, you can continue to develop a movement that defends workers interests with a strategy of a clear break with capital and its state.

Next Sunday’s vote will make a difference in the conditions in which the left and progressive forces can operate. The right and neo-fascists must be voted against and stopped, but an alternative to the PSOE’s slightly more liberal management of the capitalist economy needs to be built.

18 July 2023

Originally published by Anti*Capitalist Resistance: https://anticapitalistresistance.org/spanish-general-election-23-july-can-the-right-be-stopped/

Picture: Adelante Andalucia an electoral coalition supported by Anticapitalistas are standing a candidate in the Cadiz constituency for the Congress of the Spanish State. Manifesto>> here (in Spanish/Castilian).

Uprising: the October Rebellion in Ecuador – Book launch Glasgow & Grangemouth Weds 12 July, online Monday 10 July

*ecosocialist.scot is pleased to be working with Resistance Books, Anti*Capitalist Resistance, and other organisations to bring the authors of*

Uprising: the October Rebellion in Ecuador

Leonidas Iza, Andres Tapia and Andres Madrid to Britain in July 2023.

PDF version of info below >>> here

Wednesday 12 July Grangemouth 8pm

The big public event will be at the opening session of **Climate Camp Scotland at Grangemouth on Wednesday 12 July at 8pm**. (This is approximately four miles from Falkirk, 25 miles from Glasgow/Edinburgh, 50 miles from Dundee). In order to attend

this you will need to **register** with Climate Camp Scotland – details are >>> here

Wednesday 12 July Glasgow STUC offices 3pm-4.30pm

A meeting will also be held **on Wednesday 12 July from 3pm-4.30pm** at the offices of Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), 8 Landressy Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow G40 1BP (Google Maps). Public Transport – nearest station: Bridgeton, 5 mins from Glasgow Central/Argyle Street; Bus 18, 46, 64, 263 (SPT Journey Planner).

This meeting is kindly hosted by STUC and will particularly focus on Trade Union Solidarity and Climate Justice issues.

Monday 10 July Online/London 7pm

The visit to Britain kicks off with a public meeting and book launch in London on **Monday 10 July** that will also be available to watch and participate online. In person details: Lumen Community Centre, 88 Tavistock Pl, London WC1H 9RS and on zoom https://bit.ly/ecuadorbkregister

Meeting sponsored by Resistance Books, War on Want, Global Justice Now, the Climate Justice Coalition as part of the We Make Tomorrow series, Plan C, and Anti*Capitalist Resistance

Buy the book >>> here

Organised by Resistance Books

About the book

UPRISING is a detailed description and analysis of the Indigenous-led uprising of October 2019 in Ecuador, written by three people deeply involved in the revolt. The lead author, Leonidas Iza, came to national prominence as one of the central leaders of the rebellion. On the final day of the paro, when the movement forced the government of Lenin Moreno to withdraw Decree 883 and accede to live televised talks with the leaders of CONAIE, the main Indigenous umbrella organisation, it was Leonidas Iza who tore apart the arguments of the finance minister in front of the nation, giving him a master class in the implications of neoliberal economics and the government's deal with the IMF.

About the authors

***Leonidas Iza** is President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), and is the best-known of a new generation of Indigenous leaders in Ecuador. He emerged as one of the central leaders of the October uprising, when he was President of the Cotopaxi Indigenous and Campesino Movement.*
***Andrés Tapia** is Head of Communications at the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuadorean Amazonia.*
***Andrés Madrid** teaches at the Central University of Ecuador. He is the author of In search of the spark on the prairie. The revolutionary subject in the thought of the left intellectuality in Ecuador.*

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Recommendations

The October 2019 rising in Ecuador was a sign of things to come, as estallidos, or uprisings, erupted later in Chile and Colombia. They represented a "people in movement" – the construction of a new kind of power from below, the merging of new forms of popular resistance with historic expressions of indigenous rebellion, all reflected in the collective voice of rebellion which this remarkable book presents. In the course of those October days, as one speaker puts it, "the everyday became extraordinary", and a different future beckoned. ***Mike Gonzales,*** *Emeritus Professor of Latin American Studies, Glasgow University*

This book is an account of a semi-revolutionary confrontation, written by one of its key protagonists, Leonidas Iza, who is now arguably the most important Indigenous leader in Latin America, and two of his

comrades. It combines a detailed, first-hand account of what happened, with a profound, Marxist analysis of why and how, and what social movements and the ecosocialist left can learn from it. Unmissable! ***Iain Bruce,*** *journalist and writer, former head of news at teleSUR TV*

Not Coal, Not Dole! Just Transition & Climate Jobs – protest against Cumbrian Coal Mine Sat 22 July

There is a "Speakers' Corner" public protest against the UK government's approval for a new coal mine in Cumbria on Saturday 22 July noon. Details are below.

ScotE3 ("Employment, Energy and Environment – Campaigning for

climate jobs and a just transition) and Edinburgh Climate Coalition are mobilising from the Edinburgh area, so you can contact them for details of transport. The West of Scotland is nearer to Cumbria, for many it's nearer than Aberdeen, but the only possible transport is by car. We are not aware of any other transport but will publicise details if we get any. Let us know at info@ecosocialist.scot.

Our friends in Anti*Capitalist Resistance in England & Wales have an article by Cumbrian activist Allan Todd on their website

>> *here*

and you will be able to get Allan Todd's new book "Ecosocialism Not Extinction" from our Resistance Books bookstall at Climate Camp Scotland.

> ***From the organisers of "Speakers Corner" Cumbria***
>
> ***Join us in Whitehaven on Saturday 22nd July, at 12 noon, to oppose the West Cumbria Coal Mine. We say: Not Coal, Not Dole! We want Climate Jobs and a Just Transition***
>
> *We are inviting Trade Unions and supporters to join us for the third Speakers' Corner event which will explore the themes of Climate Jobs and Just Transition.* ***Bring your Trade Union banners!***
>
> *Is it possible to campaign against the proposed coal mine while supporting jobs for local people and boost Cumbria's economy? We believe it is. Thousands of jobs could be created in Cumbria in renewable energy, transport, housing retrofitting, and other sustainable activities. We can not have our communities left behind but coal jobs are not the jobs for the future or the present. Local communities shouldn't be held to ransom by West Cumbria Mining Ltd which is 82% owned by a Capital Investment company registered in*

Singapore!

Join us at the site to hear from great speakers talking about the prospect of Climate Jobs for Cumbria and a Just Transition for the area as an alternative to the coal mine.

*More**information by South Lakes Action on Climate Change** about the mine and why we oppose it.*

Speakers TBC. ***You can also share and invite friends on the Facebook event.***
Meeting point: *Outside the Marchon site, Whitehaven. On Wilson Pit Road, near junction with High Road. SatNav: 54°31'25.6"N 3°35'35.6"W. Click here for Google map pindrop. More information about parking will be shared closer to the date.*
Travel: Note that the RMT union has announced a train strike for 22nd July. *We are still going ahead with the event but you wont be able to travel by train. You will have to travel by vehicle to the event. We will try coordinate and support attendees with their travel arrangements.*
Direction: Arrive via the A595, as if heading for Whitehaven. Stay on that road until you see a road off [R., if travelling from the north; L., if travelling from the south], signed: 'St. Bees/Sandwith' – this is Mirehouse Road. Travel along this until you meet the B5345: turn L. onto St. Bees Road, and then, almost immediately, take the first R. on to Wilson Pit Road. The coalmine site is on the L., next to West Coast Composting (Wilson Pit Yard).SatNav: CA28 9QJ. Note there are limited parking near the site.
Accommodation*: You may also want to stay over if you are travelling for far afield so you may want to book campsite/accommodation early. So far we haven't made arrangements to support people with accommodation but we will explore accommodation with local people and other options.*
We are also hoping on the day to also carry out some outreach/door knocking activity in the local area and hold a social/film event tbc. More information soon.

From ScotE3

Solidarity with stop the Cumbrian Coal Mine Campaigners

- *Keep the carbon in the soil: Scientists across the globe are clear that if we are to prevent catastrophic global warming then we can't continue to develop new oil fields and dig new coal mines.*
- *Coal energy has the highest carbon footprint of all energy types.*

In December 2022 the Westminster government gave the green light for the development of a new coal mine at Whitehaven on the Cumbrian coast. The decision flies in the face of statements made by the Tories took while the UK hosted COP 26 in Glasgow. But post-COP and during an ongoing cost of living crisis their mantra has become 'energy security'. This apparently justifies opening a new licensing round for North Sea oil and gas, massive investment in nuclear and a U-turn on coal. As we write this it looks likely that the Tories will use their majority in the House of Commons to strike out a Lords amendment that would ban all new coal mining.

The new mine is intended to supply coal that can be processed into coke for use by the UK steel industry. Tory ministers argue that coke is essential for steel production and that domestic production will cut the carbon emissions resulting from the transportation necessary for imported coal. But the focus of the two major UK steel producers is on decarbonising steel production by using green hydrogen, moreover the Cumbrian coal is unsuitable for steel production:

'The UK steel industry has been clear that the coal from the West Cumbria mine has limited potential due to its high sulphur levels," said Chris McDonald, chief executive of the Materials Processing Institute, which serves as the UK's national centre for steel research.'

So, in reality, the government's arguments are simply a poor attempt at greenwashing. It's estimated that if the project goes ahead around 83% of the 2.8 million tonnes of coal extracted each year will be exported. They talk about it

being a Net Zero coalfield. It's the same sleight of hand as they use to argue that the North Sea will become a Net Zero oil and gas producing area. You electrify the industrial processed required for extraction, offset other emissions and don't count the carbon embedded in the coal (or oil) because that's the responsibility of the end user! All in all It looks like the government's coalition to go ahead is an entirely political strategy aimed at pushing back genuine action on climate in favour of the big corporate interests that dominate energy production.

Lord Deben, Tory chair of the UK Climate Change Committee stated in June 2022 that:

'As far as the coal mine in Cumbria is concerned, let's be absolutely clear, it is absolutely indefensible. First of all, 80% of what it produces will be exported, so it is not something largely for internal consumption. It is not going to contribute anything to our domestic needs in the terms we're talking about, the cost of energy and the rest.'

The other argument used by ministers, however, is one that we do need to take seriously. Whitehaven is a one-time coal and iron mining town and currently has high levels of deprivation. Proponents of the mine say that it will guarantee 500 jobs for 50 years. Putting the investment required for the mine into almost any other form of local economic activity would produce more jobs and certainly investing in renewables in the Whitehaven area would provide, more and more long-term sustainable jobs. But while local people have no faith in their being such investment the pull of the mine remains attractive.

Two court cases aimed at stopping the mine are due to be heard near the end of October 2023. In the meantime, a coalition of national and local environmental organisations are organising resistance. On Saturday 22nd July there will be a day of action in Whitehaven with a rally, leafletting

and door to door conversations with local people.

We want to coordinate solidarity contingents from Scotland. If you are able to join It would be very helpful if you could answer these three questions.

I am interested in joining the delegation to Whitehaven on 22nd July.
I could provide a car and take passengers.
If it's an option, I would prefer to stay overnight and return on Sunday 23rd.

Please reply to triple.e.scot@gmail.com (you can use the contact form on the ScotE3 if you wish) and cc edinburghclimatecoalition@gmail.com

https://scote3.net/2023/06/23/climate-jobs-not-coal-or-dole/

Aberdeen: Occupation of Edinburgh offices in support of Torry community

Activists occupy tree outside Edinburgh offices in support of Torry community in Aberdeen. Press statement from This is Rigged.

Ironside Farrar, Environmental Consultants with offices in

Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester were commissioned by Energy Transition Zone Ltd (ETZ Ltd) to produce a 'Masterplan' for the industrial development of parts of St. Fittick's Park, Gregness and Doonies Farm in Aberdeen. They were also tasked with obtaining Planning Permission for this development. Ironside Farrar's plans were presented to the Aberdeen City Council Management Planning Committee yesterday morning (29th June). The Council say they will adopt the 'Masterplan' as Planning Guidance.

On the same day, supporters of This Is Rigged went to the Edinburgh offices of Ironside Farrar and met with Julian Farrar, Managing Director of the company, to discuss the issues and request that Ironside Farrar withdraw from further work for ETZ Ltd, and that employees boycott all further work for ETZ Ltd for the following reasons:

St Fittick's park is the last remaining green space in Torry, which is one of the country's most deprived communities, where residents have a life expectancy ten years lower than people living in wealthier parts of Aberdeen. Commenting on the potential loss of the park, local doctors and nurses fighting to improve the health of the Torry community, say that industrialising any part of St. Fittick's Park will be devastating for the health of that community.

In addition to its positive contribution to human health, St. Fittick's Park is an oasis for wildlife, including many species of migrating birds, and Gregness and Doonies Farm support this wildlife as green corridors. In a recent article in the Guardian, journalist Tom wall suggested the park's wetland is "perhaps Aberdeen's most unlikely beauty spot. Reeds flap and bend in blasts of salt-edged wind. Grey and blue light catch in watery beds, where ducks dip and preen. Birds shelter in a young woodland of oak, dark green pine and silvery birch trees."

It therefore makes no sense to destroy this important habitat

while Scotland is in the midst of a biodiversity crisis. Furthermore, the wetlands and forest created 10 years ago in St. Fittick's Park are already capturing carbon, and it is increasingly recognised that ecosystems like these even regulate local climate including rainfall.

The main purposes of the proposed Energy Transition Zone will be to develop carbon capture and hydrogen technologies, both of which are considered by leading scientists to be unproven and dangerous excuses for continued oil extraction and habitat destruction.

In yesterday's meeting, Julian Farrar was warned that being complicit in destroying the wetlands and woodland, both of which are vitally important green spaces and biodiversity sites that have taken years and a tens of thousands of community man-hours to create, would be seen as an act of immeasurable violence.

Ishbel Shand, member of the Friends of St.Fittick's Park campaign said,

"The proposed industrial development is simply a land grab by the oil and gas industry to fill the pockets of their shareholders and directors."

After leaving the meeting with Julian Farrar, This is Rigged activists Mike Downham and Tom Johnson decided to occupy a small tree outside the Ironside Farrar offices, and are there awaiting a response.

Mike Downham, a retired paediatrician and children's DR said,

"There is a high incidence of asthma in children in Torry due to particulate matter air pollution from the nearby incinerator and the South Harbour industrial development. Further industrial development in this community would have a serious negative impact on the health of children in Torry."

Following the meeting, Tom Johnson, a painter-decorator and This is rigged supporter who knows St. Fittick's park well said,

"If Ironside Farrar were to pull out of the project at this stage, it would have a huge positive effect on the wellbeing and health of the Torry community – disempowered folk who have lost so much already. I mean, Imagine losing an entire bay – your access to the sea. And now forests they planted 10 years ago are to be ripped up and concreted over with "green" factories."

"Julian Farrar explained to me that Ironside Farrar have reduced the amount of harm to be done in the park, but if they now come out against any destruction WHATSOEVER of these spaces, that will be a really bold statement of solidarity, and an action that shows their real concern for the environment, and people. We understand it's difficult for a company to do something like that in current economic and political contexts, but to me Julian did seem to be uncomfortable with what's going on with the ETZ."

Republished from [ScotE3 -"Employment, Energy and Environment – Campaigning for climate jobs and a just transition"](https://scote3.net/2023/07/01/occupation-in-support-of-torry-community/): https://scote3.net/2023/07/01/occupation-in-support-of-torry-community/

Climate Camp Grangemouth –

12-17 June 2023 – Indigenous leader and Ukrainian activist among international speakers

At Climate Camp Grangemouth community groups, local people, workers and climate activists will assemble for a people-powered ‘festival of resistance’.

Learn practical skills, watch local and international talks and films, meet new people, explore local nature and history, play games and take collective action! Vegan food will be provided on site and the camp will be fully equipped with compost toilets and camping space.

Book a place

INEOS Grangemouth is Scotland’s most polluting site and billionaire owner Jim Ratcliffe stashes record profits in a tax haven while the community here are blighted by pollution and struggling with food and gas bills.

Climate camp will be a place to build a just transition led by people, not billionaires, to resist and reimagine a greener future together.

Details about the programme, travel and practical information can be found in the Camp Guide. And remember to book your place and donate to help us cover our costs.

Climate Camp Scotland Press Release 27 June 2023

Indigenous leader and Ukrainian activist among international speakers at camp

- Indigenous leader and Ukrainian activist among international speakers to address Climate Camp in Grangemouth
- The programme of events for Climate Camp Grangemouth, taking place 12-17th July, has been released and will include a number of international speakers, as well as sessions focusing on Scottish independence and land rights.
- The Camp will be opened by Indigenous leader Leonidas

Iza, Ecuadorian activist (pictured above) and president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador.

- Grangemouth will also hear from Ukrainian activist Iryna Zamuruieva about the Russian destruction of land and environment in Ukraine, and autonomous resistance in the country.
- Campaigners from Kurdistan and India will also speak at the camp.
- The camp will challenge INEOS's petrochemical plant in Grangemouth, Scotland's biggest polluter, emitting 2,752,000 tonnes of CO2 in 2020 (1)

Free Photos of speakers and camp at this link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KG1UspbztIfMgBBLPpJ4_tEK7eEoNekX?usp=sharing

International speakers and activists will join local communities and campaigners as part of the programme at a climate camp in Grangemouth.

Held from 12 to 17th July, the camp is a chance for local residents, workers and activists to meet and build relationships. With guests from Ecuador, Ukraine, Kurdistan and India, the camp aims to forge solidarity between those affected by the fossil fuel industry worldwide.

The camp will be opened on 12th July by Ecuadorian activist Leonidas Iza, leader of the country's biggest indigenous group. Iza led the 2019 and 2022 protests against the Ecuadorian government's austerity measures and rising fuel prices, which disproportionately impacted the country's poorest.

Later in the programme, campaigner Iryna Zamuruieva will hold

a session about Russia's destruction of Ukranian ecosystems and land, exploring the resistance to such practices in the country.

Other international speakers include representatives of the Internationalist Youth Coordination, who will share knowledge on Kurdish ecology and youth mobilisation, as well as a session on LGBTQ+ climate activism in India. Discussions on land rights, rewilding and Scottish independence will also feature, among other topics.

Quân Nguyễn, a spokesperson for Climate Camp Scotland, said:

> *"Climate Camp Grangemouth is an orientation point for climate activists to think about our strategies and tactics, and how we can restore momentum to hold polluters and governments to account. Having so many activists and resistance leaders from abroad leading the debate helps us learn from those on the frontline of the climate crisis. This knowledge in the face of an ever intensifying climate crisis is more urgently needed than ever."*

Climate Camp Grangemouth speaker Iryna Zamuruieva added:

> *"Ukraine's resistance is also a climate justice struggle. This war reinforces the need to end the fossil fuel economy which Russia uses to fund ecocide and genocide. It also shows the need to join up our struggle with those defending their kin-regions against imperial and colonial violence."*

INEOS petrochemical plant in Grangemouth, the location for this year's climate camp, is Scotland's biggest polluter, emitting 2,752,000 tonnes of CO2 in 2020. Last month INEOS refused to participate in a Parliamentary inquiry about transition at Grangemouth (2) Levels of inequality in the surrounding areas are high, with 25% of children in the Falkirk council area living under the poverty line (3) while

INEOS's owner, Jim Ratcliffe, consistently ranks as one of the UK's richest people (4).

The organisers of the camp say that this same pattern of inequality and exploitation exists across the world. By bringing international leaders and activists together, they hope to learn from each other's struggles for fairness, equality and safe environments.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Climate Camp Grangemouth is being coordinated by Climate Camp Scotland, who are bringing workers, front-line communities, and climate action groups together to build the movement for a swift just transition from fossil fuels, and to take mass action that brings about climate justice. *www.climatecampscotland.com*

1. INEOS controls four sites in the top 20 climate polluters in Scotland, all in Grangemouth town. See: https://theferret.scot/rogues-gallery-climate-polluters-top-20-revealed/

2. Petrochemical giant Ineos snubs Scottish Government net zero committee refusing to 'go on the record' – Falkirk Herald https://www.falkirkherald.co.uk/news/environment/petrochemical-giant-ineos-snubs-scottish-government-net-zero-committee-refusing-to-go-on-the-record-4126406

3. One in four children across Falkirk council area living in poverty – Faklirk Herald https://www.falkirkherald.co.uk/news/politics/council/one-in-four-children-across-falkirk-council-area-living-in-poverty-4179839

4. Manchester United bidder Jim Ratcliffe up to second on UK rich list – The Guardian – https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/may/19/manchester-united-bidder-jim-ratcliffe-up-to-second-on-uk-rich-list-

hinduja-family-richard-branson

Republished from Climate Camp Scotland website: https://www.climatecampscotland.com/

Solidarity with Kyiv Pride! Leaflet distributed at Edinburgh Pride

The following leaflet was distributed by Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland at the Edinburgh Pride march on 24 June 2023.

SOLIDARITY WITH KYIV PRIDE

It is currently impossible to stage Pride marches in Kyiv due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Last year, the Kyiv Pride March was held in Warsaw. The Ukraine Solidarity Campaign (Scotland) distributed Kyiv Pride solidarity leaflets at Edinburgh Pride.

This year Liverpool will host Kyiv's annual Pride with the city's own march being held jointly with Ukrainian organisers KyivPride. The announcement comes just a few weeks after Liverpool hosted the Eurovision Song Contest on behalf of Ukraine, which organisers said gave a "massive boost" to the city's LGBTQ+ scene.

Andi Herring, CEO of the LCR Pride Foundation, said. “Even in the UK, we are all aware of how easily these rights can be backtracked on or removed entirely, that is why we are proud to share our March with Pride this year with the LGBT+ communities of Ukraine. It is a message of solidarity, of unity and of hope for people here in Liverpool City Region and in Kyiv.” And in Scotland, we have seen the right wing UK Tory government (with no resistance from Sir Keir Starmer’s Labour ‘opposition’) overriding the democratic decision of Holyrood to implement Gender Recognition Reform.

Lenny Emson, who was a founding member of KyivPride a decade ago and has led the organisation as an Executive Director for the last two years, said: “The Russian invasion took our right to march away from us. But international solidarity gives us a chance to keep marching for Ukraine, for LGBTQI rights, for freedom. KyivPride supports self-determination in its national, social and individual senses. and the Ukrainian people’s right to militarily resist the Russian occupiers.

UKRAINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN (SCOTLAND)

https://www.facebook.com/USCScotland/

СОЛІДАРНІСТЬ З КИЇВСЬКИМ ПРАЙДОМ

Через російську агресію, на даний момент проведення прайдів у Києві неможливе. Минулого року Варшава прийняла київський Марш рівності; Українська кампанія солідарності (Шотландія) розповсюдила листівки про цей марш на единбурзькому Прайді.

Цього року Ліверпуль прийматиме щорічний київський Прайд. Хода буде проведена спільно з КиївПрайдом,

українськими організаторами київського Маршу рівності. Це станеться всього через кілька тижнів після того, як Ліверпуль прийняв пісенний конкурс Євробачення від України, який, за словами організаторів, дав «значний поштовх» ЛГБТК+ сцені міста.

Енді Геррінг, генеральний директор ліверпульської організаціх LCR Pride Foundation, сказав, що «Навіть у Великій Британії ми всі усвідомлюємо, як легко можна втратити наші права, тому ми з гордістю ділимо наш прайд-марш із ЛГБТ+ спільнотами України. Це послання солідарності, єдності та надії для людей тут, у регіоні міста Ліверпуль, і в Києві». А в Шотландії ми бачили, як правий британський уряд Консервативної партії (без опору з боку лейбористської «опозиції») скасував демократичне рішення шотлиндського уряду про реформу гендерного визнання.

Ленні Емсон, який був одним із засновників КиївПрайду десять років тому і очолював організацію як виконавчий директор протягом останніх двох років, сказав: «Російське вторгнення відібрало в нас право маршувати. Але міжнародна солідарність дає нам шанс продовжувати маршувати за Україну, за права ЛГБТКІ, за свободу. КиївПрайд підтримує самовизначення в національному, соціальному та індивідуальному сенсі. та право українського народу на військовий опір російським окупантам».

УКРАЇНСЬКА КАМПАНІЯ СОЛІДАРНОСТІ (ШОТЛАНДІЯ)

https://www.facebook.com/USCScotland/

Climate Change Committee Report – None of this is Working

Mike Small, editor of Bella Caledonia, reports on the latest report of the government's Committee on Climate Change and exposes the latest incarnation of climate denialism and pandemic disinformation at the heart of Westminster.

John Gummer's latest (and last) Committee on Climate Change report has just dropped and it's damning. It says we're falling behind and nowhere close to enough on all fronts in tackling the climate crisis and this is caused by the total vacuum of political leadership at the heart of the British government. The headlines are: "UK has made 'no progress' on climate plan, say government's own advisers".

Incredibly fewer homes were insulated last year under the government-backed scheme than the year before, despite soaring energy bills and a cost of living crisis. There is pitiful progress on transport emissions, and no coherent programme for behaviour change (there's a surprise).

The report also found:

The number of homes receiving energy efficiency improvements under the government's Energy Company Obligation scheme more than halved, from 383,700 in 2021 to 159,600 in 2022. At least 1m to 2m homes should be upgraded each year to meet net zero.

Homes are still being built that will need to be retrofitted with low-carbon heating and efficiency measures, because the government has not yet brought in its promised future homes standard.

No decision on whether to use hydrogen for home heating will be made until 2026, leaving households and boiler companies in complete limbo.

Emissions from transport have remained “stubbornly high” as the government has “made a political choice” to allow an increase in road traffic, instead of encouraging people on to public transport.

There is no clear policy to decarbonise steel production, or emissions from other heavy industries.

In a letter from Lord Deben (Gummer), Chairman of the Climate Change Committee, to Rishi Sunak about the 2023 Progress Report he bemoaned “The failure to act decisively in response to the energy crisis and build on the success of hosting COP26 means that the UK has lost its clear global climate leadership.” This idea of the success of COP26 or of Britain’s ‘climate leadership’ is a Tory myth and an appeal to national hubris. He also complained about the ‘Inaction has been compounded by continuing support for further unnecessary investment in fossil fuels.’ Like, No Shit Sherlock.

The illusion of action, the mythology that meaningful change is underway is laid bare.

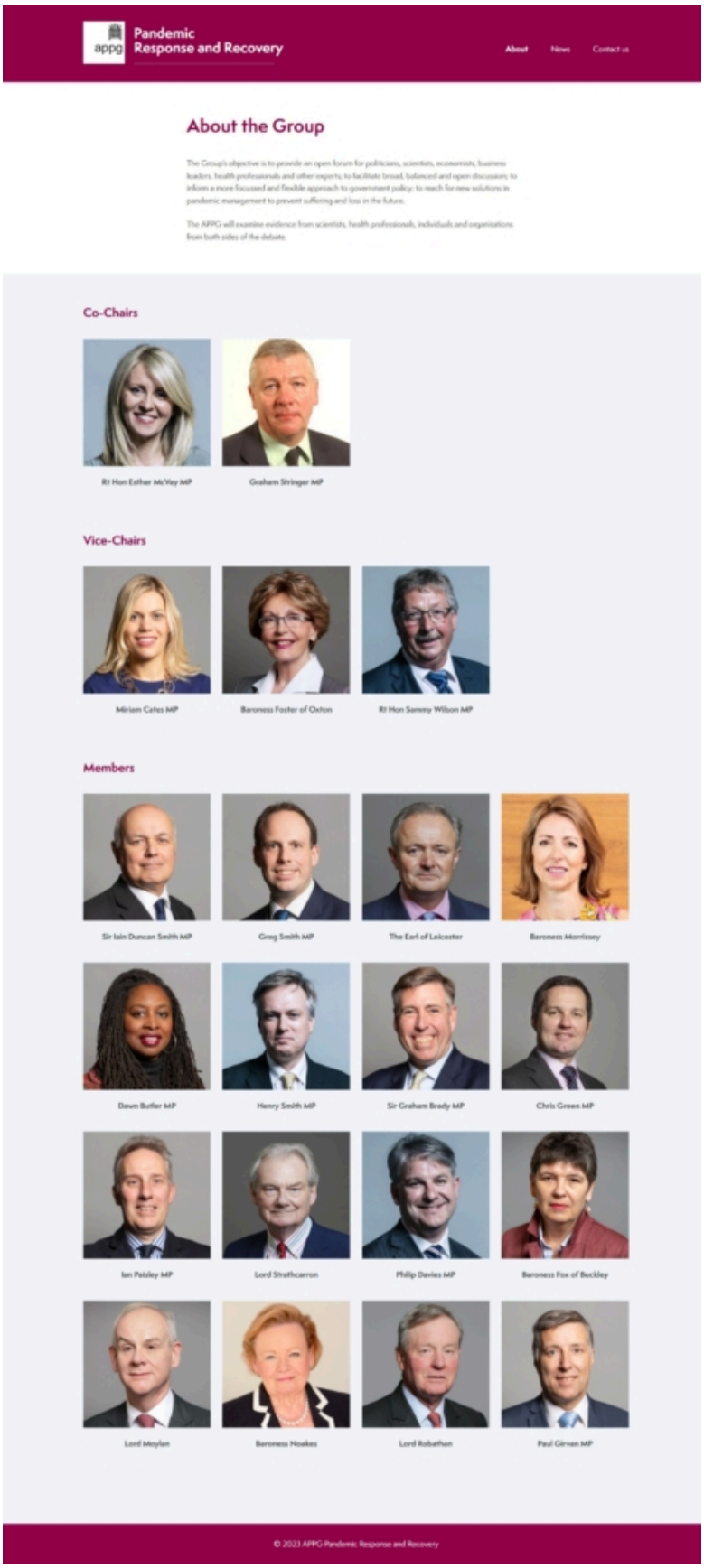
Climate Denialism and Pandemic Disinformation

Meanwhile (h/t to Leo Hickman) a letter to the Daily Telegraph has revealed for the first time the names and numbers of the tiny grouping of climate-sceptic UK parliamentarians who call themselves the “Net Zero Scrutiny Group”. There’s no surprises:

Craig Mackinlay MP (Con)
Sir Iain Duncan-Smith MP (Con)
Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg MP (Con)
Lord Frost (Con)
Esther McVey MP (Con)
Sir John Redwood (Con)
Dame Andrea Jenkyns (Con)
Sir Robert Syms (Con)
Mark Francois (Con)
David Jones (Con)
Kelly Tolhurst (Con)
Sammy Wilson (DUP)
Andrew Lewer (Con)
Jack Brereton (Con)
Miriam Cates (Con)
Chris Green (Con)
Jonathan Gullis (Con)
Philip Hollobone (Con)
Adam Holloway (Con)
Julian Knight (Ind)
Marco Longhi (Con)
Karl McCartney (Con)
Holly Mumby-Croft (Con)
Philip Davies (Con)
Bob Seely (Con)
Greg Smith (Con)
Andrew Bridgen (Reclaim)
Scott Benton (Ind)
Baroness Foster of Oxton (Con)
Baroness Lea of Lymm (Con)
Lord Lilley (Con)
Lord Moylan (Con)
Lord Strathcarron (Con)

The Telegraph splashed with a front-page ‘scoop’ from the “Net Zero Scrutiny Group” clearly designed to distract from the Committee on Climate Change’s damning report But as John Bye has pointed out there’s an interesting crossover between the Net Zero Scrutiny Group and the All-Party Parliamentary Group ‘Pandemic Response and Recovery’.

This crossover includes such luminaries as Esther McVey (Chair), Sammy Wilson (Vice Chair), Iain Duncan Smith, Baroness Foster of Oxton, and Lord Strathcarron.



The APPG group has some interesting backers. As Byline Times reported the group is “being funded and managed by Collateral Global – the successor organisation to the ‘Great Barrington

Declaration' (GBD), established by two of its co-founders, Oxford epidemiologist Professor Sunetra Gupta and Ministry of Defence contractor Alex Caccia."

"The GBD is a pandemic disinformation group backed by the Koch climate science denial network, known for promoting a 'herd immunity by natural infection' approach to the Coronavirus crisis."

Support from HART and Climate Science Deniers

The APPG has also received PR support from the Health Advisory and Recovery Group (HART), which harbours a range of conspiratorial anti-vaxxer views about the pandemic – including the idea that Coronavirus death certificates are fake, that deaths are really being caused by vaccines rather than COVID, and that the both the disease and vaccines are part of a global depopulation conspiracy by elites.

A press release announcing the creation of the APPG was sent out by Jemma Moran – HART's head of communications.

Baroness Foster was conferred a Life Peerage after a nomination by Prime Minister Boris Johnson as part of the 2020 Political Honours. In January 2021, she was elevated to the Lords as Baroness Foster of Oxton. Not to be confused with Baroness Fox (aka Claire Fox, aka Claire Foster), also a great

Koch enthusiast, also present.

This convergence between the far-right, libertarian conspiracism and climate denialism is not a coincidence.

The APPG also include Labour MP Graham Stringer who is a trustee of the Koch-connected Global Warming Policy Foundation, Britain's most prominent climate science denial lobby group which takes funds from fossil fuels companies.

Stringer has denied the IPCC's conclusion that humans are the dominant cause of current climate change. So has his colleague in the APPG, the DUP's Sammy Wilson, that human-induced climate change is a "myth based on dodgy science".

Today's revelations will be no real new news to anyone. We all knew this anyway, but now it's official, laid out by the government's own committee. While we are led to believe that progress is being made and everything is in hand, the government is actually going backwards, introducing anti-climate policies so that nothing can change.

28 June 2023

Mike Small

Republished from: https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2023/06/28/none-of-this-is-working/

Support independent Scottish journalism – Bella Caledonia – https://bellacaledonia.org.uk/donate

France – Criminal policing, systemic racism, anti-social policies: supporting a legitimate revolt

Statement by leaders of the NPA (New Anticapitalist Party France)
Since the death of young Nahel, working-class neighbourhoods have been mobilizing. This mobilization is legitimate. And the source of the violence lies with the police, Darmanin and Macron, who are responsible for this situation.

An anti-racist, anti-authoritarian revolt

For years, those in power have been strengthening the police and racist arsenal: police violence is increasingly regular and deadly, at demonstrations and in working-class neighbourhoods. With rare exceptions, the perpetrators of this violence enjoy organized impunity.

In the police force, it is the far right that sets the tone. Remember that “angry” police organizations demonstrated on the Champs-Élysées, and that they are still demanding more freedom to kill.

Macron and Darmanin are collaborating and contributing to all this by supporting and reinforcing this impunity, and through the many racist and freedom-destroying laws that strengthen the police and the far right: the separatism law, security laws, etc. Not to mention the authoritarian management of Covid and the repression of social and environmental

movements.

The mobilization of working-class neighbourhoods is an opportunity for the working classes as a whole and for the world of work: it paves the way for a social mobilization for justice, against police repression, against the authoritarian power that also expressed itself through the anti-democratic methods used during the movement on pensions, with the 49-3, the 47-1, etc. This authoritarianism is at the heart of the social movement. This authoritarianism has been at work for years, with bans on demonstrations and violent episodes of repression, as well as the dissolution of the CCIF (Collectif contre l'Islamophobie) and Soulèvements de la Terre. [1]

Justice for all!

Justice means, first and foremost, justice for Nahel, for Zyed and Bouna, for Adama, for Alhoussein, for the three young people in the 20th arrondissement of Paris who were hit by a police car, for all the victims of police violence, for the people maimed in the protests. The guilty parties must be punished, and the victims and their families must be compensated.

We must put an end to preventive detention and release the young people imprisoned as a result of the demonstrations of recent nights. Let's not forget that all the responsibility for these events lies with the government.

Public transport must be re-established in the neighbourhoods, and any state of emergency or curfew must be rejected.

The police must be disarmed immediately.

And (minister of the interior) Darmanin must resign.

Beyond that, we need social justice: the anger we are seeing today is at the same time the expression of a much deeper revolt, against racism, against the stigmatization of people

living in working-class neighbourhoods, against racialized people, against Islamophobia, against poverty that is growing, particularly as a result of inflation, low wages, job insecurity, attacks on unemployment insurance, the destruction of public services, etc.

Supporting and extending the revolt

Make no mistake about it: while Macron's government is increasingly repressive, it is not the only one in the world to act in this way. Repression is the rulers' only response to the economic, ecological, social and political crisis into which they have plunged the world.

The NPA calls on people to mobilize alongside angry young people, to gather in front of town halls, every evening if necessary, to express our rage and our demands. It calls on the organisations of the workers' movement, trade unions, associations and parties to meet as soon as possible to discuss how to build a mobilization on the scale and in the forms that will support the current revolt, obtain justice and launch a counter-offensive against the anti-democratic and anti-social power of Macron and his government.

CHRISTINE POUPIN, OLIVIER BESANCENOT, PAULINE SALINGUE, PHILIPPE POUTOU

30 June 2023

Christine Poupin is is a trade union activist in the chemicals sector and a national spokesperson for the NPA in France.

Olivier Besancenot is one of the best-known leaders of the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA), formed in 2009 following a call by the Revolutionary Communist League (Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR), French section of the Fourth International). As candidate for the LCR in the presidential elections in 2002 and 2007, he received 1.2 million votes (4.5%) and 1.5 million votes (4.2%) respectively. He is a

postal worker in the Paris region.

Pauline Salingue is a spokesperson of the NPA.

Philippe Poutou, the NPA candidate in the French presidential elections in 2012 and 2017, works in the Ford cars factory in Bordeaux.

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Hugo Blanco 15 Nov1934 - 25 June 2023

Derek Wall celebrates the life of his friend and comrade Hugo Blanco

Hugo Blanco, who died on Sunday 25th June, was an almost mythical Peruvian revolutionary leader. I had the pleasure of working with him and it is fair to say all of us who met him found not a cold legend but a warm and beautiful human being.

He led a peasant uprising in the 1960s, which while successful in achieving land rights, saw him spend many years in prison, often in very difficult conditions and for much of the time on death row. He was at the time a leading member of the Fourth International and maintained warm contact with the FI up until his death. In recent decades, inspired by the Zapatistas and other indigenous movements, he published the newspaper Lucha Indigena ('Indigenous Fight').

There are three things, at least, which are important about Hugo Blanco. Firstly, he was a continuous active revolutionary militant from his student days right up until final illness. Secondly, he took an open comradely approach to this militancy, working with others and being flexible as to appropriate tactics. Thirdly, he was a pioneering ecosocialist, promoting an ecological approach to revolutionary activism before many of us were conscious of this element.

There is so much to say about his long life, it is difficult to know where to start perhaps. However, a key moment for Hugo was hearing about an indigenous person being physically branded with a hot iron. Though only a school student at the time, hearing of this started him on a lifelong path of working against oppression, particularly the oppression of indigenous peoples.

He became at Trotskyist as a student in Argentina in the 1950s. He, like many other Latin Americans was appalled by the coup led by the CIA in Guatemala in 1954. Attending a demonstration, he heard different speakers from different political currents, he was most impressed by the speaker who called for the masses in Guatemala to be armed. Learning that the speaker was a Trotskyist, Hugo decided he was a Trotskyist too.

He soon became a committed party member and worked at a various factories before moving back to Peru to organise the masses. He was held in a police cell overnight in Cusco for organising workers. He shared his cell with three individuals from the La Convención region, bordering the Peruvian Amazon. They asked him to move to their region and help with their struggle for land rights, a struggle that accelerated with landowners murdering the peasants occupying land. In response, Hugo organised armed self-defence groups, with the conflict leading to both victory and imprisonment.

Released in 1970 by the new Peruvian military government, Hugo became active once again supporting trade union disputes and other struggles. He was exiled. Variously he spent time in Mexico, Argentina and Chile. He was in Chile during the coup against Allende's socialist government, narrowly escaping death as he was rescued by the Swedish Embassy. His beard was shaved off, he was put in a suit and spirited out under the name of Hans Bloom. His daughter Carmen went to school with daughter of the Swedish Ambassador; but for this he might well have been killed.

He lived for a time in Sweden, returned to Peru and was involved in many more struggles, indeed he was once a candidate for the Presidency and spent some time as a Senator. As Senator he was particularly engaged with environmental protection. Threatened with death by both the state security services and Shining Path, he was exiled, once again, this time back to Mexico.

He was least enthusiastic about his participation in electoral politics and in the last twenty years has been committed to grassroots militancy rather than traditional Leninism. There is, however, continuity in his approach, which has always focused on mass democratic struggles and decision making '"I have always respected the indigenous characteristic that it is the community that is responsible, not the individual. Even when we took up arms, it was the masses who decided to defend themselves". (Hugo Blanco, the Peruvian ecosocialist – International Viewpoint – online socialist magazine)

Equally his ecological struggles were rooted though in his life-long commitment to land rights. Lucha Indigena has supported many, many workers', indigenous and ecological struggles not just in Peru but across the world. Hugo has toured many countries in support of ecosocialists' campaigns, and in 2019 met Greta Thunberg in Stockholm. Hugo argued that environmental politics is rooted in the struggles of the oppressed, noting

There are in Peru a very large number of people who are environmentalists. Of course, if I tell such people, you are ecologists, they might reply, “ecologist your mother” or words to that effect. Let us see, however. Isn’t the village of Bambamarca truly environmentalist, which has time and again fought valiantly against the pollution of its water from mining? Are not the town of Ilo and the surrounding villages which are being polluted by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation truly environmentalist? Is not the village of Tambo Grande in Piura environmentalist when it rises like a closed fist and is ready to die in order to prevent strip-mining in its valley?

It is impossible in a thousand words or even five thousand to properly honour and describe his various political campaigns or indeed his numerous often near miraculous escapes from death. However perhaps the best epitaph and summary comes from another Latin American revolutionary.

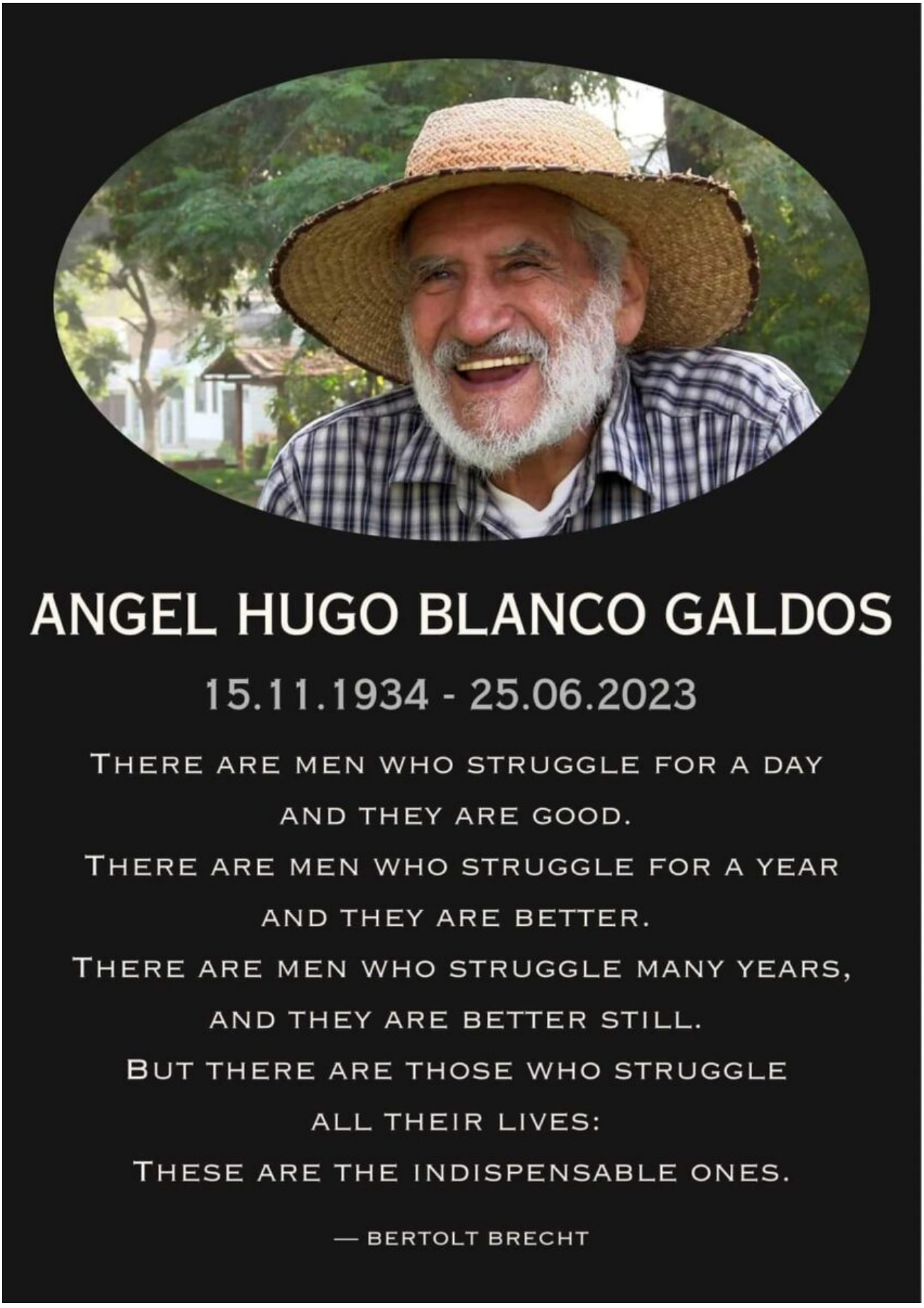
In Algiers in 1963 Che Guevara noted:

Hugo Blanco is the head of one of the guerrilla movements in Peru. He struggled stubbornly but the repression was strong. I don’t know what his tactics of struggle were, but his fall does not signify the end of the movement. It is only a man that has fallen, but the movement continues. One time, when we were preparing to make our landing from the Granma, and when there was great risk that all of us would be killed, Fidel said: “What is more important than us is the example we set.” It’s the same thing. Hugo Blanco has set an example’

And Hugo kept setting the example for decades after, the best way to honour his life is to continue his legacy of indigenous solidarity, ecosocialism and practical, focused revolutionary commitment.

There is a film about Hugo released in 2020, Río Profundo, and many, many interviews from him that can be

read. He was a huge inspiration to all of us who met him.



Derek Wall wrote *Hugo Blanco: A Revolutionary For Life* published by Merlin/Resistance books in 2018

Resistance Books and Merlin also published We the Indians:– The indigenous peoples of Peru and the struggle for land in the same year.

Republished from Red Green Labour – https://redgreenlabour.org/2023/06/28/hugo-blanco-15-11-1934%e2%80%9125-06-2023/

Ecosocialist Film Night: PickAxe – Tuesday 27 June, 6.30pm, Glasgow

To book tickets, click >>> HERE

Join us for a showing of PickAxe, a 1999 documentary about the victorious struggle of American eco-activists to stop the logging of a protected, old growth forest at Warner Creek in Oregon.

When Warner Creek suffered an arson attack which led to a wildfire in 1991, the forest service sold off the protected woods to the highest bidder to be salvage-logged. In order to stop that, activists occupied the logging road into Warner Creek with a fortified camp, tore up the tarmac with pickaxes, and settled in for a months-long battle against the park service, the timber companies, and the police.

A fascinating document of resistance by and for activists,

PickAxe has much to teach a new generation of climate activists who are becoming ever more interested in direct action and protest militancy.

After the showing, there will be time for a discussion of the film and its message: What can we learn from the Warner Creek blockade? Can we take any of the politics and tactics from there and apply them to Scotland? What were the shortcomings of the Warner Creek activists?

Sales of tickets go towards fundraising for the costs of sending a delegation of Scottish activists to this years Socialist Youth Camp being put on by the 4th International over in France! Lend a hand to the comrades, watch a good film and have a good chat about eco-activism!

TIME: 6:30PM to 9PM

PLACE: Red Rosa’s event space, 195 London Rd, Glasgow, G40 1PA

TICKETS: You can either pay on the door or purchase a ticket online here.

£5 entry

Or if you wanna be a real gem: £8 solidarity price

(And for all stalwarts who would give yet more to the cause, the fundraising tin will be there too!)

“Prigozhin’s March”: What Was It All About?

The Posle Editorial Collective assess Wagner’s mutiny and its consequences:

The events of June 23-24 are already being described as the most serious domestic political challenge to Putin's regime. In a matter of hours, Wagner units managed with little resistance to take control of Rostov-on-Don and Voronezh, major cities in southern Russia. They even got a few hundred kilometers outside of Moscow. By announcing the start of a military rebellion, Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin openly challenged the necessity for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, demanded the removal of Russia's military leadership, and claimed his goal was the restoration of "justice." And while the conflict was resolved with little blood it seems to have forever undermined Putin's promise of stability and regime's unity.

There's no doubt Prigozhin is a war criminal and an opportunist pursuing his personal interests. In the months leading up to the mutiny, Prigozhin made numerous statements bashing the Russian military leadership trying to take control of Wagner units staffed by both former Russian prisoners and retired army officers. Yevgeny Prigozhin, who owes his career to Putin's patronage and has extensive connections in the state security apparatus, has turned out to be the most aware of the regime's weaknesses and the vulnerability of Putin's "chain of command." Generals Surovikin and Alekseev, who have played key roles in the so-called "special military operation" in Ukraine, publicly called on Prigozhin to "come to his senses" and "resolve the matter peacefully." Most of the army stood in silent neutrality toward the rebels. Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov, whom Prigozhin demanded to meet, never commented on what was happening and disappeared. Note that the leaflets distributed by Wagner not only called for their resignation, but also for an immediate court martial for Shoigu and Gerasimov on accusations of the brutal treatment of soldiers, poor supplies to the army, and concealing the truth about the course of the war.

On the morning of June 24, Vladimir Putin delivered an urgent five-minute address to the nation. He called Wagner's

rebellion a “stab in the back” of the Russian army but did not mention any specific actions to crush it down. Putin highlighted the moral and political dimensions of the mutiny and called it a betrayal deserving of the harshest response. He blamed the mutineers for putting Russia on the brink of civil war and military defeat. Yet, the Russian president did not mention any names, revealing his poor preparedness and uncertainty about the situation. Several thousand-armed columns of the Wagner fighters crossed a vast distance in less than a day and voluntarily stopped 200 kilometers short of Moscow. At the same time, President Putin, presumably, rushed out of the capital, recording his addresses from his remote country residence in Valdai. Regional governors and pro-Kremlin politicians swore allegiance to the president and the constitutional order on social media only a few hours after the mutiny’s outbreak.

Predictably, some forces, factions, and citizens did not follow the president’s call to resist the traitors and expressed their support for the rebels. These include neo-Nazis on both sides of the front: the Russian Volunteer Corps fighting alongside the Ukrainian armed forces and the Rusich sabotage group, which has been engaged in armed conflict with Ukraine since 2014 as a Russian proxy. Prigozhin responded unambiguously to Putin’s message. He stated that the president was “wrong” about Wagner’s betrayal, called himself and his fighters “patriots of the motherland,” accused Moscow officials of corruption, and refused to back down. Seeking to expand his support, Prigozhin voiced two hallmark claims of the anti-Putin opposition: Russian regions should oppose Moscow for expropriating the country’s resources and the Russian leadership is made up of crooks and corrupt officials and should be exposed and brought to justice.

Despite Prigozhin relying solely on the armed units, the program he announced was supposed to lend popular legitimacy to the coup d’etat. People in Rostov-on-Don cheered Wagner’s

fighters as heroes, demonstrating that Prigozhin's slogans could gain mass support. The attempted Wagner mutiny also revealed the unwillingness of the security services to actively intervene in the situation.

Prigozhin's "march of justice" ended as unexpectedly as it began. The Belarusian dictator Lukashenko brokered an agreement between Wagner and the Kremlin. According to its terms, Prigozhin was to withdraw his units and the mutineers were to be spared punishment for their alleged "feats of arms." The agreements with Lukashenko also seem to include secret provisions granting Wagner certain autonomy and defining the framework for further relations with the military leadership. The deal was guaranteed by the "word of the President of Russia," as Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov later stated. In other words, the public is kept in the dark as to the terms and content of these unofficial agreements. Although all Russian military units and ordinary citizens were called upon to participate in the mutiny and to resist the rebels, the crisis was resolved by a conspiracy between two war criminals with the Belorussian autocrat playing the role of both a broker and an umpire.

While the consequences of these events are difficult to predict, it's already clear that they have forever changed Putin's political system. If this attempted military insurgency was so successful, why can't this example inspire future attempts to build on its success? Contradictions within Russia's elites have spilled over from the media into the reality of Russian cities and the armed forces. The whole world has witnessed that they were (temporarily) resolved outside any legal framework with the compromise guaranteed by Putin's "word." In Russia, the rule of law has given way to mafia codes. Words backed up by violence are stronger than the prosecutor's office or even the president's declarations of imminent punishment. The war unleashed by Putin's regime is becoming an ever more apparent threat to its stability and

will inevitably result in its eventual collapse. What form will this breakdown take? And could Russia's intimidated and disempowered masses come to the fore? These questions remain open.

26 June 2023

*Republished from **Posle**.*
Posle [после – After' in Russian Language] is a website in Russian and English created in May 2022 to reflect on questions raised by the war in Ukraine for Ukraine and Russia.