



THE ANVIL



MACG

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Free

STRIKE FOR A SUSTAINABLE CLIMATE



Credit: Socialist Appeal

On 20 September this year, there was a co-ordinated series of demonstrations around the world held under the umbrella of “School Strike for Climate”. At least 6 million people participated, with protests across 4,500 locations in 150 countries. It was followed the next week by another 2 million people protesting in 2,400 locations. In Australia, protests were attended by about 300,000 people – amounting to over 1% of the population.

These protests mark a watershed in global politics around climate change. In

key countries, including Australia, huge numbers of people are angry about the impending climate disaster and willing to do something about it. Capitalist governments, however, are taking inadequate action and some are even denying there is a problem.

It will take more than protest to avert the danger of global temperature rises of 3-4°C, which would cause the death of billions and possibly the end of industrial civilisation – and most people know it.

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What is urgently necessary now is to turn protest into resistance, through turning the school strikes into workers’ strikes. In Australia, the next global school strike day should be the occasion for mass co-ordinated strikes by workers from as many industries as possible, with the aim of building towards a general strike.

Such strikes, of course, will be illegal. But this is such a broad and urgent issue that we now have a golden opportunity to smash the “Fair” Work Act and its vicious anti-union provisions to smithereens. Workers who have had strikes banned by the “Fair” Work Commission, or been injunctioned off picket lines, or fallen foul of other rules that are designed to prevent us exercising our economic power have a vital interest in joining the next climate strike.

To achieve mass workers’ action over climate change requires two things. Firstly, it requires a political platform that appeals to workers both morally and materially. The climate movement needs to get away from the moralistic approaches of some organisations and prominent figures. We’re not “all in this together” and we don’t all share responsibility for the unsustainability built into capitalist society. Instead, we need to put a Just Transition at the heart of our program. Workers and communities currently reliant on unsustainable industries have to own the transition plans and so must make these plans themselves. No worker and no community should be left behind. Naturally, this will need resources, which will have to be found with social equity.

So forget about neo-liberal ideas like a carbon price. The rich got us into this hole and they’ll have to pay to get us out.

Secondly, organising these strikes requires a sufficiently committed political force. The union officials will have to decide which side they are on: a Just Transition to a sustainable, zero carbon future - or the electoral fortunes of the ALP. We need a rank and file upsurge in the unions that will push past union officials that stand against us. And the prize will be not just a barrier against destruction of habitability on our planet. It will also be the ability of workers and their unions to strike on daily issues of wages, conditions and employer behaviour.

The general strike for a Just Transition will be the beginning, but not the end of the matter. We will open up a debate about the dimensions and shape of the Just Transition. As the struggle progresses, more workers will come to realise that the only Just Transition is a transition away from capitalism. Two facts will drive this. First, more people will see the existing capitalist class is so invested in fossil fuels that it has to be swept aside for humanity to achieve sustainability. The understanding will also emerge that eternal growth is the ideology of the cancer cell. Only by abolishing capitalism can we disconnect living standards from resource consumption and adopt a circular zero waste economy.

The struggle for a planet we can continue to live on is the struggle for libertarian communism. And it will be won or lost in the workplace.

CAPITALISM IS UNSUSTAINABLE

FREE WEST PAPUA

In response to small but co-ordinated West Papuan demonstrations across the country in the middle of August this year, Right wing forces engaged in a provocation against Papuan students in the Indonesian city of Surabaya. When the Papuans responded, these Right wing forces accused the students of disrespecting the Indonesian flag and stormed the students' dormitory, attacking them and engaging in racial slurs.

When the stories of this assault spread, the cities of West Papua erupted in rage. In Manokwari, Jayapura and Sorong, government buildings were stormed and some torched. In these and many other places, the Morning Star flag was raised. A protest against anti-Melanesian racism became centred on the Papuans' core demand of independence.

The Indonesian Government was initially taken aback by the protests, particularly as they arose in reaction to an instance of egregious racism. The raising of the Morning Star, however, was a challenge that could not be left without a response. Many protestors were shot, the military was greatly reinforced in West Papua and access to the Internet was shut down. Dozens of people were murdered by security forces. Demonstrations died down after about a month, but the issues remain.

Fundamentally, it is colonialism causing the problems in West Papua. The Indonesian State, centred on the Javanese ruling elites, doesn't recognise the right of West Papua's people to self-

determination and instead insists on a unitary Indonesian national identity. From the original take-over in 1962, through the "Act of Free Choice" conducted at gunpoint in 1969 and the decades of heavy military repression under Suharto's New Order regime, the Papuans have been oppressed and their lands confiscated to make way for migrants from Java and other Indonesian islands. Indonesia's Basic Forestry Act of 1967 states that "the rights of traditional law communities may not be allowed to stand in the way of transmigration sites".

As Anarchists, we are opposed to all forms of nationalism. Instead, we demand workers' revolution, but this does mean simple opposition to the West Papuans' demand for independence. This would be to side with the nationalism of the chauvinist Indonesian State. Rather, we oppose all forms of national oppression, regardless of where the capitalists draw their national boundaries. We are happy to let the location of these boundaries be set by simple democratic methods. If the West Papuan people want independence, they are entitled to it – and they will learn that their own capitalist class is capable of being just as violent and corrupt as the Indonesian one.

The Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group therefore demands that the Indonesian military be withdrawn from West Papua to stop the immediate abuses and that transmigration to West Papua be ceased to prevent the underlying dispossession getting worse.

We recognise the right of the West Papuan people to self-determination and we call on the working class in both Australia and Indonesia to join us in this. It is particularly important for the working class movement in Indonesia to recognise the West Papuans' right of self-determination, because this is the only way the question can be resolved peacefully. The other road is armed struggle, with the backing of Australian imperialism – something that would result in a sham independence and condemn the Papuans to semi-colonial servitude for the benefit of Australian mining companies. Only the working class can free West Papua.



Credit: Radio NZ

**TROOPS OUT NOW!
STOP TRANSMIGRATION!
SELF DETERMINATION FOR
WEST PAPUA!**

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MACG

What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is a social philosophy based upon the principles of liberty, equality and solidarity. It is the political dimension of a free society.

What is Communism?

Communism is the principle of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need". It is the economic dimension of a free society.

What is the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group?

The MACG is an organisation of class struggle revolutionary anarchists who share political positions, articulated in theory, strategy and tactics. We aim to encourage struggle by the working class for its own interests and, within that struggle, we aim to advance Anarchist ideas as its necessary philosophical basis.