

ECOSOCIALISM IS OUR ONLY OPTION

It's not enough to resist—we have to build, too

We don't face multiple separate crises. The system itself is the crisis and must be overcome, replaced and transformed.

In April, the UN's climate scientists warned it's "now or never" to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels. You can almost hear them screaming at their keyboards, desperate for governments to actually do something, when they outline the need for "rapid, deep and immediate" cuts in CO2 emissions. But their words are not just a warning about the future; they describe the present reality for billions of people.

South Asia is now into its third month of extreme heat, with temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius day after day. And it's not just South Asia that is sweltering. In March, both the Arctic and the Antarctic were 30 degrees Celsius and 40 degrees Celsius above their usual average temperatures, respectively. Ice is melting, and sea levels are rising. Thirty million people were displaced by climate shocks in 2020. And these shocks store up more strife to come by wrecking harvests.

The supply chains that connect the world's farms, mines, factories, shipping lanes, ports, warehouses, delivery networks and consumers are already massively disrupted, even before the full effects of climate breakdown are felt. In the heavily integrated global capitalist economy, disruption spells disaster. Already, more than 800 million people—1 in 10 people of the entire world's population—go to bed hungry.

The price of wheat has doubled already this year. And it could rise further as the effects of Russia's criminal invasion of Ukraine and Russia's resulting partial economic isolation are felt across the globe.

Wars lead to hunger, mental distress, misery and death for years after the fighting stops. There must be an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine, the withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukrainian territory and a negotiated settlement between the two countries.

If there isn't, then not only will the Ukrainian people continue to face the horror of shells, tanks and air raid sirens; not only will Ukrainian refugees suffer uncertain futures and dislocation from their families and communities; not only will young Russian conscripts be sent off to be brutalized in the army and die in a foreign land for a war they don't understand; not only will Russian people suffer under sanctions; not only will the people of Egypt, Somalia, Laos, Sudan and many others who rely on wheat from the belligerent nations continue facing rising hunger.

But everyone on earth faces the threat of nuclear Armageddon if the war in Ukraine continues.

The threat of direct confrontation between Russian and NATO forces is a clear and present danger to all of us. That's why it is so important that we support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which is now part of international law thanks to inspiring campaigning by countries in the Global South.

It will not be easy. Weapons companies do extremely well out of war. They fund politicians and think tanks. They have their many media mouthpieces. Those who strive for peace and justice are vilified because behind conflict stand the interests of the war machine. They threaten the ill-gotten wealth and power of the few.

We see it with painful clarity in the pandemic as Big Pharma refuses to share vaccine technology that was mainly developed with public funds. Who benefits? The pharma executives and shareholders. Who loses? Everyone else. More mothers and fathers die. More livelihoods are wrecked. And the threat of viral mutation hangs over everyone, vaccinated and unvaccinated alike.

The state is used to prop up the wealth of the richest. Central banks pumped in \$9 trillion in 2020 in response to the pandemic. The result? Billionaire wealth went up by 50 percent in one year, when at the same time the world economy shrank. The billionaires and corporations claim to hate government action. In reality, they love it. The only thing they hate is governments acting in your interests. And so, they fight to keep governments in their pocket and try to overthrow those that aren't.

When we step back and survey all of these dynamics, a truth dawns on us. We used to think that there were a series of distinct crises: the climate crisis, the refugee crisis, the housing shortage crisis, the debt crisis, the inequality crisis, the crisis of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. We tried to isolate each one and solve it.

Now we can see that we don't face multiple separate crises. The system itself is the crisis. The global system is not in a crisis that can be resolved. The system is crisis and must be overcome, replaced and transformed.

The end of the world is already here—it is just unevenly distributed. The image of apocalypse—bombs and raids, oil spills and wildfires, disease and contagion—is a reality for people across the planet.

The periphery is the future, not the past. We were told that developed countries give the developing world an image of their future. But the periphery sits at the vanguard of history—where the crises of capitalism hit hardest, the consequences of climate collapse arrive the quickest, and the call to resist them rings the loudest.

That resistance is powerful and inspiring. The world recently witnessed the largest strike in history when Indian farmers and their worker allies resisted the neoliberal bills that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government wanted to force through their parliament. The farmers stood up for themselves, their livelihoods and the needs of the poor. And they won.

Or take Amazon, the world's sixth-largest company, which has made record profits during the pandemic. Its greed and exploitation are being fiercely resisted by workers, communities and activists on every continent in the world. They have come together to make Amazon pay.

In Latin America, the people are rallying to support progressive political leaders to say no more to the domination by imperialism, the destruction of their communities and the abuse of their environments.



SINGER

But it's not enough to just resist. We have to build a new world brimming with life, bound by love and powered by popular sovereignty.

How do we do that? We strengthen workers and rural workers in their struggles against exploitation, support people and communities in their fights for dignity and join progressive forces to mobilize state power. And we bring them all together into powerful people's alliances with the capacity to remake the world. If we do that, we will breed hope over despair.

So I want you to commit today:

Double your efforts in the struggles you are involved in. Join that campaign you've been thinking about joining. Show that real solidarity.

I want you to be able to look back in a generation's time and say, yes, I built the trade unions, the community organizations, the social movements, the campaigns, the parties, the international platforms that turned the tide.

I want you to be able to say, yes, we produced and distributed the food, homes and health care so no one endures poverty; preserved and shared the wisdom of the people of this planet; spread love between people and communities; built the energy system to decarbonize our planet; dismantled the war machine and supported refugees; reined in the power of the billionaires; and secured a new international economic order.

Will it be easy? Of course not. We will face enormous resistance. Of course we will.

But, as the great and wonderful Chilean poet **Pablo Neruda** once wrote:

"You can cut all the flowers, but you cannot stop spring from coming."

And Spring, my friends, is coming.

Jeremy Corbyn

Member of Parliament
former leader of the
UK Labour Party

From his speech to the
Progressive International's

**'Summit at the
End of the World'**
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