



Report: The International transform! Zoom Conference in Copenhagen 13 March 2021

“How to Combat Climate Warming – Green Capitalism or system change ? “

Transform!Danmark organized its ninth international Transform conference in Copenhagen on 13 March 2021, after a year of Corona restrictions which had severely impacted on our lives and work: Last year’s international conference planned for 14 March 2020 suffered a last-minute cancellation. Many transform activities, including ours, during the past year have been conducted online as webinars. As a positive development this has also widened the scope of the activities which have reached a broader public.

Continuing Corona restrictions forced this year’s conference to be organized as an online event, but with essential assistance by transform!europe. Our experience with an online event of this size – both the long hours and the many participants - were somewhat mixed. The content of the conference was impressive with high-quality speakers. The technical side of the conference worked, and we had ensured that there was the usual time for debate. But the debate turned out considerably reduced and subdued compared to previous annual conferences. The usual political, social and other inter-action at physical conferences was also greatly missed.

The Corona crisis has also underlined the inter-connectedness of the multiple global crises of our time: The need for system change, which had been accentuated by the climate crisis, was in no way reduced by the Corona crisis. WE saw some slow-down of CO2 emissions due to the economic stand-still of many activities during the Corona crisis of 2020 – but this did not last: Last autumn greenhouse gas emissions and concentrations increased. At the same time there was a new experience of the need and the possibility to solve problems in society differently – with more focus on collective responsibility and input – as opposed to individualism and competition furthered by neo-liberalism. This underlined that a recovery after the Covid crisis

should necessarily be coupled with an ambitious green and just transition with a focus on drastically reducing/stopping emissions.

We underlined at the conference two years ago the 2018 report by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) indicating that with no change in emissions temperatures were expected to rise above 1,5 degrees Celsius between 2030 and 2052 already (*the recent IPCC report from August 2021 confirmed the dire expectations*). In the EU adaptation strategy temperatures rising to 3 or 4 degrees at the end of the century are mentioned as realistic if there is no change in policies. Compare this to the Paris Agreement goals of 1,5 or maximum 2 degrees temperature rise by the end of the century. The social and other consequences of these scenarios are enormous. We are talking about global disasters.

As a new development since a year ago the EU and the national governments have put forward more concrete climate policies and plans, enabling the speakers of the conference to contribute with evaluations of these policies, which are seen more or less as attempts to combine green policies with market policies: Green Capitalism.

This year's conference was therefore inspired by the same ideas as last year. The conference was a contribution to the debate on if and how to initiate system change and not rely on the inadequacies of green Capitalism. The climate crisis highlights the need for system-breaking initiatives, especially to mobilize for an urgent strengthening of the movement and of radical efforts to work for red and green alternatives. For this reason, we chose to keep the title of the conference and some of the headlines of the sessions.

The preamble to the programme of the conference outlined the basic concerns of the conference:

“The industrial and economic slowdown due to the pandemic is no substitute for sustained climate action. How can concrete and more ambitious goals in climate and environmental policies be achieved? Are the measures and goals adopted by the EU, governments and institutions much more than a greening of capitalism? And how much can be achieved by green capitalism/green growth against the background of the real challenges of climate warming? Climate action should be part of the recovery programmes, but are they not being absorbed by neoliberal policies?”

Besides Transform!Danmark and transform!europe, the conference was co-organized by Enhedslisten/the Red-Green Alliance, the Danish radical left party, as well as a number of left-wing and environmental organizations, including NOAH - Friends of the Earth, Global Aktion, and web-magazines.

The conference

The conference was organized as previously with a plenary in the morning with two speeches, and two parallel sessions in the afternoon.

The speeches in the morning by two speakers of the South were global and general. Whereas the contributions in the afternoon were by Europeans and Scandinavians focusing on one hand on an evaluation of present EU and national climate policies and the contributions and actions by of grassroots movements; and on the other on the long-term system-breaking solutions to climate change.

Walden Bello, writer, professor and climate activist from the Philippines, was opening the conference and had been invited to contribute with an economic/ecological perspective and overview of the global crises. I.e. a more overall perspective of global developments and not primarily on the climate crisis. Whereas **Sabrina Fernandes**, a scholar and climate activist from Brazil, with a view from the South, focused on the urgency to build successful climate action and solidarity between and with the oppressed peoples.

WE had deliberately tried to include both politicians, academics and grassroots activists in the parallel afternoon sessions for a diversified view of climate policies, the input of the grassroots movements, and the long-term alternatives. Just a couple of weeks before the conference, **Fernando Racimo**, an activist of the Extinction Rebellion, agreed to speak about their movement and positions and spoke just after the lunch break.

The speakers of the second session were **Helmut Scholz**, an MEP of Die Linke (The LEFT group in the European Parliament), **Laura Horn**, an associate professor at the Danish RUC (Roskilde University Centre), and **Jacob Sørensen**, an activist of NOAH – Friends of the Earth. Whereas the last contribution dealt mainly with the positions and activities of NOAH in a power-point presentation, the two other speakers reported very negatively on one hand, the effects of the EU trade agreements, and on the other, the Climate Law of the Danish Social Democratic minority government.

The speakers of the third session, running parallel to the second session, were **Lotta Hedström**, a former spokesperson of the Swedish Miljöpartiet/Green Party, and **Jean-Claude Simon**, transform!europe and La France Insoumise, France, who dealt exclusively with systemic alternatives to climate change, focusing on two strategic perspectives: Eco-socialism and eco-feminism. Both were power-point presentations.

The workshops originally planned in the afternoon after the three sessions were cancelled due to the online organization of the conference. There was as well a

conclusion with a short debate at the end of the conference, but with no extraordinary inputs.

The conference programme, the recording of parts of the conference (the morning programme esp.), some of the speeches, and the power-point presentations from the conference can be viewed on the Transform!Danmark website:

www.transformdanmark.dk

The report of the conference will be published by transform!europe:

www.transform-network.net

The morning plenary: Global considerations

A short report of the contributions, with introductions of and by the speakers:

Walden Bello, Professor, State University of New York at Binghamton; co-founder of and senior analyst at the Bangkok-based institute Focus on the Global South; recipient of the Right Livelihood Award (aka Alternative Nobel Prize) in 2003; and author of 25 books, among which are *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (2000), *Counterrevolution: The Global Rise of the Far Right* (2019), and *Paper Dragons: China and the Next Crash* (2019).

“The Climate Emergency in the Context of the Crisis of Neoliberalism and the Rise of the Right”

The presentation will locate the climate emergency in the deep crisis of legitimacy of neoliberalism and globalization owing to the stunning spread of Covid 19 occurring at a time when the world was still mired in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008. Covid 19 put an end to “connectivity,” a new phase of globalization led by China, and created conditions for deglobalized production that would be less harmful to the climate. However, such potentially positive economic conditions have not been accompanied by positive trends at the level of politics, where the dominant fact is the rise of the far right both in the global North and the global South. The presentation will examine the far-reaching implications of the meshing of the crisis of the climate, the crisis of neoliberalism, and the rise of the far right, with a view towards arming progressives with ideas and strategies to confront this conjunction of global trends.

Walden Bello’s speech was displayed on the screen and read aloud by himself in probably the most pedagogical contribution in the conference. The speech has been published on the transform!europe website (www.transform-network.net) as well as

translated into Danish and published by the Danish web magazine *Solidaritet* (www.solidaritet.dk). See both for full text in English and Danish.

The content of this brilliant speech was a wake-up call: The end of Neo-liberalism is near, the centre of politics is falling apart, not least induced by the spread of the pandemic the past year in an economic system already in deep crisis. But it is not progressives and the radical left offering the ideas attracting discontented people, for far too long this has been the far right. The radical left should be positioned to offer alternatives but has been weakened by being perceived by the public as more or less synonymous with Social Democracy and its open support of neo-liberalism. Bello does not offer a way out for the left other than “to ride the tiger”. Only the far right and the radical left “are serious contenders in this race to bring about another system”, Bello states.

Sabrina Fernandes, Brazil, Ecosocialist organizer and Communicator, PhD in Sociology, Carleton University, Canada.

“Bottom-up, South-North transitions: climate urgency and the conditions for internationalist struggle”

As the world approaches one more deadline for climate action by 2030, we are also faced with a sum of many crises: economic, ecological, sanitary and humanitarian. This requires urgent action, but, despite many signs of insurgency and resistance across the globe, billionaires continue to get wealthier, and capitalism reinvents itself in a mix of old and new 'normals'. This scenario calls for building mass movements that are radical in their objectives, but that also know that if climate action is not successful in the near future, there might not be the necessary conditions and time to accomplish larger revolutionary goals. This presentation looks into efforts in the Global South to build the connections between struggles in order to avoid the worst of climate change and links it to wider debates of carbon transition and worldwide solidarity between and with the oppressed peoples.

Sabrina Fernandes – conference contribution

We have in Brazil been discussing what a **Green New Deal (GND)** would look like. We have also been looking to what is happening in other Latin American countries and an eco-socialist transition in Brazil. Difficult with GND, does not reflect Brazil but is related to the USA. Parting from this initiative, but with a different kind of project, trying to identify obstacles for an ecological transition in the global south and how it would affect relationship with global north, and global interaction. In Latin America GND is a solution from the US, an inspiration but a domestic focus, creating jobs in the USA, changing electricity infrastructure, etc. As the US has their hands in a lot of countries in become complicated for us: when they talk about ecological transition it is domestic, but democracy or resource extraction it is about us.

I will talk about six things, 3 obstacles we are facing to realize climate change, and 3 opportunities that might help to overcome.

Matter of reparation. Global south has been colonized, plundered, impoverished countries. Complicated re transition, like industrialization. In Brazil great agricultural potential, but production is taken abroad, is considered commodities, not being used to feed people but to livestock. Deforestation in all of Brazil, even worse with Bolsonaro government. Caribbean countries with tourism are likely to be affected by climate change. Reparation funds from UN, more like aid, e.g. Special Climate Change Fund (2001). Internal reparation e.g. in relation to indigenous peoples – in Brazil trying to ‘integrate’ them to take over their lands.; also Ecuador (oil); COVID. With reparations: dynamic of capitalism in global south and imperialism. In Marxist development theory focus for underdevelopment was on industrialization – and this can be a huge trap with regard to climate change: so, how to develop without making climate change worse. It almost put a stop in 2015 to the Paris agreement. How to promote development, quality of life. Is it possible to develop med some element of degrowth – which also in Latin America is a polarized discussion. But a **tactical** degrowth – which kind of industries to degrowth or abolish so others can grow. E.g. telephones: landlines were costly, but then cellphones appeared. Likewise, instead of particular autos we can focus on busses and railroads. Instead of relying on export of commodities, a combination of agrarian reform to face agribusiness (and their emissions), and a shift to more advanced economies with more research.

Imperial mode of living has attracted attention of middle class in Latin America, importing way of life from the north that is responsible for emissions, medias, and cultural industry. A problem both with production and ideologically with lifestyle with consumerism; traditional and indigenous communities and people in vulnerable areas have some alternatives, the concept of *good living*.

We are facing blockades, intervention throughout Latin America – how can we assure a decarbonization when there is intervention in elections; in Brazil a coup in 2016. CIA was involved in persecution of Lula. Bolsonaro cut climate budget by 95%, so there is no climate mitigation. At elections in Venezuela, opposition was in contact with the parties in the US. Cuba, Haiti. Imperialism is present.

Focus on jobs is essential, not any type of jobs, but should be about quality of life, not subsidies for jobs in private industry but strengthening and extension of public sector, and green jobs must be a priority. Before the coup many labour unions in Brazil were talking about climate jobs – and we must bring this back into priorities, and help to mobilize people, and connect to education & research, and not only energy jobs.

Care democracy, not only production but also services, it is a broad sector. Women, e.g. in rural areas are carrying the burden of climate change. In Latin America women are in the forefront of climate activism. Care democracy frees up time; we need community centers with e.g. laundry.

Mobilization needs to be international. We see that Biden is not so different from Trump, Biden foreign policy related to Latin America still is attacking Venezuela. We need solidarity from other places.

GND, ecological transition – we don't think much in borders. Transitions plans must also be related to other regions; internationalism must also be a kind of coordination

After-lunch presentation:

Fernando Racimo, activist, Extinction Rebellion, XR Scientists, on their position, work and activities. Slide presentation.

Fernando Racimo's talk covered the tactics and policies of Extinction Rebellion (XR) civil protest movement. Tactics – non-violent direct action.

There was an overview of the Earth's sixth mass extinction – caused by humans.

It exposed the climate act of the Danish government dumped this year by the Climate Council of the government as inadequate.

It underlined the many forms of pressure that have been used to convince politicians: politics, demonstrations, petitions and individual actions. But nothing has worked.

Why? Because elections lead to short-termism; growth is valued above everything; competition stands above cooperation.

When the rules don't work, they must be broken – this means civil disobedience – also in Denmark.

We have three demands, he said:

- Tell the truth: Government and media to tell the truth and declare a climate and ecological emergency
- Act Now: A radical political response se is possible
- Citizens' Assembly – current system is failing – Trusted by public – No lobbying and re-election pressure strengthens democracy.

This was exemplified by showing the spread of XR actions on a world map, also in Denmark.

Fernando Racimo presented the new Scientists for Extinction Rebellion (XR Scientists), who are connected to the University of Copenhagen, RUC (Roskilde University Centre), Aarhus University, DTU (Denmark's Technical University), IT University of Denmark.

Parallel sessions in the afternoon:

Session 2: Green Capitalism or system change – EU Green Deal and recovery plan – the roles and impact of national climate policies and the climate/environmental movement

Helmut Scholz, MEP, Die Linke, Germany

“How compatible is the European Green Deal with trade agreements?”

The European Commission is about to present the result of its review of the Union’s Trade Policy, following a long public consultation process. Will trade policy become coherent with the Green Deal, or continue to serve the old priorities?

Over the past two decades, the European Commission has been negotiating Free Trade Agreements with many countries and regions. FTAs with 76 countries have already been concluded. The success of these agreements is usually measured by calculating growth rates of the gross national product in Europe and the increase in exports and profits of large companies. This growth occurs at the expense of 800 million people who are left behind starving, and also at the expense of climate and environment. Instead of furthering the greed for profit, the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must replace the original logic of free trade and has to be the new benchmark for policy success.

Helmut Scholz is serving as a coordinator in the Parliament Committee on International Trade for the Left group (GUE/NGL) in the European Parliament. Over the past ten years Helmut has also been in charge of following the negotiations for an EU - Mercosur Association Agreement, i.e. the EU trade agreement with the South American countries – Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Trade should not be seen in a narrow understanding, Helmut says. The implications of trade are huge. The EU-Mercosur Agreement for example would have an impact on the lives of over 780 million people. The volume of trade is just under 90 billion Euros per year. The agreement would save European companies 4 billion Euros worth of duty payments per year - the biggest deal the EU has ever made - whereas the South American countries would lose this amount in their balance sheets, and the balance of trade has always been in the favour of the EU afterwards.

Mercosur companies are exporting mainly commodities to Europe – agricultural products accounted for more than 40 percent this year, minerals for another 18 percent. If you look at services, the volume of services exported from Europe to Mercosur is three times higher than the other way round. And this is going to increase, as Mercosur countries are giving substantial openings in public procurement and financial services. There will be rather few, rather large companies from a handful of EU Member States profiting from the agreement. If you look at where the

companies are established that are actually trading with Mercosur, it is Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, France, and Portugal. There is not much trade with Central and Eastern European countries.

Will the trade agreement help to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030? Will our people benefit from it? Helmut Scholz asks. He underlines that he is not against trade. But he believes that the old-fashioned trade agreements are not needed any longer. We need agreements to support cooperation, including to improve the economic situation of our people, but not degrading all other aspects of development of our societies as side-issues.

With regard to the European **Green** Deal presented by the European Commission, when it comes to international cooperation and trade, the communication is unfortunately euro-centristic and blind-folded. Industrial forms of animal “production” in Europe, cows and pigs are being fed on GMO soy imported cheaply from Brazil and Argentina. The EU - Mercosur agreement further encourages this business model. It will increase profits for those who can produce on large scale. The agreement is literally reducing the space for sustainable farming both in Europe and in Latin America.

How can we reform a trading system which is based on neo-liberalism? Helmut Scholz advises instead to cooperate more together, as the mandate for the EU Commission is given by the states.

Laura Horn, Associate Professor, Roskilde University (RUC), Denmark

“Still a climate vanguard? The status quo of Danish climate policies”

The Danish climate law of 2019 is an ambitious set of policies, anchored in a firm legislative commitment. How has it held up to political realities since its adoption? What is the status quo on reaching the envisaged 70 per cent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030? How has the corona crisis impacted Danish climate and ecological policies? This talk will offer an overview and stock-taking of developments, framed against the background of power relations and political struggles.

Laura Horn did a power-point presentation of her talk (see the TransformDanmark website).

The Danish Climate Law of 2019 was adopted in the Danish Parliament by the minority Social Democratic government with three supporting centre-left parties. Most notable in the Danish Climate Law of 2019 is the aimed-at goal of 70% emissions reductions by 2030, and climate neutrality by 2050. This includes energy efficiency improvements (also broad electrification strategy), ban on the sale of all new diesel and petrol cars from 2030, cooperation with other North Sea countries on offshore wind energy.

Most important in the content of the Climate Law is the decision to set up:

- * “Klimarådet” – an independent climate council composed by climate scientists.
- * Energy policy report and climate programme to be submitted by the government to the parliament every year; parliamentary approval required.
- New national climate targets to be established at least once every five years: these cannot be less ambitious than most recently set targets; new initiatives in the climate programme should be presented with a reduction effort if it cannot be deemed probable that the national climate targets will be reached.

The Climate programme 2020 disclosed the estimated costs to be DKK 16-24 billion compared to the Danish defence budget 2021 of DKK 26.1 billion.

The phasing out of oil and gas exploration in the Danish North Sea, estimated revenue loss DKK 13billion.

Emissions reduction of 2 million tons – whereas the total estimate of reductions to reach the 2030 goal is ca 19 million.

The “hockey stick” model: This means that the development of a concrete policy plan for reductions resemble a hockey stick – very little is achieved in the beginning of the 2020-2030 plan – at the end of the period you will have to act very fast to achieve the 70% reductions.

Despite recommendations from the Climate Council, no CO₂ tax is being introduced: A relatively high uniform carbon tax is a key pillar in a cost-efficient achievement of the 70-percent target. Such a tax would be able to ensure significant reductions in industry, agriculture, transport, and heating of buildings.

The Danish Climate Council Report of 2021: Estimated a reductions gap of 20 mil. tons CO₂ to reach the 70-percent target.

There is a myth concerning Danish climate leadership. The climate leadership needs to act, not just to make and present plans. It also needs to note the relevance of social science and humanities for discussions about climate and ecological policies and agency.

The “Borgerting” – Danish Citizens’ s Assembly was set up in context of the 2019 Climate Law. Recommendations published in March 2021. Characterized by being far more radical in their approach than the politicians.

Laura Horn ended her talk by announcing the EuroMemo conference, autumn 2021 (check www.euromemo.eu for dates):

- EuroMemorandum 2021: A POST-COVID 19 GLOBAL-LOCAL AGENDA FOR A SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION IN EUROPE

Jacob Sørensen, NOAH – Friends of the Earth, researcher and activist, “Baltic Pipe – No thank you” campaign

"Diversity in the climate mobilisation in the Campaign against the Baltic Pipe"

As oil fields are emptied and technology improves it becomes more feasible to exploit fossil gas. Moreover, fossil gas emits less CO₂ and particles than coal and transition from coal to gas can help achieving short term national climate and air pollution targets. Therefore, many new fossil gas infrastructure projects are being built all over the world at the moment. The EU's fourth Projects of Common Interest (PCI) list - eligible for European public funds – contains, for example, 32 new fossil gas infrastructure projects. This has given rise to many local, national and international resistance networks.

In Denmark most resistance has been built up around the construction of the Baltic Pipe, which is planned to transport gas from Norwegian fossil gas fields through Denmark to Poland. The pipe will distribute three times the present Danish consumption of gas, and it will be a major setback in terms of making Poland compliant with the Paris agreement. Many different groups including affected locals, climate activists and politicians from all over the country are actively resisting its construction.

Why is resistance against Baltic Pipe important? Jacob Sørensen asked in his talk. Because Baltic Pipe leads to expansion of gas use in Denmark. Fossil gas is also called natural gas. The authorities have used as an argument in favour of Baltic Pipe that this is to avoid Polish dependence on Russian gas. But there is no effect if gas is replaced by gas. Even if some of the gas will replace coal, gas is a fossil fuel. This is part of an EU supported gas infrastructure in Europe. “Energinet” (an independent public enterprise owned by the Danish Ministry of Climate and Energy) says only green gas will flow in Baltic Pipe after 2050. But this is greenwashing of business as usual. The narrative of maybe finding a “future solution” to the emissions is dangerous.

In Denmark resistance to Baltic Pipe has been very diverse: The power-point presentation by Jacob shows this diversity. A mix of young climate protestors and the local population protesting against the effects on their neighbourhood and region of the construction of the pipeline. There has been street theatre – kajak activism etc.

A citizens' proposal was sent in 2020 to the Danish Parliament to ask for the cancellation of the decision to build Baltic Pipe. There is international collaboration and support: gastivists, Portugal, midcat, Argentinian fracking activists etc.

Read more:

- [Balticpipe.net](https://balticpipe.net)
- noah.dk/balticpipe (Danish)
- [Stopgas.dk](https://stopgas.dk) (Danish, knowledge hub, under construction)

Session 3: The need for systemic alternatives and how to build them?

Lotta Hedström, Miljöpartiet/Green Party, former spokesperson, Sweden

“Women and the climate crisis. Developing eco-feminism as a way to system change”

*Partly conceptual, partly illustrated with historical and current concrete examples this session examines both **eco-feminism** and **petro-masculinity** as root causes to the climate crisis. Ecofeminism also offers an approach that eventually can alleviate the impact of our day-to-day practices, which subversively counteract the large-scale, established, ongoing climate deterioration.*

Lotta Hedström states that ecofeminism is not a dogma and doesn't claim to be superior to other views, beliefs or ideologies. It is a way to look at things, an approach for activism and an analysis of power distribution. Ecofeminism is one of the most useful lenses to perceive the world and to understand climate change. Ecofeminism says that patriarchy destroys both men, women and children. And besides this, animals, the living nature and all healthy environments. Not to mention local communities, vulnerable democracy. It has now reached the whole global climate and our collective survival as well as all life forms. Ecofeminism claims that through history women have been naturalised and nature feminised. Both have for some five thousand years been seen as Objects and

therefore controlled and dominated by a global patriarchal order of gender inequality.

This gives way to perceive the whole world in a dualistic, polarised way.

Still today countries who are most hostile to women, often happen to be the most conflict struck, most oil dependent or oil producing (petro-masculinity), most arid, with the lowest level of public education and most environmentally destroyed. Ruled by explicit macho ideals of concurrence, competition, violence and weapons.

Brazil, (cf. Sabrina Fernandes' talk) has for a long time been considered one of the most dangerous countries in the world for women to live in. President Bolsonaro, with his mainly military cabinet, not only openly defies all efforts to save the rainforests in Amazonas, but also promptly counteracts what he calls "genus ideology", as well as the rights for indigenous people. This kind of male chauvinistic, macho and petro-masculine politics of course hurts indigenous women in particular and they have to endure threats and democratic exclusion, as well as physical violence. Also, the whole global climate suffers from the deforestation of Amazonas.

Because in these quotas we catch a number of implications on what concerns Women, Nature, Locals, Climate and Democracy simultaneously. They reveal how it all sticks so tightly together.

This synthesis is exactly what Ecofeminism stands for, explains Lotta Hedström.

It is in itself basically a social, civil movement with no formal structure.

It aims of caring and acting spontaneously for sustainability for all living beings, preserving the natural habitats, resources and means of survival. Also for men.

Lotta Hedström explains that she has been active in politics for more than 30 years and has seen big changes in politics. She doubts if politics and the formal structures we have built, alone can help counteract climate change.

Because democracy is worldwide eroding. Fascist, nationalist and even racist and conservative regimes such as Bolsonaro's are worldwide gaining power in too many countries, too rapidly.

It was after the UN meeting in Copenhagen in 2009 that she lost most of her faith in what politicians can achieve. It was a total fiasco for the whole world, where elected people intentionally spoiled the future for us all. But a huge step forward was the global Paris agreement on climate in 2015. Between the fiasco in 2009 and 2015 public opinion to combat climate change has risen considerably.

Shortened version. See Lotta Hedström's contribution on the website of Transform! Danmark.

Jean-Claude Simon, transform!europe, La France Insoumise, France

"Priorities to move the transition in Europe forward"

Eco-socialism and Energy transition? The ecological crisis against the backdrop of the systemic obstacles of Capitalism. Energy transition as a societal change project.

"Systemic alternative" is a powerful notion; for us, it means that a radical eco-socialist transition plan is needed in Europe, as in the rest of the world. It also means that some sort of 'rupture' is needed in the daily operations of bourgeois society to achieve full decarbonisation, the key requirement to end climate change. This session will focus on a number of measures, to be taken at different levels, which are necessary to enable the transition: economic democracy and worker management, socialised banking, decommodification of nature, cooperation instead of competition, and balanced territorial development.

Finance, Debt and the Ecological Transformation: A call for System Change

This system change is necessitated by an increasing environmental crisis characterized by global warming and the destruction of ecosystems caused by greenhouse gas emissions, CO₂, etc.

These emissions are a result of the "deadly infinity" of capitalism: exponential growth, competition, and profit maximization, which together commodify man, as "human resources" and nature as "natural resources" according to the ordoliberal 'new language'. The crisis is affecting the whole of society. A revolutionary break is necessary - whether it is the result of "an economic blockade caused by a general

strike, by an election, a reaction to an ordo-liberal coup (as in Greece in 2015), following a crisis of legitimacy for the regime caused by a financial collapse or a pandemic; " –As "a class in power has never agreed to resign [voluntarily]".

The current situation: "Capitalism is a totality with three components: finance capital, trade capital and industrial capital", says JCS, and that "none of these three components can function without the other two". JCS explains that the financial part of capitalism has taken a "growing hegemony over the other two" after 1983. And that there has been a tremendous concentration and centralization as to who has the power over the financial markets. These are specifically 161 people (mostly men), who manage 23,900 billion in 2013. This power manifests itself [of course] politically as well.

With the so-called financialization of capitalism, money now no longer appears as a "general equivalent or a means of payment, but actually money as capital". A greatly increased lending practice, as a result of, among other things, the cessation of the Breton Woods system links money with credit and not least debt. JCS mentions on one hand government / public debt, which has grown due to business tax reliefs and rescue packages, on top of the financial crisis in 2008, and on the other private debt. The first brings about cuts in public services and the last "the total subordination of daily human life under capital, the" purest form of financial hegemony".

The first measures to rectify the environmental crisis after a breach are therefore aimed at the banking and credit system. "The eco-socialist alternative will replace the financial dictatorship of money-capital with a 'common' form of currency placed under the control of the popular classes" and "A central bank, put under popular administration and control". "The second priority will be to establish a new public credit structure, which will also have to be democratic and participation-based." This is a prerequisite for the environmentally necessary measures that JCS mentions: Renewable energy; Organic farming; CO₂-neutral transport.

"The criterion for granting credit will no longer be short-term profit and profit maximization, but contributions to concrete projects for the development of the local economy according to the criteria for sustainable development and eco-socialism."

This, in turn, presupposes the formation of a determined and united social bloc, which must include "about 75 to 80% of wage earners in employment (today about 90% of economically active people are wage earners)". "The alternative must be built" in collaboration with movements, trade unions, political organizations".

JCS concludes: "Let us propose a new state constitution with three specific elements. First, a change in property relations with social (societal) ownership of the financial system, the means of production and trade, as the primary; secondly, a

recognition of the commons, and of the principle of the right of use of the commons¹; and thirdly, a new legal framework / code recognizing the right to worker control and management in all economic and administrative units. These three elements are the preconditions of society and the state necessary to put an end to the real subordination of work and life under capital. Let us be those constructing the new political economy.”

Panel conclusion and short round-up: *“What are the most important tasks of the climate movement in the coming years.”*

There is no report of this very short session.

1