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Isabel Allende says Trump is a fool for denying climate change

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Barcelona, November 7 (RHC)-- Chilean writer Isabel Allende she is bemused by how U.S. President Donald Trump can deny climate change, adding that it was a foolish stance to take.

"How is it possible that the President of the United States denies climate change, with what that means in terms of policies, of image, of the message he gives to the world? Who can deny it? Only a fool can deny it," she said as she was in Barcelona to pick up the International Barcino Historical Novel Prize.

She told reporters that at a time of fundamental changes were coming and that she hoped to be able to witness it. Allende, who has lived in California for years, said that today there are mass migrations, uncertainty and discomfort in many parts of the world and that they would generate very important changes.

"It is the younger generation, those who will inherit the world that is more restless and do not want this system. They are people worried about climate change. All this will produce very positive changes. We will enter a time of fundamental changes and I hope to be alive to see them," she said.

The writer, who has more than 70 million readers and 24 books under her belt, said that the "old men who are running the world should be ashamed" that a girl like Greta Thunberg "has to shake their conscience."

When asked about Chile, she said the uprising had been an extraordinary surprise for both ruling politicians and opposition leaders. "According to statistics, (the country) seems to be an oasis in Latin America, but the figures do not show the distribution of income, resources and inequalities, which are some of the highest in the world."

Allende said that one percent of the population held on to 25 percent of the country's wealth with 40 percent of the population unable to afford basic services.

"Everything is privatized, with a neoliberal system imposed by the Pinochet dictatorship, in agreement with the 'Chicago boys' -- which could be implanted fiercely because there was no labor representation," the award-winning author continued.

For 17 years, capital income had total freedom and lacked the counterweight of unions, political parties, the author added. Citizen representation and this model, which was applied in 1980, has remained in place as the ruling status quo for 30 years. "And with the pretext that the price of subway fares would rise, a revolt has erupted, a massive protest, in which everyone is on the street," Allende mused.

The famed author also spoke of her latest novel, *A Long Petal of the Sea*, which taps into the nostalgia of exile and tells the story of thousands of refugees who traveled to Chile following the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

"They were very well received and contributed so much to culture, science and music that today it would be impossible to quantify it, but they and their descendants changed history," Allende said.

Refugees have been an issue more prevalent than ever today, although "masses of displaced people have always existed," said Isabel Allende. "Since Trump has been president, the United States is bearing witness to a true human rights crisis on its border with Mexico, with subhuman situations and with detention centers that are prisons."

Edited by Ed Newman

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