

THE

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SOCIALIST STANDARD

Journal of The Socialist Party of Great Britain

Companion Party of the World Socialist Movement

THE ILLUSIONIST

Magic money myths



Also: Are We Anti Latin American?
A Modern Money Tree?
British fascists online

David Graeber's False Dawn
Mutual Aid
The Strike



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Introducing the Socialist Party

The Socialist Party advocates a society where production is freed from the artificial constraints of profit and organised for the benefit of all on the basis of material abundance. It does not have policies to ameliorate aspects of the existing social system. It is opposed to all war.

The *Socialist Standard* is the combative monthly journal of the Socialist Party, published without interruption since 1904. In the 1930s the *Socialist Standard* explained why capitalism would not collapse of its own accord, in response to widespread claims to the contrary, and continues to hold this view in face of the notion's recent popularity. Beveridge's welfare measures of the 1940s were viewed as a reorganisation of poverty and a necessary 'expense' of production, and Keynesian policies designed to overcome slumps an illusion. Today, the journal exposes as false the view that banks create money out of thin



air, and explains why actions to prevent the depredation of the natural world can have limited effect and run counter to the nature of capitalism itself.

Gradualist reformers like the Labour Party believed that capitalism could be transformed through a series of social measures, but have merely become routine managers of the system. The Bolsheviks

had to be content with developing Russian capitalism under a one-party dictatorship. Both failures have given socialism a quite different-- and unattractive-- meaning: state ownership and control. As the *Socialist Standard* pointed out before both courses were followed, the results would more properly be called state capitalism.

The Socialist Party and the World Socialist Movement affirm that capitalism is incapable of meaningful change in the interests of the majority; that the basis of exploitation is the wages/money system. The *Socialist Standard* is proud to have kept alive the original idea of what socialism is-- a classless, stateless, wageless, moneyless society or, defined positively, a democracy in which free and equal men and women co-operate to produce the things they need to live and enjoy life, to which they have free access in accordance with the principle 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs'

Discontented workers choose the devil they know

THE 2022 French presidential election took place against the backdrop of deep working class dissatisfaction with the political status quo. As in 2017, the first round of results gave French workers the choice between Emmanuel Macron and the far-right nationalist, Marine Le Pen in the second round. Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the left-wing reformer, came in a close third at 22 percent of the votes cast (Le Pen came in second at 23 percent and Macron on top at 28 percent). What is striking is how the established capitalist parties, *Les Républicains* and so-called *Parti socialiste*, were reduced to insignificance electorally, gaining between them about 6.5 percent of the vote less than the total cast for Eric Zemmour, the other far right candidate at 7.1 percent. There were six other candidates.

Macron is no longer the new kid on the block. He has been the President for the last five years and has revealed himself the faithful servant of French capitalism. In this time, he has introduced anti-working class austerity policies which provoked strikes and protests from the workers

and also the *Gilets jaunes* protests which, although small-business led, had drawn in discontented workers. No wonder that he is known as the 'president of the rich'.

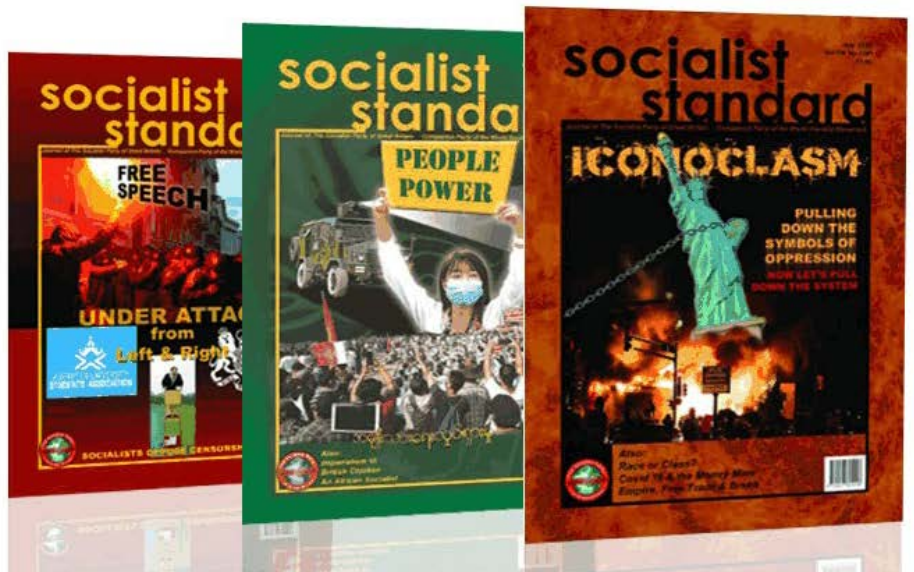
Le Pen continues in her attempt to make her party less toxic. She has changed its name to the *Rassemblement National* (National Rally) and has dropped her opposition to the EU and the Euro. She wants to reform it and reduce France's contribution to the EU budget. French Law would take precedence over EU law. For all her efforts to soften her party's image, there are still her noxious xenophobic and racist policies – French nationals given priority over immigrants in jobs, housing and social services and tougher immigration policies and the banning of muslim headscarves in public. She was helped by the fact her rival on the far right, Zemmour, who is more noxious than she is had helped her to appear more 'moderate'. She poses as the workers' friend by focussing on the cost of living crisis, with pledges like abolishing income tax for the under thirties. However, she has had to play down her former close links with Putin

by condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and faced taunts that her party had accepted loans from Russian banks.

It is not surprising that there is little enthusiasm for either of these candidates. Both Macron and Le Pen had gone after the votes that went to Mélenchon. Macron had sold himself to younger votes as a keen supporter of a pro-environment agenda.

After the second round of voting on 24 April, Emmanuel Macron was declared the final winner. Many French workers stayed with the devil they knew. Although profoundly dissatisfied with his political leadership, they reckoned that the alternative was far too unpalatable and decided to hold their noses and vote for him. There will be a sigh of relief among the world capitalists, especially those from the EU area, that the French workers had opted for a safe pair of hands. However for the French workers, there is little change, the same old drudgery, the struggle to make ends meet, which is the same fate of workers all over the world.

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Original Sin

IN 2012, broadcaster and current affairs pundit Andrew Marr wrote and produced a BBC/Open University documentary series called *Andrew Marr's History of the World*, a lively saunter across 70,000 years of human history which helpfully included the invitation to download a free 'How do they know that?' booklet from the OU website, in case you wanted to check any of the facts presented (bbc.in/3EwNvF1).

Unfortunately, in the very first episode Marr somewhat marred his own enterprise with the extraordinary claim that homo sapiens drove the Neanderthals to extinction by hunting and eating them. How did Marr and the OU know that? Well, they didn't, and the booklet didn't mention it. Indeed the OU's own published research instead 'suggests that climate change was the primary factor in the extinction of Homo species, despite their great ecological plasticity and cognitive abilities' while 'in the case of Neanderthals, the climate-driven increased extinction risk was probably exacerbated by competition with *H. sapiens*' (bit.ly/3JRkiWw).

Why did Marr make this odd and sensational claim? Perhaps in the absence of hard facts, a racy narrative won out instead. But why did the respectable OU let him get away with it? The thing is, it's part of the 'Original Sin' apology for capitalism, the gist of which is that, like it or not, we need to be ruled by powerful elites because we're all murderous psychos at heart. This view, popularised by Thomas Hobbes and latterly by his fanboy Steven Pinker, is baked into the foundations of capitalist ideology so thoroughly that it is usually the first objection to socialism that people reach for. This is also why anthropology continues to be such a hotly politicised area of study (see pages 14-16 and 20-21 in this issue).

In the case of Neanderthals, the circumstantial evidence did initially seem damning, with Neanderthals dying out in Europe around 40,000 years ago, just around the time humans from Africa were supposedly first smuggling their bone Neander-bashers through customs. But now new evidence points to *H. sapiens* already being in Europe around 54,000 years ago, meaning there was



Credit: BBC

a potential overlap of 14,000 years, which in turn hardly suggests wholesale genocidal mayhem (bbc.in/3vrLmGz).

So the hunter-killer scenario, with one species as ruthless restaurateur and the other as regional plat du jour, is almost certainly a caricature. In fact, given the small and sparse populations in early Europe, the two may not even have had much to do with each other, though Neanderthal traces in the human genome do attest to some contact. According to Prof Chris Stringer of London's Natural History Museum, 'we don't need to invoke violent causes for [Neanderthals'] demise. There are already two main factors they had to contend with.' The first of these was rapid climate change: 'Most of the north Atlantic was switching from bitterly cold to nearly as warm as the present day every few thousand years, sometimes in less than a decade, and so Neanderthals had to deal with an extremely unstable climate in western Europe before modern humans arrived there' (bit.ly/3KWs171).

The other factor was humans' competitive success, due to the fact that, as Prof Stringer says, 'we were networking better, our social groups were larger, we were storing knowledge better and we built on that knowledge'.

This is not to say that early humans were eco-friendly hippies. Early modern humans very likely hunted most megafauna to extinction, and certainly deforested huge areas of land, contrary to those romantics who impute mystical communion with and respect for nature to all aboriginal populations. But let's not allow shameless apologists for capitalism to get away with misrepresenting the past for their own propaganda purposes.

Last year's models

'We've been here before and been disappointed, but we are all secretly hoping that this is really it, and that in our lifetime we might see the kind of transformation that we have read about in history books' (bbc.in/3MgSTik).

You might think this is a socialist talking about the revolution to abolish capitalism. In fact it's a scientist referring to the fact that the fundamental W-boson particle appears not to weigh quite what it ought to. It's only a small difference, but as Prof Brian Cox once observed about a study purporting to show neutrinos travelling slightly faster than the speed of light, to a physicist that's like saying that you've done the sums and found that $2 + 2$ don't quite equal 4. It fractures your whole world like a thunderbolt.

Instead of being horrified at this prospect, physicists are as excited as kids on E-numbers. They have no stake in the current 'standard model' of physics because they already know it's wrong in at least three ways. There's a whole bunch of antimatter that should be out there but isn't. There's a whole bunch of dark matter and dark energy that shouldn't be out there but is. And gravity haunts it all like the ghost in the machine, inexplicably analogue in an otherwise digital quantum reality. There are all sorts of theories to account for these problems, and the race is on to find evidence for a winner.

How different from the world of everyday affairs, whose social organisation also has its own 'standard model', currently known as capitalism. In this case too, there are all sorts of things systemically wrong with it, and many people can see this, not just socialists. But, unlike physics, some people *do* have a huge financial stake in the status quo, and that doesn't just skew the debate, it prevents it taking place. So whereas physicists are looking excitedly for a better and more coherent model that *they know* must be out there if only they can figure it out, the rich are making sure that no such endeavour is taking place in the social realm.

Which is unfortunate, because whereas in particle physics the most that's probably at stake is a Nobel prize and some departmental funding, for human society the consequence of not having a constructive debate about the future might be not having any future at all.

PJS

Are we anti Latin American?

Dear Editors

In your last issue, reviewing 'The Truth About Trotsky', you state 'In 1937 Leon Trotsky, from his exile in Central America...'. Well, he was not exiled in Central America, he was exiled in Mexico. Unless of course you did that intentionally placing Mexico outside North America, thus implying that only the two English speaking countries, US and Canada belong to North America, therefore Mexico as a Spanish speaking country should be in Central America.

The shape of the American continent, from Alaska to Cape Horn, is that of geographical giant with a thin isthmus in the middle linking North from South America. In that sense, even if it burns the writer reviewing the book on Trotsky, Mexico's place is in the North of the continent.

This brings me to a pattern in your constant depiction of anything political and ideological pertaining Latin America. And is that of a veiled attitude of dismissal every time it is mentioned.

I find this quite offensive – Guzman in Peru 'was not a Marxist', 'Allende in Chile apart from nationalizing the copper, did very little'. AMLO in Mexico, Lula in Brazil, etc, etc.

As a Chilean who came here after being in prison from 1974 to 1976, I cannot help but to think of the typical position of those pseudo Marxists who love criticizing everybody else, without ever themselves doing anything practical for Socialism.

Salvador Allende was the leader of the Popular Unity government 1970-1973 which in itself is an achievement. The first Marxist to be elected by the vote in the Western Hemisphere, he showed that Chile could be transformed. First of all, the nationalization of the banks was the first measure taken by the Popular Unity, copper the second. Many of the big industries, especially textiles, were passed over to the Social Property Area. It created the 'comandos populares', which encouraged the participation at the municipal/local level of the working class, the same can be said

of the 'cordones industriales' where all the big industries surrounding Santiago had been taken or expropriated and were now ran by their workers.

The Agrarian Reform was also a total success. It nationalized the largest privately owned land measuring over 40 hectares. Thus, not only economically benefited the rural workers of the countryside who became syndicalized but also the indigenous population of Southern Chile who for centuries had been reclaiming back their land.

Allende's government lasted only for three years, but were filled with advances and hopes for most Chileans. In the last local elections before the coup, the Popular Unity had increased their votes supporting the government but, as Kissinger said, the CIA had to push for military intervention before it was too late.

As you can see, this is not an essay or article but a rough letter pointing out that you cannot make swiping statements as you do. I'm planning to continue reading *Socialist Standard* because it's worth it.

Nigel de Vere, Bromley.

Reply:

We take your point that we should not have referred to Mexico as being in Central America. We can assure you that it was an honest mistake – based on a common practice that we should no doubt have questioned – but it was in no way an attempt to belittle any particular country or part of the world.

However, while we apologise for that, we can find no reason to apologise for references in past issues of the *Socialist Standard* with regard to political events and developments in the Spanish and Portuguese speaking parts of the American continents which you have found offensive. You mention Guzman in Peru, AMLO in Mexico, Lula in Brazil and, in particular, Allende in Chile, and you object to our not considering such people or movements as 'Marxist'. You are particularly critical of the views we have expressed about

Allende's Chile. While we acknowledge and appreciate your personal opposition to the post-Allende Chilean dictatorship which led to your imprisonment and to your leaving your home country, we cannot accept that the reforms brought in by the Allende government, beneficial as they may have been for many Chileans, had anything to do with Marxism or socialism as we define those terms. They clearly had a lot to do with 'reformism', i.e. the attempt by 'progressive' governments to run the capitalist system in a more liveable, and often less oppressive, way for workers. And we do not question that this brought with it 'advances and hopes for most Chileans'. But the kind of reforms you mention, for example nationalisation of banks and industry, in no way amount to the moneyless wageless society without buying and selling based on economic equality and free access for all to all goods and services, which is the basis of Marx's prescription for a socialist form of society.

Of course nothing prevents those advocating or practising policies of reform from calling themselves Marxist or socialist (or others referring to them in that way, often pejoratively), but our contention is that what they represent is a particular way of running the capitalist system, not a fundamental transformation of that system, which is currently dominant in various forms in all countries. We would contend that nothing in Allende's policies or practices (though they sadly cost him his life) represented or even pointed the way forward to the wholly democratic society of common ownership and voluntary association that is truly worthy of the name 'Marxist' or socialist.

Having outlined our disagreement with you on this point, we nevertheless consider it a credit to your open-mindedness that you say that you will continue to read our journal because 'it's worth it'. Needless to say that is something on which we do agree with you. – *Editorial Committee.*

Russian gold

‘THE BANK of Russia has resumed gold purchases this week, but more importantly, the regulator is doing so at a fixed price of 5,000 rubles (\$59) per 1 gram between March 28 and June 30, raising the possibility of Russia returning to the gold standard for the first time in over a century,’ RT reported on 2 April (bit.ly/3juJTda)

This led to speculation that, in a further bid to get round Western sanctions, Russia’s next move might be to require all its exports be paid in roubles that would in effect link their price to the price of gold. This would not be a return to the gold standard that existed up until 1914 but would be more like what the US did up until 1971 when it agreed to buy gold at \$35 an ounce. This was part of the ‘gold exchange’ system where other currencies had a fixed rate of exchange with the dollar and so were linked to gold that way.

The US decision to end this in 1971 led to the present era of floating exchange rates where rates go up and down depending on the demand for a particular currency to pay for imports or to invest abroad. In practice the dollar remained the main, but by no means the only, ‘reserve currency’ as the currency in which central

banks held money for their country’s international transactions.

The West’s decision to deny the Bank of Russia access to its dollar reserves may be more significant than anything Russia might do. It will be a signal to other countries that holding dollars is not as safe as they assumed and may lead them to find alternatives, even to rely more on gold. It could be the beginning of another change in the international payments system.

The previous regime in Russia – the one that came to power in November 1917 with the Bolshevik coup d’état – also toyed with the idea of a gold rouble. Trotsky, who considered himself the leader, albeit in exile, of a within-the-system opposition to the Stalin government, was an advocate of this. In an article published in English in 1935 entitled ‘If America Should Go Communist’ (bit.ly/3xjYJuS), he affirmed his belief that a gold-based currency was best:

‘Your “radical” professors are dead wrong in their devotion to “managed money”. It is an academic idea that could easily wreck your entire system of distribution and production. That is the great lesson to be derived from the Soviet Union, where bitter necessity has been converted into official virtue in the monetary realm. There the lack of a stable gold rouble is one of the main

causes of our many economic troubles and catastrophes.’

Trotsky mistakenly believed that Russia, even under Stalin, was in a transition from capitalism to socialism and that, during the transition, money was needed, ideally linked to gold. He was, however, aware that socialism would be a moneyless society, but that was only for the dim and distant future:

‘Only when socialism succeeds in substituting administrative control for money will it be possible to abandon a stable gold currency. Then money will become ordinary paper slips, like trolley or theater tickets. As socialism advances, these slips will also disappear, and control over individual consumption – whether by money or administration – will no longer be necessary when there is more than enough of everything for everybody!’

What he failed to realise was that the very existence, due to ‘bitter necessity,’ for money in the Russian economy showed that it was still a capitalist economy. It wasn’t in a transition to socialism. If anything, the state capitalism that existed there in his time was a transition to the more classic type of capitalism that existed in the West, and which largely came into being when the old USSR collapsed in 1991.

The richest 10% of people own more than 80% of global wealth, and the 10 richest men have six times more wealth than that of the poorest 3.1 billion people combined. These vast inequalities in wealth reflect how society is split into two classes: the capitalist class who get their wealth through owning industries and corporations, and the working class who rely on wages or benefits to buy what is needed.

The Socialist Party’s weekend of talks and discussion looks at why capitalism is divided into classes and how the antagonism between them impacts on the way we live. What is ‘class consciousness’ and how does it develop? To what extent is it meaningful to say that there is a middle class? What classes were there before capitalism, in previous stages of history? And what could a future classless society be like?

THE CLASS DIVIDE

The Socialist Party’s Summer School

19th - 21st August 2022

Fircroft College, Birmingham

Full residential cost (including accommodation and meals Friday evening to Sunday afternoon) is £100; the concessionary rate is £50. Book online at www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/summer-school-2022/ or send a cheque (payable to the Socialist Party of Great Britain) with your contact details to Summer School, The Socialist Party, 52 Clapham High Street, London, SW4 7UN. Day visitors are welcome, but please book by e-mail in advance. E-mail enquiries to spgbschool@yahoo.co.uk.

War without end



One hundred years after the war to end all wars (1914-18) started, Russia's current war against Ukraine began. February's major escalation has made it the largest war in Europe since the end of WW2. The mass exodus of millions of children, women, and men too old to be conscripted is similarly record breaking. In 1914 we were told that German 'militarism' had to be rebuffed and 'plucky little Belgium' supported. Today we are told by the US Ambassador to UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, that 'There can be no fence-sitters in this crisis' (pl.usembassy.gov, 21 February, bit.ly/3CWTJgB0) and are encouraged to #StopRussia and #StandWithUkraine. But the truth is wars are always and only waged for largely commercial reasons – access to raw materials, markets, trade routes and strategic positions from which to defend them all. 'Russia's president knows exactly what he wants, and it's not eastern Ukraine. His interests are all about oil and gas and supply routes. The rest is smoke and mirrors' (*Daily Beast*, 1 March 2015, bit.ly/3M0FAMK). Socialists oppose all capitalist wars, so-called 'progressive wars' or struggles for national liberation. Workers have no country. 'Russia's 500 Super Rich Wealthier Than Poorest 99.8%' (*Moscow Times*, 10 June 2021, bit.ly/3M0FAMK). Similarly, 'in total, the top 100 wealthiest business people in Ukraine control around \$44.5 billion, according to Forbes, which accounts for 27% of Ukrainian GDP in September, 2021' (en.wikipedia.org, bit.ly/3wmpmiz). Indeed elsewhere, 'since the onset of Covid-19 in early 2020, the combined wealth of the 650 American billionaires has increased by nearly \$1 trillion' (commondreams.org, 30 November 2020, bit.ly/3L4dypj). The overwhelming non-owning majority, those who do the fighting and the dying, effectively get nothing. Would any worker, apprised of this, raise even a paintball gun? Hence the need for Wilfred Owen's 'old lie': 'it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country'.

Class war

'Would you stay and fight or leave the country? A bare majority, 55 percent, said they would stay and fight, while 38 percent

said they would leave. "When confronted with a terrible hypothetical that would put them in the shoes of the Ukrainians, Americans say they would stand and fight rather than seek safety in another country," said Quinnipiac polling analyst Tim Malloy. That's one way to spin it, I guess. For me, the fact that just under half of my friends and neighbors would hypothetically abandon their homeland and all it stands for in the face of a foreign invader is less than encouraging. Many people don't even seem to have hypothetical patriotism, let alone fortitude. Further disheartening is that the youngest Americans, those ages 18-34 and most physically capable, were even less likely to stay and fight. Only 45% said they would remain, while 48 percent would flee' (postbulletin.com, 17 March, bit.ly/3ufS95o).

Less than encouraging? Disheartening? Not at all! We said at the 'start of WW1 '...that no interests are at stake justifying the shedding of a single drop of working-class blood' (*Socialist Standard*, September 1914). Let the capitalists fight it out themselves:



'SpaceX and Tesla CEO Elon Musk is offering to fight Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying that if he wins, Putin will have to withdraw his military forces from Ukraine. "I hereby challenge Владимир Путин to single combat," Musk tweeted, using Cyrillic in an apparent bid to make sure Putin understood him. He added, "Stakes are Україна" -- Ukraine' (dailymail.co.uk, 14 March, bit.ly/34Wkxkx).

War and want

War is completely unnecessary. We are living in a world that has enough resources to provide plenty for all, to eliminate world poverty, ignorance and disease, to provide an adequate and comfortable life for everyone on the planet. Yet under capitalism resources are squandered on armaments, of individual as well as of mass destruction, and, as now, in actual war. 'Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Feb 27th proposal to ramp up defense expenditures by tens of billions of euros, spurred by Russia's war on Ukraine, has defense officials in Berlin scrambling to identify spending opportunities that promise fast results, according to several company officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations' (yahoo.com, 11 March, yho0.it/3tULddM).

Hypersonic



'Russia unleashed nuclear-capable hypersonic missiles for the first time ever in combat, obliterating an ammunition depot in western Ukraine, its defense ministry said Saturday, as embattled President Volodymyr Zelensky made an urgent plea for "meaningful and fair" peace talks and the strategic port city of Mariupol was on the precipice of falling to the invaders' (nypost.com, 19 March, bit.ly/36bdMfm).

No WW4



'The prospect of nuclear conflict, once unthinkable, is now back within the realm of possibility' United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' (axios.com, March 14, bit.ly/3uf7nHW).

Rosa Luxemburg offered us a prescription in 1918: 'During the four years of the imperialist slaughter of peoples, streams and rivers of blood have flowed. Now we must cherish every drop of this precious juice as in a crystal glass. The most sweeping revolutionary action and the most profound humanity—that is the true spirit of socialism. A whole world is to be changed. But every tear that is shed, when it could have been staunched, accuses us' (marxists.architecture.net, bit.ly/37Pd3RH).

UK BRANCHES & CONTACTS

All meetings online during the pandemic. See page 23.

LONDON

North London branch. Meets 3rd Thurs. 8pm at Torriano Meeting House, 99 Torriano Ave, NW5 2RX. Contact: Chris Dufton 020 7609 0983 nlb.spgb@gmail.com

South & West London branch. Meets last Saturday in month, 2.00pm. Head Office, 52 Clapham High St, SW4 7UN. Contact: 020 7622 3811. spgb@worldsocialism.org

MIDLANDS

West Midlands regional branch. Meets last Sat. 3pm (check before attending). Contact: Stephen Shapton. 01543 821180. Email: stephenshapton@yahoo.co.uk.

NORTH

North East Regional branch.

Contact: P. Kilgallon, c/o Head Office, 52 Clapham High Street, SW4 7UN.

Lancaster branch. Meets 3rd Mon, 3pm, Friends Meeting House, Meeting House Lane. Ring to confirm: P. Shannon, 07510 412 261, spgb.lancaster@worldsocialism.org.

Manchester branch. Contact: Paul Bennett, 6 Burleigh Mews, Hardy Lane, M21 7LB. 0161 860 7189.

Bolton. Contact: H. McLaughlin. 01204 844589.

Cumbria. Contact: Brendan Cummings, 19 Queen St, Millom, Cumbria LA18 4BG.

Doncaster. Contact: Fredi Edwards, fredi.edwards@hotmail.co.uk

SOUTH/SOUTHEAST/SOUTHWEST

Kent and Sussex regional branch. Meets 2nd Sun. 2pm at The Muggleton Inn, High Street, Maidstone ME14 1HJ. Contact: spgb.ksr@worldsocialism.org.

South West regional branch. Meets 3rd Sat. 2pm at the Railway Tavern, 131 South Western Road, Salisbury SP2 7RR.

Contact: Stephen Harper spgbsw@gmail.com

Brighton. Contact: Anton Pruden, anton@pruden.me

Canterbury. Contact: Rob Cox, 4 Stanhope Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 6AB.

Luton. Contact: Nick White, 59 Heywood Drive, LU2 7LP.

Cornwall. Contact: Harry Sowden, 16 Polgine Lane, Troon, Camborne, TR14 9DY. 01209 611820.

East Anglia. Contact: David Porter, Eastholme, Bush Drive, Eccles-on-Sea, NR12 0SF. 01692 582533. Richard Headicar, 42 Woodcote, Firs Rd, Hethersett, NR9 3JD. 01603 814343.

Essex. Contact: Pat Deutz, 11 The Links, Billericay, CM12 0EX. patdeutz@gmail.com.

Cambridge. Contact: Andrew Westley, wezelecta007@gmail.com. 07890343044.

IRELAND

Cork. Contact: Kevin Cronin, 5 Curragh Woods, Frankfield, Cork. 021 4896427. mariekev@eircom.net

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh branch. Meets 1st Thurs. 7-9pm. The Quaker Hall, Victoria Terrace (above Victoria Street), Edinburgh. Contact: J. Mair. 0131 440 0995. jimmyjmoir73@gmail.com
Branch website: <http://geocities.com/edinburghbranch/>

Glasgow branch. Meets 1st and 3rd Tues. at 7pm in Community Central Halls, 304 Maryhill Road, Glasgow. Contact: Peter Hendrie, 75 Lairhills Road, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 0LH. 01355 903105.

peter.anna.hendrie@blueyonder.co.uk.

Dundee. Contact: Ian Ratcliffe, 12 Finlow Terrace, Dundee, DD4 9NA. 01382 698297.

Ayrshire. Contact: Paul Edwards 01563 541138. rainbow3@btopenworld.com.

Lothian Socialist Discussion @Autonomous Centre Edinburgh, ACE, 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA. Meets 4th Weds. 7-9pm. Contact: F. Anderson 07724 082753.

WALES

South Wales Branch (Swansea)

Meets 2nd Mon, 7.30pm (except January, April, July and October), Unitarian Church, High Street, SA1 1NZ. Contact: Geoffrey Williams, 19 Baptist Well Street, Waun Wen, Swansea SA1 6FB. 01792 643624.

South Wales Branch (Cardiff)

Meets 2nd Saturday 12 noon (January, April, July and October) Cafe Nero, Capitol Shopping Centre, Queens Street, Cardiff.

Contact: Richard Botterill, 21 Pen-Y-Bryn Rd, Gabalfa, Cardiff, CF14 3LG. 02920-615826. botterillr@gmail.com

Central Branch

Meets 1st Sun, 11am (UK time) on Discord.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

LATIN AMERICA

Contact: J.M. Morel, Calle 7 edif 45 apto 102, Multis nuevo La loteria, La Vega, Rep. Dominicana.

AFRICA

Kenya. Contact: Patrick Ndege, PO Box 13627-00100, GPO, Nairobi
Zambia. Contact: Kephass Mulenga, PO Box 280168, Kitwe.

ASIA

Japan. Contact: Michael. japan.wsm@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

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One World, One People

‘Ubi bene, ibi patria’

**‘Where it goes well with
me, there is my country’**

MILLIONS of vulnerable and damaged people are making perilous, life-threatening journeys to seek a safe refuge.

It was only a matter of a few months ago that some countries were constructing razor-wire fences along their borders to keep out foreigners hoping to reach sanctuary in Europe. Refugees were dying on the frontier from exposure and hypothermia from extreme winter conditions. Many people showed little understanding or support for those asylum seekers and did not want to accept outsiders. Growing xenophobic attitudes have given rise to far-right populism. When the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, Nigel Farage spoke of an impending flood of its refugees: ‘You can now see a wave of people leaving Afghanistan, and we already have numbers we quite simply can’t cope with.’

Now, how different is the reception that desperate and vulnerable men, women and children are now receiving. Europe generously embraces Ukrainian refugees fleeing the Russian invasion. Many humanitarian-minded individuals have rushed to do what they can to help Ukrainians, yet, forgetting or ignoring that refugees from elsewhere are still being pushed back or caged in detention camps.

Socialists share the sentiments of the environmentalist movement, Fridays For Future, when it explained, ‘While Ukrainians deserve immediate peace and all our support, so do the people from Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and all war-torn regions. Empathy, justice, and compassion should be for everyone. Refugees should not have to be white to be heard and seen.’ Fridays for Future went on to say ‘People only desire to live and exist safely. Let it become a door-opening moment where we demand justice for everyone independent of their nationality and skin colour.’

Millions of Ukrainians have joined the 84 million other people in need of security around the world (2021 UNHCR data). If they were all to form their own country, it would be the 17th largest on Earth, slightly bigger than Germany. If we were to add to those figures migrants forced by dire economic conditions to cross borders, the



Credit: © Jeff J Mitchell/Getty Images

number is well over one billion people.

The population of the forcibly displaced is now more than double the number of Europeans driven from their homes by World War Two, six times the number of those displaced by the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan, 100-fold more than the number of Vietnamese Boat People following the Vietnam War.

To put it another way, about one in every 95 people on this planet is involuntarily on the move. Add in those driven by economic imperatives and one out of every 30 people on Earth is now a refugee or a migrant.

In contrast to media perceptions it has not been the wealthy developed countries hosting refugees. In 2014, about nine million of the world’s displaced lived in low-income countries. Today, that number stands at an estimated 36 million and is forecast, by the Danish Refugee Council, to increase to 40 million by the end of 2023. The displacement crisis ‘disproportionally affects poorer countries and areas that already have enough on their plate,’ said the Council’s Charlotte Slente.

There are currently 5.7 million registered Syrian refugees stranded in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, 1.2 million Rohingya in the camps at Cox’s Bazaar in Bangladesh, 2.2 million Afghan refugees still in Iran and Pakistan, 2 million South Sudanese, 4 million displaced in Yemen while Honduras has 937,000 displaced people, the highest number in Central America.

Since 2015, a fifth of Venezuela’s population has left, one of the largest displacements in the world. On average, 2,000 Venezuelans crossed into Colombia every day in 2021 which now hosts 1.8 million Venezuelans.

Behind these numbers are people with personal stories of tragic loss and pain, all hoping for a chance at a better future. They think it is worth risking their lives if it leads to an opportunity of a decent life for them and their families.

However, we also witness a UK government passing draconian new nationality and borders legislation to restrict the rights of refugees and for those who endeavour to enter the country ‘unlawfully’, and they will be criminally prosecuted to add to all the other miseries that have already been inflicted upon them.

The UK government has now announced it intends to deport – or should that be ‘transport’?-- those accused of ‘illegally’ arriving to claim asylum to Rwanda, in the middle of Africa, 4,500 miles away. How different from the humanitarian welcome being offered to Ukrainians fleeing war in what is now effectively becoming an unequal two-tier refugee policy.

Socialists do not hold with making a ‘league table’ of suffering and to differentiate between the more deserving or the less deserving for our charity and compassion. There should be no competition or contests for our concern. But in today’s world, such a conflict of interests exists when it comes to attitudes and policies in regard to refugees.

The World Socialist Movement’s position is that we are all equal worthy members of the human family and when it comes to looking after ‘our own’, none should be excluded and rejected, no exceptions nor special cases. Humanity is One. We are indivisible.

ALJO

A Modern Money Tree?

IN THE last part of the nineteenth century pro-capitalist economists, worried by the use Marx and others had made of the Classical Economist David Ricardo's labour theory of value, sought to change the whole theoretical basis of economics. They also objected to the Classical Economists' analysing society as divided into social classes (landlords, capitalists and workers) with conflicting interests.

What they came up with was that it was the utility to consumers that determined the exchange value of goods and services, not labour cost. Consumers were assumed to spend their income in such a way that the 'marginal utility' of each different item they bought (i.e., the added satisfaction they get from one more unit of a good) was equal; the price of goods was the result of consumers all doing this and so would typically decline with every additional unit of consumption as consumers were willing to pay less for it. Similarly, labour and capital were considered as each contributing to production and being rewarded according to their 'marginal productivity', the theory being that workers will be hired up to the point when the marginal revenue of production is equal to the wage rate. The reward to capital was profits.

This 'marginalist revolution' ushered in Neoclassical Economics and became the dominant view amongst economists and is still taught in schools and universities all over the world. It is against this theory that Steve Keen's *The New Economics: A Manifesto* (Polity, 2022, 200 pages), aimed at students about to study economics, is directed. Like all manifestos, it is a call to arms. Keen denounces neoclassical economics as a 'disease' and calls for its complete eradication.

Money creationism

But what does he propose to put in its place? As an advocate of so-called Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), his main criticism is aimed at the Neoclassicals' theory of money and banking. As it happens this is something they inherited from the Classical Economists – that banks are essentially financial intermediaries, borrowing money at one (or no) rate of interest and relending it at a higher rate; that banks do not 'create' money but merely redistribute it. Keen defends the contrary view that banks can and do create money.

This is partly a question of semantics about what is meant by 'creating money'.

Even Neoclassical textbooks define bank lending as doing this. So, when a bank makes a loan by definition it 'creates' money. The justification for this claim is that when a bank makes a loan it doesn't hand over the cash but deposits money in the borrower's account. But this is different from when a customer deposits money in their account, which is a liability of the bank to them (the bank owes it to them). A deposit made by a bank into a borrower's account is the reverse (the borrower owes it to the bank). It is misleading to treat these two kinds of deposit as the same and to assimilate the second to the first.

Supporters of the view that banks have the power to create new money also point to the fact that a bank doesn't necessarily have to have the money available at the time it makes a loan. This is true. However, when the borrowers actually spend the money it has to be covered. This may be from inbound income, but if there is a shortfall at the end of a trading day when banks settle up with each other, to cover this the bank has to borrow money on the money market from other banks or from the central bank.

Another confusion arises from the fact that governments, which do have the power to create money, don't normally do this directly. They do so via the banking system, so creating the illusion that it is the banks rather than the government's central bank that has created new money or, rather, new money-tokens.

The government money tree

MMT makes an additional claim that distinguishes it from other money-creationists. They are 'Chartalists' who hold that money did not evolve spontaneously out of trading but that it has always been the creation of a state. This runs contrary to the Classical view that money originated in commodity exchange when one commodity emerged as the 'general equivalent', ie, one that could be exchanged for all other commodities. This was Marx's view too. Coins are issued by states and are (or were supposed to be) a guarantee of the weight of the money-commodity. Coins are indeed the creation of states but the money-commodity is not. Some coins did weigh the stated amount but others were, or came to be, tokens for this, as are all notes and, even more obviously, electronic money.

MMT argues that, because the state can create money-tokens at will, it does not need to tax or borrow to fund its spending. When it wants to spend it can simply arrange for new money-tokens to be created (or 'printed', as it is sometimes anachronistically put) and then spend this; this increases money in the hands of the general public, so stimulating the economy; some of this money can even come back to the state as taxes (if there still are any). Conclusion: the budget doesn't need to be balanced and can be run at a permanent deficit.

There is nothing 'modern' about this theory. People have always wondered why, if something needs to be done, the government doesn't simply create the money to do it. It is not as simple as that as new money-tokens are not new wealth but additional claims on existing wealth, so that if a government were to do this the result would be inflation causing a rise in all prices; even below the level of the full employment of resources the result, after an initial short-lived stimulation of economic activity, would be stagflation. No wonder some people think that MMT stands for Magic Money Tree.

MMT's crisis theory

MMT is not quite that crude and Keen offers a theory of crises based on banks supposedly creating too much money by making too many loans and fuelling speculative bubbles, a purely monetary theory of crises. 'Banks, debt and money', he claims, are 'the main factors that drive economic performance and also cause economic crises' (p. 56). He quotes (p. 84) fellow-economist Hyman Minsky: 'The tendency to transform doing well into a speculative investment boom is the basic instability in a capitalist economy.' There is some truth in this; bank lending does expand in a boom but this is in response to the increased demand for loans from firms wanting to make hay while there is an expanding market, a view banks go along with as they, too, expect more profits to be made of which they will get a share as interest.

Contrary to what MMT teaches, increased bank lending comes from the demand side, not from the banks themselves. Despite Keen's claim, banks seeking more interest from more lending is not what 'drives economic performance'; what does is capitalist firms seeking profits. What causes a boom to bust is overproduction, in relation to its market,



Credit: © Peter Summers/Getty Images

in some key industry, which means that the anticipated profits cannot be realised because not all that has been produced can be sold. Production is curtailed and this has a knock-on effect on the rest of the economy, including the banking sector.

Keen does not think that capitalism's unstable path can be entirely eliminated, only that it can be dampened down considerably:

'While financial instability cannot be wholly eliminated from capitalism..... the most egregious elements of irresponsible bank lending can be addressed by limitations on what banks can be allowed to lend' (p.70).

What he proposes, to remedy this, is some reform to banking law and regulations that would 'constrain or eliminate' banks from 'lending that finances asset price bubbles' (plus a few pet reforms of his own which no government is likely to adopt).

This, he suggests, would be enough to allow another 'Golden Age of Capitalism', as from 1950 to 1973 when there was near full employment, low interest rates and only minor recessions.

Keen's class analysis

That is not to say that Keen is presenting himself, as most bank reformers do, as a conservative out to save the capitalist system. He writes that 'to acknowledge that capitalism is a class system is simply

acknowledging a fact' and that 'with a class-based analysis, the consequences for different social classes of different economic policies must be confronted.' (p. 142)

Earlier he had given an example of what he had in mind by class-based analysis when he described how a computer model of the business cycle he had devised worked. His model assumes that normally the share of profits in GDP is 12.9 percent, leaving '87.1 per cent of GDP to be divided between workers and bankers, and it doesn't matter to capitalists how that is allocated between them' (p. 87). So he is positing a three-class system – capitalists, workers and bankers. Here is how his model presents the business cycle starting from the boom stage:

'... [R]ising wage and interest costs ultimately mean that the profits expected by capitalists when the boom began are not realized. The increased share of output going to workers and bankers leaves less than capitalists had expected as profits. Investment falls, the rate of growth of the economy falters, and the boom gives way to a slump. The slump reverses the dynamic that the boom set in motion, but doesn't quite reverse the impact of the boom on private debt... The recovery from the crisis thus leaves a residue of unpaid debt. The profit share of output ultimately returns to a level that once again sets off another period of euphoric expectations and high debt-financed investment, but this starts

from a higher level of debt relative to GDP than before. With a higher level of debt, the larger share of income leaves a lower share for workers. So the workers pay the price for the higher debt in terms of a lower wages share of GDP...' (pp 87-8).

So, the class conflict in his analysis is between workers and bankers. But the loss to workers is built into his model because it assumes a constant share of profits in GDP. Since the bankers' income (interest) has to come out of profits, the more interest capitalist firms pay on loans the less the capitalists retain as profits. It would perhaps have been more realistic to have assumed a constant share of wages in GDP. That would bring out that what would change throughout the business cycle would be the shares of the capitalists and the bankers, which would be irrelevant to workers as it doesn't matter to them how that is allocated between them, especially as both interest and profits are just a division of the surplus value produced by the workers.

Keen's model is a specious attempt to show that workers have an interest in reducing the income of bankers whereas doing that would benefit only the capitalists. He is in effect asking workers to take the side of the capitalists against the bankers. But why should they as both productive capitalists and bankers are just two sections of the same capitalist class?

ADAM BUICK

British fascists online

A FEW weeks ago, YouTube's algorithms carried me towards some video essays made by the alternative media commentator known as Morgoth. I'd been vaguely aware of Morgoth and similar reactionaries, such as Richard Spencer, Millennial Woes and Keith Woods, for some time, but hadn't paid too much attention to them. After all, I knew that they called themselves 'traditionalists', 'racial nationalists' or 'third positionists' – in a word, fascists – and I only have so much time to devote to the ramblings of people who would happily deport or kill my non-white friends and family. On the other hand, it's good to know your enemies, so I resolved to trawl through some of the videos and livestreams made by Morgoth and his cronies in order to get a sense of what the far right are saying and doing online these days.

Racial nationalists

Morgoth's worldview is a macabre one. In between garbled references to right-wing philosophers, Morgoth rails against the 'liberal elites' and 'globalist' technocrats whom he sees as running the world – all controlled and funded, of course, by rootless cosmopolitans like George Soros. According to Morgoth, these elites are set on crushing the 'Western Spirit', subjecting the population to their nihilistic ideology of hyper-individualism, hedonistic consumerism and, worst of all, racial diversity. By promoting mass immigration and miscegenation throughout the Western world, the elites, according to Morgoth, want to undermine and ultimately eradicate the white native stock. To stop this from happening, Morgoth proposes that whites should unite to reactivate the Faustian spirit of the West by creating a racially pure ethno-state. As he puts it at the end one of his videos: 'We're going to be the masters in our own land again!' (YouTube, 'Roger Scruton & Words of Power').

For obvious reasons, Morgoth never appears on camera. Judging by details contained in his various monologues, he seems to be a Generation X factory worker from North-East England. He has a blog, Morgoth's Review, and a large number of video essays on YouTube and other digital platforms favoured by the far right, such as BitChute and Odysee. He also occasionally pops up as a guest on other so-called 'dissident right' social media channels and has now started to consolidate his oeuvre on his Substack page. His video essays, which are often illustrated by footage or photographs from his countryside walks, address a wide range of topics and Morgoth often sweetens

the red pill of ethno-nationalism with discussions of contemporary popular culture. In recent years, far-right organisers have been using online gaming as a recruitment tool, pipelining young men towards racial supremacism during in-game chats and associated livestreams, and Morgoth himself often combines his political rants with analyses of videogames, fantasy novels, television dramas and films.

Many of Morgoth's videos rhapsodise about the wonders of Nature, although even these are shot through with expressions of hatred towards minority groups. In one video (YouTube, 'A Tale of Two Country Walks'), for example, Morgoth laments that, on a visit to the Norwegian fjords, he was obliged to share his authentic appreciation of the awe-inspiring landscape with 'cripples' and 'fat slob' who were able effortlessly to enjoy the same scenery from the comfort of an adjacent car park. Morgoth's main business, however, is racial hatred and his regular attacks on racial minorities often contain elements of so-called scientific racism or 'race realism'. In a 2017 blog post ('Equality is a Cruel Mistress'), for instance, he cites a table of national IQ rankings to argue that the black Labour politician Diane Abbott, as the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, is too unintelligent to be the Shadow Secretary of State.

Morgoth, and the British far right in general, are obsessed with the so-called 'Asian grooming gangs' that have come to light in English towns such as Rochdale and Telford in recent years. Research produced by the Home Office suggests that the sexual grooming of young girls in Britain is not a disproportionately 'Muslim problem', but Morgoth, like other far-right figures in Britain such as Tommy Robinson, talks exclusively about Pakistani men preying on white English girls and defiling the racial purity of the nation. There's an all-too-familiar racist fantasy at work here. In his memoir *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler wrote luridly about the 'satanic joy' of 'the black-haired Jewish youth', who 'lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people'. The image of a racialised Other who enjoys what is rightfully 'ours' and stands in the way of our own satisfaction is deeply imprinted on the fascist imagination.

Paranoid

Indeed, Morgoth, like the rest of the political far-right, is very paranoid. To justify his sense of victimhood,

he conflates completely different traditions of political and philosophical thought into a single straw-man enemy. Liberalism, leftism, postmodernism, neo-liberalism and socialism are lumped together and presented as the more or less interchangeable snares of the Machiavellian globalists. Unsurprisingly, this leads Morgoth into incoherence and self-contradiction; in one video he even makes the bizarre claim that socialists have been responsible for ushering in 'a globalist, capitalist society' (YouTube, 'The Good, the Bragg and the Stormzy').

The question therefore arises: why should we pay any attention to confused bigots like Morgoth? One reason is that there is clearly a receptive audience for their ideas. Research findings published by the organisation Cybersecurity for Democracy last year showed that far-right news stories produce far more user engagement, in the form of 'likes' and 'shares', than other types of online content. Some of the key figures on the far right, meanwhile, have significant numbers of followers. At the time of writing, Morgoth himself has nearly 50,000 subscribers on his YouTube channel. He has also been given mainstream credibility – if that is the right word for it – by featuring as a guest on the podcast of the British conservative hack James Delingpole. In 2019 the singer Morrissey even shared a Morgoth video on his website. All in all, it's a level of exposure that socialists could only dream of. It's therefore worth considering the reasons for the popularity of this type of content.

It has to be said that some of Morgoth's material is quite entertaining. Morgoth can turn a good phrase and knows how to appeal to his listeners' interest in popular culture. In one video, for example, he indulges in a fairly amusing rant against the 90s television chef Jamie Oliver, suggesting that the 'middle-class' neo-liberal multiculturalism that arose in the New Labour years was 'forged in the basket of Jamie Oliver's moped, alongside the quail eggs and Japanese lager' (YouTube, 'Do Millennials Dream of Jamie Oliver's Moped'). This combination of comedic sarcasm and pop-culture awareness gives Morgoth's content a certain piquancy.

Phoney radicalism

Another dangerous aspect of Morgoth's work is its phoney radicalism. Morgoth's philosophical touchstones are the fascist favourites Friedrich Nietzsche, Julius Evola, Oswald Spengler and Martin Heidegger.

But he is canny enough to acknowledge some leftist thinkers, too. In one video (YouTube, 'My Trip Down South') he alludes to Jacques (sic) Deleuze and he often refers to the leftist philosopher Mark Fisher. For example, to support his own critique of cultural decline under neo-liberalism, he draws on Fisher's concept of the 'the slow cancellation of the future' – the interesting claim that cultural innovation has stagnated since the 1990s and that popular culture today is merely recycling the themes and styles of earlier periods.

In fact, like so many fascist writings, Morgoth's musings often appear to be consistent with socialist understandings. For example, he attacks the commodification of human life that capitalism produces (although he contradicts himself by warning white women to be mindful of their declining 'sexual market value', which sounds pretty commodifying to us). He is also critical of contemporary liberal catchwords such as 'white privilege' – as are socialists, since such notions tend to undermine working-class solidarity. Morgoth's critique of Extinction Rebellion (YouTube, 'Extinction Rebellion: Worst Controlled Opposition EVER!'), meanwhile, also has a superficial affinity with socialist arguments. Morgoth makes the point that XR are not a truly radical group and that their demands essentially amount to a call for working-class austerity; again, socialists would be inclined to agree. But Morgoth predictably blames the environmental crisis on overpopulation and ignores the fundamental role of capitalist production and over-production in generating global heating and other environmental threats. In fact, it's not clear whether he even accepts the reality of human-made global heating, as he seems to reject the notion of scientific consensus; when it comes to understanding the coronavirus pandemic, for instance, he places his faith in the mumbo jumbo

of the discredited scientific crank Dolores Cahill (YouTube, 'A Letter From The NHS'). As always, the fascist mind rejects the scientific, materialist analyses of social phenomena in favour of scapegoating and irrational conspiracy-mongering.

As already noted, Morgoth is far from the only racial nationalist at work on the internet today and regular debates among nationalists of various stripes sometimes attract thousands of viewers. And while these men sometimes trade in outright lies and misrepresentations – for example, Morgoth suggests in one video that Marx and Engels might have been funded by the Rothschild banking family (YouTube, 'The People vs The Gammon') – their ideas are often couched in radical-sounding language, providing critiques of capitalism, 'neo-liberalism', consumerism and commodification. This is, of course, the socialism of fools. But what gives far-right ideas their traction and plausibility – at least among some white working-class people – is that they identify and seem to provide an explanation for real problems affecting our class, such as declining living standards and the lack of stable, full-time jobs and affordable housing.

How much of a political threat the far right pose today is another question. On the one hand, as we know, fascism is always over-diagnosed by left-wing commentators. While recent years have seen the establishment of neo-Nazi political organisations in Britain such as Patriotic Alternative, such groups often have a relatively short shelf-life – for example, the English Defence League, which sprang to life in 2009, has been relatively inactive for the last ten years – and some more recent groups, like National Action, have been banned by the state and forced underground. On the other hand, right-wing, authoritarian and often explicitly racist governments have come to power

in recent years in several countries around the world. Then there is the question of far-right violence. Across the world, far-right terrorist attacks have become more common in recent years and are notoriously hard to predict, because their perpetrators have often been 'radicalised' online and are not part of any monitored group.

In recent years, the far right have largely been purged from mainstream tech platforms such as YouTube and Twitter. But it's not clear how effective the censorship of far-right ideologues has really been: it has arguably only pushed them towards the more loosely-regulated 'alt-tech' platforms and handed them a propaganda advantage by allowing them to pose as victims. What we can say for sure is that, from the socialist point of view, far-right arguments need to be combated with better ones. Like all reactionaries, Morgoth is disdainful towards the academic subject of Media Studies (YouTube, 'Clapping for Stalin and The Burnley Banner'); but the popularity of his ideas suggests a need for robust media literacy and political clarity.

Racial nationalism needs to be exposed for the nonsense it is and anybody attracted to it should know that whatever they may claim, Morgoth and his fellow Aryans don't represent the interests of workers in Britain or anywhere else. They claim to be 'traditionalists', but their right-wing brand of identity politics is completely at odds with the working-class traditions of mutual aid and solidarity and with the history of working-class struggle against wage slavery. They also describe themselves as politically incorrect 'dissidents' or the 'dissident right', but in fact they are defenders of the *status quo*. They reproduce the dominant ideology, dividing humanity along national and racial lines and obscuring what almost all of us have in common: our membership of the exploited class.

SH



David Graeber's *False Dawn*

GRAEBER AND Wengrow's new book, *The Dawn of Everything*, is making waves. Its cover may not be sitting, face out, on the shelves of all the high street bookshops, but it is gathering a lot of positive reviews in both the left- and right-wing press. For a book written by a prominent anarchist, getting any reviews at all in the conventional media is quite a feat in itself. So, what is going on? Well, for one thing, *The Dawn of Everything* sets out to challenge the conventional narrative of human origins – or claims that it does. And since the conventional narrative in anthropology is one which, since the 1960s has tended to favour left-wing interpretations of 'human nature', it is no surprise the right has welcomed it.

The Dawn of Everything is a big, fat book, some 500-plus pages in length. It is teeming with fascinating accounts of recent archaeological findings. And it is worth reading for this alone. Anthropologists are not great popularisers of their work, and much of the information contained here is normally only available on the shelves and stacks of university libraries. As the subtitle of their book tells us, however, Graeber and Wengrow (G&W) are not merely interested in informing the public of these new findings, they are attempting nothing less than *A New History of Humanity*.

Their book opens with a historical survey of the way in which the debate about human origins has been framed in Europe. In essence, it's an argument between those who, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, view 'human nature' as essentially co-operative, and our early human relations as egalitarian, and those who, like Thomas Hobbes, regard us as competitive creatures, and conceive of our early existence as a 'war of all against all.' These claims, of course, have distinct political alignments. For left-wing Rousseauists, humanity is best suited to living in an egalitarian society, while for right-wing Hobbesians, no degree of human flourishing is possible without a restraining dominance hierarchy. Numerous variations on these two opposing myths have emerged over the centuries, but they have continued broadly to shape the debate.

Egalitarian hunter-gatherers

In 1966, however, a milestone was passed when the first 'Man the Hunter' symposium of hunter-gatherer specialists was held in Chicago (the name of the symposium

reflected the patriarchal assumptions still prevalent in the anthropology of that time). As researcher after researcher took to the podium, a radical picture of hunter-gatherers began to emerge. Above all, the evidence showed that hunter-gatherer peoples had notably egalitarian features, and there was a subset among them that was hyper-egalitarian in virtually all aspects of their social lives, including relations between men and women. This suggested that humanity itself had egalitarian origins. Within the academic discipline of anthropology, at least, the Hobbesian view of humanity's hierarchical nature and beginnings had been blown clear out of the water.

Around the turn of the millennium, this view of hunter-gatherers was given new theoretical depth by Christopher Boehm in his 1999 book, *Hierarchy in the Forest*. Boehm pointed out that the Rousseauist and Hobbesian narratives both contain elements of truth. Human beings are undoubtedly capable of seeking to dominate others, but they are also innately predisposed to resist being dominated, and wherever possible will band together to repulse those who would subordinate them. In Boehm's view, whether a society became egalitarian or hierarchical depended on whether the material conditions within that society advantaged those with a will to dominate or those who resisted being dominated. Our early societies were egalitarian, he argued, because the conditions they lived under favoured coalitions which could resist domination. One example of such a condition was the invention of projectile weapons which could be used by everyone, large or small, male or female, to undercut the physical strength possessed by alpha males. This resulted in a state of *reverse dominance*, or *counterdominance* as it is now more commonly called.

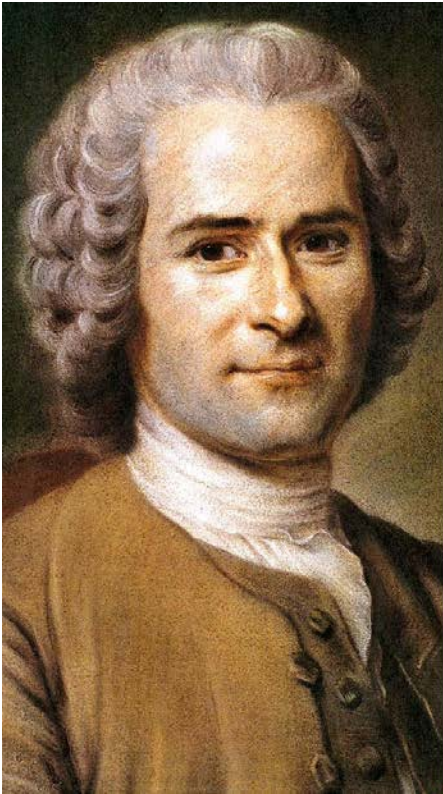
Evolved cooperators

Boehm's argument set the scene for a revolution in anthropology. The next step was taken by Sarah Hrdy, in her ground-breaking 2009 book, *Mothers and Others*. Although Boehm had argued for egalitarianism among males in early human societies, he had made the assumption, common at the time, that in early societies males had dominated females. Hrdy pointed out that there were biological grounds for not taking this assumption for granted. Humans differ from their great ape cousins in one very noticeable respect: they give birth to big-brained

babies. Human brains including the brains of infants gobble up calories at a furious rate, and human children mature slowly, remaining dependent on their caregivers for many years. In the Machiavellian world of our close cousins, chimpanzees, with its alpha males and hostile, shifting alliances, no mother could or would trust her infants to another female and certainly not to a male. In the human world by contrast, mothers could not cope with feeding and bringing up their children alone. If humans were to survive, they would have to develop co-operative childcare arrangements, something we invariably see among egalitarian hunter-gatherer peoples. Among great apes, males are the leisure sex. The only contribution they make to the next generation is a dollop of sperm. In human societies, that was no longer feasible. Mothers needed help from their own mothers and from the rest of society, males and females alike. Humans, Hrdy argued, are evolved co-operators. We co-operate on a grand scale, and this requires the development of a great deal of trust. Numerous evidences that we are biologically wired to coordinate our activities exist. We see signs of it marked on our bodies, in our 'co-operative eyes', for instance. Whereas the eyes of our great ape cousins are round, and the sclera which surrounds their irises is dark, our eyes are almond shaped and our sclera are white. We can see immediately where some other person is looking and therefore what they might be thinking. It is hard for a chimpanzee to read much from the eyes of a rival. Humans on the contrary are extremely good at interpreting other people's thoughts and reactions from their eye movements, a process known as *intersubjectivity*. Research has demonstrated that humans are capable of working out how someone is reacting to the way we are reacting to their reaction.

Strange synthesis

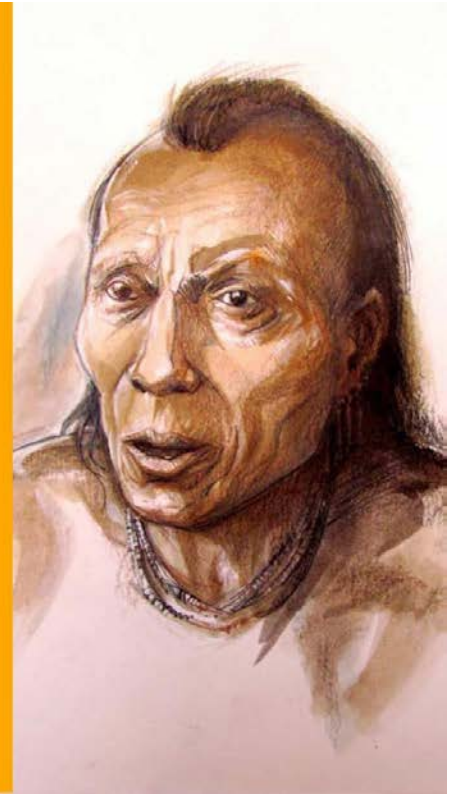
In *The Dawn of Everything* G&W set out to challenge this orthodoxy. Like Boehm, they propose a kind of synthesis between the Rousseauist and Hobbesian myths, but a synthesis of a rather strange kind. They argue that in fact there is no particular way in which our original societies organised themselves, that humans have always adopted a range of different social forms, sometimes egalitarian, sometimes hierarchical, and that we have done so purely out of choice. Graeber, in particular, had long been of the view that conditions



THE DAWN OF EVERYTHING

A NEW HISTORY OF HUMANITY

DAVID GRAEBER AND
DAVID WENGROW



of individual freedom can arise at any time irrespective of the economic context. Similarly he has denied that there exists any such real thing as culture, that there are merely individuals who are free to create their own identities. This suggests that Graeber believed that there was no value in attempting to overturn capitalism, since no society will ever be governed by a single principle. At best we should seek out liberated zones where community can assert itself.

For G&W, however, the ability to choose our own social structures is part of what makes us human. In support of this claim, they make several arguments in the course of their book. They point to a number of groups such as the Inuit that are known to vary their social structures seasonally. During one part of the year, they form hierarchical relationships in which, for instance, women are subordinated to men, and egalitarian ones during another. These relationships, according to G&W are chosen in a playful, carnivalesque spirit.

As an approach to understanding social organisation, this idea has multiple problems. Societies are rarely, if ever, the result of unified or even collective decision making. It seems hardly credible, for instance, that women would have playfully chosen to occupy a role subservient to men, or that one section of society should have placed itself freely and experimentally under the oppressive rule of another. To say that 'society chooses', means, at most, that some section of society with some material advantage over the rest has exercised a prominent influence over social relations. Class societies are cockpits of

competing interests with built-in fault lines, and even classless, egalitarian societies are full of members whose desires and wishes come into conflict with one another.

A second line of argument that G&W advance in *The Dawn of Everything* is that in the last few decades, evidence has been accumulating which challenges the 'standard' view that we had egalitarian origins, or that hierarchical (class) societies emerged only with the onset of agriculture. In particular they turn to archaeological evidence from the Upper Palaeolithic in Europe (approximately 40,000- 15,000 years ago). This evidence includes, for example, the discovery of large-scale 'ceremonial' buildings and a number of 'princely' burials that contain artefacts which would have taken a great many hours of collective labour to produce.

Multiple problems

These arguments should be treated with care. G&W, for instance, have limited their examination of the evidence to only one small part of the globe, to Europe, which is conveniently the only area in which clear evidence for hierarchical society definitely exists during this period. They have also limited their view to the last 40,000 years, a relatively short, and relatively recent, period of time. If we go back beyond this period, evidence that could indicate the existence of hierarchical societies becomes vanishingly rare (which led one critic, Chris Knight, to point out that the book should have been titled *The Tea Time of Everything*). The authors attempt to justify their limited time frame by arguing that evidence before

40,000 years ago is scant and we cannot reliably know what was going on in this period. It is true that archaeologists have less evidence than they would like from before the Upper Palaeolithic, but is not negligible as G&W suggest, and with modern methods of analysis, a lot of information can be gleaned from it. Moreover G&W's argument cuts both ways. If we take the view that the evidence we do have is unreliable, then we certainly can't conclude, as G&W do in one of their most bizarre arguments, that because the physical appearance of individuals varied widely in earlier periods (several human species still existed side by side), we can simply assume that their forms of social organisation were also various and not necessarily egalitarian.

When setting out this evidence for hierarchical societies in the Upper Palaeolithic, the authors are careful not to tell their readers how extensive it is or how it compares with evidence for other forms of social organisation. As their review of it takes up a significant amount of space it is easy to get the impression that it is rather extensive, when in reality this is not the case. Covering a period of 35,000 years, for example, archaeologists have found no more than six 'princely' burials. Moreover, as G&W admit (when they are not directly advancing their claims for hierarchy) the individuals found in these burials show evidence of some sort of physical deformity making them difficult to interpret. It is not possible to conclude with certainty, therefore, that they indicate the existence of hierarchical or class societies at all. The meaning of big

ceremonial buildings is also ambiguous as similar constructions have also been discovered in societies that are at least partially egalitarian.

There is a lot about G&W's arguments throughout *The Dawn of Everything* that doesn't add up. And their book presents other concerns as well. They tend, for instance, to suggest that anthropologists habitually ignore the evidence now available for hierarchical societies in Upper Palaeolithic Europe and cling to older egalitarian narratives. In reality, most anthropologists are very aware of this new evidence and in the last two decades have modified their views to take note of it. They have pointed out, however, that the balance of evidence is still in favour of predominantly egalitarian early societies. Instead of addressing the evidence for this claim, G&W go noticeably silent, preferring instead to poison the well by tossing aside such views as 'Utopian' or as 'Garden of Eden' narratives. Their treatment of Christopher Boehm's *Hierarchy in the Forest*, is an example of their general attitude to the subject. Having presented a positive assessment of his theory of reverse dominance, they feign surprise and confusion at why he, like the majority of anthropologists, should commit to belief in human egalitarian origins. The answer is not hard to find by anyone who wants to find it. In his book, Boehm sets out explicitly the grounds on which he takes this view. As for the extensive work of Hrdy and others on co-operative childcare, G&W hand-wave this away in a single sentence. It is difficult to avoid the impression that the authors are trying hard to present themselves as pioneers, as edgy and iconoclastic rebels against the academic status quo.

Graeber's dismissal of the idea of early egalitarianism is one that has a long history in his writing. Anyone who reads through the bibliographies of his earlier works, for instance, is unlikely to find reference to authors who have pursued this research. He has consistently refused to address it, and is notorious for accusing colleagues who have published reports of their fieldwork on egalitarian hunter-gatherers as having made it all up. At first sight, this seems a curious attitude. Knight has argued that it can be traced back to Graeber's early experience of fieldwork in Madagascar where for specific historical reasons the state had dwindled in significance and self-organising communities had arisen in the interstices. However, a simpler explanation might be that to accept the idea of hunter-gatherer egalitarian origins runs counter to his deeper political instincts as an anarchist. If egalitarianism is only to be found among immediate return hunter-gatherer peoples, then that might suggest (as many right-wing

critics argue) that it is only possible for it to exist in societies organised into small bands and with little property. That in turn implies that it would be impossible to reproduce in more populous societies with large-scale social production. There is no evidence for this claim, but neither is it the real issue. The undeniable fact that egalitarian and hyper-egalitarian hunter-gatherers do and have existed has never been proof positive that a future society of free association and free access is possible. Our knowledge of egalitarian hunter-gatherers has a different value. It reveals to us the material circumstances under which an egalitarian society can function, and this is not an insight to be tossed aside in favour of a rather weak and unproductive theory.

Material circumstances

What egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies show us is that in order for a dominance hierarchy to arise two conditions must be met. The first is that one section of a population must gain a material advantage of some kind over the rest. This could be something as simple as having access to weapons or other means of coercion. The second is that alternative means of satisfying needs must be unavailable. The disadvantaged population then has no choice but to accept the domination of others. Together, these two conditions allow a dominant group or class to stand between the rest of the population and the satisfaction of their needs.

This situation was neatly illustrated in the 1820s by the fate of the unfortunate Thomas Peel, a cousin of the soon-to-be Prime Minister, Robert Peel. As leader of a syndicate of financiers, Thomas proposed to develop a colony at Swan River in western Australia (now the city of Perth). Setting out in 1829 from England he took with him provisions, seeds, implements and other means of production to the tune of £50,000, a huge sum at that time. He also took with him 300 men, women and children whom he intended to employ in the 250,000 acre colony. Once he arrived in Australia, however, Peel discovered that with land and opportunities available, employment seemed less than desirable to his 300 workers and they rapidly decamped to pursue independent lives elsewhere in the colony. As a proponent of colonisation dourly observed, 'Mr Peel was left without a servant to make his bed or fetch him water from the river.'

As Thomas Peel's workers demonstrated, we will often resist the domination of capitalist employment if an escape route is available to us. Hunter-gatherers tend to fiercely resist employment when colonial or post-colonial governments try to impose it on them. Workers too in

early capitalist societies demonstrated the same reluctance to accept wage relations. Thanks to a flourishing working-class press in the eastern states of America during the 'Golden Age' of capitalism, we know how strongly workers resisted capitalist employment and how humiliated and defeated they felt when it was eventually forced upon them.

Capitalism is a clear example of a dominance hierarchy. Ownership and control of the means of production by the capitalist class is backed up by the coercive force of the state. Historically the elimination of forms of subsistence other than employment was achieved by the enclosure of common lands, thus turning peasants into landless labourers. Material conditions thus gave the capitalist class the ability to stand between the working class and the satisfaction of its needs. With no escape routes available, workers today have no alternative but to accept the domination of capitalist relations. For the majority, employment is the only option. A smaller number become self-employed and escape the domination of a human boss, but are still at the mercy of the capitalist market. Fewer still attempt to go down the risky and insecure road of starting a business. A few will succeed and end up dominating others, but most will fail, often with dire financial consequences to themselves and their families.

For the vast majority of us as workers within the capitalist system there can be no escape from a life of domination and exploitation through capitalist employment. We do, however, have a means of escape from the domination of capitalism itself. And that is not because it is in our human nature to be able freely to choose any social system we like, as G&W would have it, but because material conditions at this time allow us a real and sustainable alternative. As members of the working class, we have the option to act consciously and collectively, to challenge the system, to eliminate class society and put an end to the patterns of domination it inevitably entails. A society of free association and free access is within our grasp- if we choose to reach for it.

HUD

Watch:

- A lecture given by Camilla Power providing an evolutionary perspective on the origins of egalitarianism (bit.ly/3rqCMGX).
- The first of a series of videos critiquing *The Dawn of Everything* in great detail (bit.ly/3jKKzv2).
- A lecture given by Jerome Lewis on a group of contemporary egalitarian hunter-gatherers in Africa (bit.ly/3rv0z8D).

Mutual Aid

A RECENT edition of the BBC Radio 4 programme *In Our Time* featured a discussion on the Russian anarchist Peter Alekseevich Kropotkin. The focus was not primarily on his political advocacy, rather it was his book *Mutual Aid: a factor of evolution* that was the object of consideration.

Published a couple of years before the Socialist Party of Great Britain was founded, it is an examination of the role cooperation and mutuality has played in evolution. There was an aggressive strain of Darwinism, personified by Darwin's bulldog, T.H. Huxley, which emphasised the war of all against all as the motive force behind natural selection.

This view has often been deployed as justification for capitalism being the expression of self-interest as the prime motivation of human economic, political and social relations. It has been a persistent theme, running from Hobbes's *Leviathan*, that seemed to draw biological justification from Darwin's work.

In common parlance, this thinking is often expressed as socialism being a nice idea, but against human nature. If evolution depends on natural selection being driven only by self-regarding motives, then socialists are setting themselves against nature.

Kropotkin however, along with many, many others internationally, insisted that it was this brutalist view that disregarded the actuality of nature. Rather than begin by justifying human potential for cooperation, which might have been regarded as a plea for human exceptionalism, his approach was to examine nature more broadly to see if there was evidence of mutuality being fundamental.

His was no sentimental view of nature, as is demonstrated in the opening lines of the Introduction. 'Two aspects of animal life impressed me most... One of them was the extreme severity of the struggle for existence which most species of animals have to carry on against an inclement Nature; the enormous destruction of life which periodically results from natural agencies'.

This is the antithesis of unbridled idealism, a realistic view based on his own extensive travels, experience and observation. The second aspect arising from his observations is telling:

'...even in those spots where animal life teemed in abundance, I failed to find – although I was eagerly looking for it – that bitter struggle for the means of existence, among animals belonging to the same species, which was considered by most Darwinists... as the dominant characteristic

of the struggle for life, and the main factor of evolution.'

Then, chapter by chapter, he goes on to demonstrate how it is mutuality amongst animals of the same species that is the primary, and crucial, factor in survival and evolution. He begins with invertebrates and progresses through ants, bees, birds to mammals.

On reaching humans he presents what evidence there is that cooperation in the Palaeolithic period was a necessity for survival in a hostile world, continuing to be so in both the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Primitive communism was not some fancy of Marx and Engels.

He goes on to trace this important feature of human life as it expressed itself, often in adverse political situations, from pre-history into history itself, into the medieval free cities and guilds. He cites examples of insurgent warriors taking land by force who eventually swapped spears for spades and operated cooperative farming communities.

Even in the 19th century he found expressions of mutuality in village communities and the nascent labour movement, although it is through the 19th century and the rise of industrial capitalism that private property became predominant and protected by the state. The mutual gave way to the individual.

While *Mutual Aid* is an anarchist constructing a scientific basis for communism rather than the historical materialism of Marx, the two approaches are surely not exclusive. Marx gives an understanding of how we arrived at the society we have and identifies the mechanism for change, the conscious action of the working class acting on its own behalf. The object being the establishment of a worldwide socialist system based on meeting need not profit. The question as to its viability will undoubtedly continue to be raised until socialism is actually realised.

Kropotkin indicates that rather than being alien to nature, biology demonstrates the contrary. Modern research and observation has found cooperation to be fundamental in nature. Plants provide each other with nutrients, fish groom each other for parasites, ants work together to build nests, bees sacrifice their lives for the good of the hive and predators hunt in packs.

Evolution requires groups of organisms to act together for mutual benefit. In 2016, research using a new conceptual evolutionary model at Tomsk State University was published. Competition and the struggle

for existence were found not to be the main drivers of evolution. Rather, the avoidance of competition is important (bit.ly/3xkTOK9).

So, Kropotkin is vindicated by research in the land of his birth, as well as research more widely throughout the world. His own book refers to many researchers and observers from a plethora of nationalities, just as he draws evidence from every continent. By doing so he not only makes the case for mutuality, but also demonstrates human progress to be a global phenomenon, as socialism, as the practical realisation of mutuality, must be.

This book review might seem to be 120 years late, but not so. There is an abiding interest in the premise of Kropotkin's argument and it continues to have a resonance for those advocating a radical alternative to capitalism.

Eighty years after *Mutual Aid* was published Stephen Jay Gould's essay (1988), *Kropotkin Was No Crackpot* (marxists.org/subject/science/essays/kropotkin.htm) examines the controversy around the meaning for society of Darwinism at the turn of the Twentieth century.

Gould expresses how seemingly contradictory positions do not have to be polarised: 'Reproductive success ... works in many modes. Victory in battle may be one pathway, but cooperation, symbiosis and mutual aid may also secure success...'

He goes on to outline Kropotkin's work, setting it in the mainstream of Russian thinking as exemplified by N.I. Danilevsky whose expertise in both population dynamics and fisheries led him to critique Darwinism as '...the credo of a distinctly British 'national type' as contrasted with old Slavic values of collectivism.' The 'national type' he referred to was the line of thought running from Hobbes through Adam Smith to Thomas Malthus, the developing philosophy of capitalism.

In September 2021, to mark the centenary year of his death, PM Press/Kairos published a new edition of *Mutual Aid* with a new Forward, Introduction, Afterword and Postscript. Some of the terminology is anachronistic – references to savages and red Indians – but it is of its day. When he uses such nomenclature, it is not to disparage, rather to show mutuality to be universal.

Those who would change society need to counter assertions rendered as indisputable facts, such as competition is fundamental to human nature. What *Mutual Aid* demonstrates, along with subsequent biological research showing cooperation at the cellular level is vital for organic development, is that advocacy of a system based on people voluntarily contributing their abilities so all can receive according to their needs is not utopianism, but natural. Mutual aid indeed.

DAVE ALTON

Something – a lot – for Nothing

RISHI SUNAK, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, cannot be pleased. It seems that his political rivals have been using his wife – the daughter of one of India's richest capitalists and a capitalist in her own right – to sabotage his political career. It is true that there is something incongruous about a rich politician presiding over the pain, in terms of higher gas, petrol and diesel prices, that the government has decided is worth workers paying as a result of their sanctions against Russia.

The media and the Labour Party made great play of the fact that Sunak's wife was a 'non-dom', someone whose tax domicile is another country and so who can pay taxes there rather than here, in her case India where they are lower. But which state – India or the UK – she pays taxes to is irrelevant from the point of view of those who work for wages. What is relevant is how she gets her income in the first place.

According to the BBC, 'She owns £700m in shares of the Indian IT giant Infosys, founded by her father, from which she received £11.6m in dividend income last year.' (bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-61045825)

£11.6 million a year is £233,077 a week,

without having to do anything, not even these days to clip coupons. Who said the idle rich no longer exist? But where does it come from?

The immediate source is the dividends on the £700 million's worth of shares in the capitalist enterprise founded by her father. But where did the wealth of that company come from? According to the company's website:

'From a capital of US\$250, we have grown to become a US\$106.44 billion company' (infosys.com/about/history.html)

Maybe, but how did that happen? It will be a typical story.

Infosys was started in 1981 by a group of software engineers. In 1992 it became a public limited company. The following year it was 'floated', selling shares in it to outside capitalists and financial institutions. These will have invested their money with a view to obtaining a share of future profits while the company used the money to expand its activities.

For the first few years the original founders would have worked hard to build up the business, though \$250 would not have taken them very far; they would have had to borrow more from somewhere, even if from their friends and relatives but more likely a

bank. When they had acquired enough they could begin to take on employees. These too would work hard but, unlike the founders, would not have benefitted fully from their work; a part of the value they added would have gone to the company as profits, most of which would have been re-invested to expand the business.

As the business expanded the original capital made up a smaller and smaller part of the total capital which would have been built up out of the profits produced by the workers and by invested outside capital (built up too out of the profits of other workers).

So, the Chancellor's wife's wealth comes from the exploitation of workers. The dividends that enable her to live an idle life of luxury come from the same source. They are a pure property income, what the tax authorities in Britain used to call 'unearned income' – before they realised that 'unearned' could mean 'not earned' and so be interpreted as 'ill-gotten'. It's an income that she – and others like her – get just because they have titles of ownership of means of production and to a share of the profits their operation by wage-workers brings.

That's the scandal, not that she played the system to pay less tax.

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Four Sale

ANY CELEBRATIONS planned by Channel 4 to mark its upcoming fortieth birthday are likely to be clouded by its future as a state-owned broadcaster being in doubt. The channel which has brought us *Big Brother*, *Bake Off*, *Brookside* and *Brass Eye* is the most prominent of the 12 run by The Channel 4 Television Corporation, with others including Film4, E4 and streaming service All 4. Its content, which aims to be edgier and hipper than that of the BBC, ITV and Channel 5, isn't made in-house, but by profit-seeking companies such as Endemol Shine UK and All3Media.

The Channel 4 Television Corporation is a statutory corporation, which means that its remit is decided by an Act of Parliament. On 4 April the government announced its intention to privatise the corporation, which would require a change in legislation, with its sale to the highest bidder expected in 2024. The government's stated rationale is that a privatised Channel 4 would have more freedom to make money, with the implication that this will improve its programming. The previous Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Oliver Dowden explained this in true Tory style: 'There are constraints that come with public ownership, and a new owner could bring access and benefits, including access to capital, to strategic partnerships and to the international markets. Private investment would mean more content, and more jobs' (tinyurl.com/puun7a93).

This is a u-turn from the government's stance in 2016, when the then-Secretary of State Karen Bradley agreed with a report from the House of Lords which said 'We are concerned that, notwithstanding assurances given at the point of sale, a private owner may seek to dilute Channel 4 Corporation's public service remit in future, in order to maximise profit' (p.4, tinyurl.com/26k45c7t). The change in policy is apparently due to shifts in the media landscape since 2016, particularly the rise of video-on-demand services. On 4 April current Secretary of State Nadine Dorries posted on Twitter 'Government ownership is holding Channel 4 back from competing against streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon'. This isn't really an equal comparison, as streaming services don't broadcast news, which is one of Channel 4's most popular products, but they are all competing in the overall media marketplace. Channel 4, along with other traditional broadcasters, is steadily losing viewers to the trendy streaming services. Consequently, the adverts which interrupt its shows have fewer viewers, and so the cost of advertising drops, which reduces its

income and therefore its reserves needed to buy programmes.

This is a threat to Channel 4 because nearly all its funding comes through selling advertising slots. Although this wasn't known to Nadine Dorries, who during a meeting of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sports Select Committee in November 2021 wrongly assumed that Channel 4 was funded by 'public money', and when she was corrected responded with 'And... so... though it's... yeah and that' (tinyurl.com/2p8a5m6e). Dorries' credentials for overseeing the nation's culture were previously demonstrated by her eating animal genitals during her appearance on *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!* which led to her breaking the MPs' code of conduct and being suspended from the party whip.

Channel 4 is in a confident position financially, reporting a record pre-tax surplus in 2020.

Despite the market shifting towards streaming services, Channel 4 is in a confident position financially, reporting a record pre-tax surplus in 2020 (tinyurl.com/4hrzakwv). Media analysts Enders have estimated that the channel could be sold for between £600m and £1.5bn (tinyurl.com/yc76h7fa) to whichever hungry buyer wins the eventual bid.

Many people are against Channel 4's potential privatisation, including its bosses. Chair Charles Gurassa said that its board has 'serious concerns that the consequences will be very harmful, both to the UK's creative economy and to the choice and breadth of distinctive British-made content available to UK audiences' (tinyurl.com/yckd26yc). The National Union

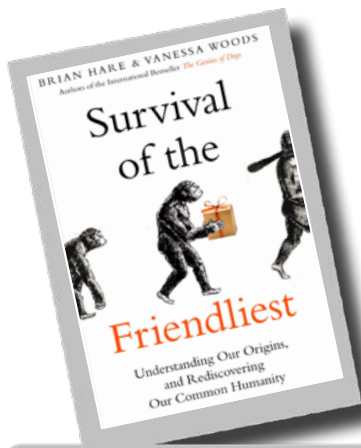
of Journalists and opposition parties don't support the sell-off either, with Liberal Democrat culture spokesman Jamie Stone saying 'This government seems hell-bent on trashing this uniquely British legacy and undermining jobs and investment in the creative sector' (tinyurl.com/mem434kt).

With the criticism has come speculation on the political reasons behind the planned sale. Jeremy Corbyn tweeted on 5 April 'The Tories want to privatise Channel 4 to shield themselves from accountability and drag the UK's media landscape even further to the right. If Channel 4 falls into the hands of billionaire barons, the establishment moves closer to freedom from scrutiny at the expense of truth'. Channel 4 News has a reputation for being critical of the government, so the argument is that privatisation will stifle this. Previous Minister of State for Media and Data John Whittingdale said 'This is not motivated in any way by a political agenda or ideology. It is about sustaining Channel 4 and making sure that it has a viable future' (tinyurl.com/yc3xunss). But there is an ideology involved, that of believing that organising production is best left to the dynamics of the capitalist market. Those opposed to privatisation are concerned that increasing the extent to which market forces affect the channel will damage programmes which have less potential to be profitable, such as the news and niche drama. Where they're mistaken is in assuming that the channel is sufficiently protected from market forces by remaining state-owned. Whether Channel 4 is 'privately' or 'publicly' owned, its output is still produced by companies motivated by profit, and shaped by commercial interests, such as the rise and fall of viewing figures representing changing consumer levels and therefore income. And even while the channel is 'publicly' owned, the public doesn't own it in any practical way. Channel 4 already runs according to what's in the interests of media companies, which privatisation would only reinforce.

MIKE FOSTER



Friends for Life



Brian Hare and Vanessa Woods: Survival of the Friendliest: Understanding Our Origins and Rediscovering Our Common Humanity. Oneworld £10.99.

The title is a reference to the ‘survival of the fittest’, Charles Darwin’s alternative formulation of the idea of natural selection. This raises the issue of how fitness is measured: it is sometimes seen as a matter of physical strength, intelligence and power, and some racists even regard it as a justification for white supremacy. Here, however, Hare and Woods argue that it is friendliness and co-operation that have led to humans’ evolutionary fitness. The argument is in some ways similar to that of Rutger Bregman in *Humankind* (discussed in the May 2021 *Socialist Standard*), though the evidence here is more based on human (pre)history and psychological experiments, rather than discussion of human behaviour in the real world.

The essential concept here is that of self-domestication: ‘natural selection acted on our species in favour of friendlier behavior that enhanced our ability to flexibly cooperate and communicate ... we thrived not because we got smarter, but because we got friendlier.’ Female preference for male friendliness is claimed to have caused a friendlier society to evolve. Other human species besides *sapiens* went extinct since they could not co-operate and communicate in the same way. Friendliness resulted in larger social networks and hence better technology, which meant bigger groups and even better technology, in a positive feedback loop. Human self-domestication happened before eighty thousand years ago. Dogs and bonobos are also ‘built for cooperative communication’, but chimps are not.

However, there is a negative side to the formation of larger groups of people: outsiders can be treated with fear and even aggression. They may even be dehumanised, considered less than fully human, and simianised (looked on as

similar to apes). This occurred as part of the justification for the slave trade, and one recent study of Americans found that Muslims were regarded as only 90 percent fully human by the group tested. Dehumanisation seems to be central to explaining why some people do terrible things, along with obedience to authority and a desire to conform (note that all this is in the context of a society that sets people against each other). But contact with other groups reduces conflict, by removing the sense of threat and increasing empathy.

Unfortunately among this presentation is a truly bizarre claim that ‘communists’ (who support ‘extreme forms of egalitarianism’) and anarchists are dehumanisers. Naturally no explanation or justification is offered for this.

On the whole, though, this is a worthwhile account of aspects of human evolution, where co-operation and friendliness have played a crucial role in making modern-day humans such an intelligent and technologically-advanced species, with the potential to live in a world of equality where all needs are met.

PB

Marxist Anti-Bolshevik



World Bolshevism. By Iulii Martov. Translated by Paul Kellog and Mariya Melentyeva. AU Press, Edmonton, Canada, 2002.

When in 1938 *International Review* published, under the title *The State and the Socialist Revolution*, a number of essays written by Martov in the years 1918-1921 (he died in 1923) the translator omitted the first section. The whole collection had been published in Russian, in Berlin in 1923, under the title “Mirovoi bol’shevizm” (World Bolshevism). This explains why Martov has come to be called Julius, the German equivalent of Iulii (or Yuliy), his first name in Russian.

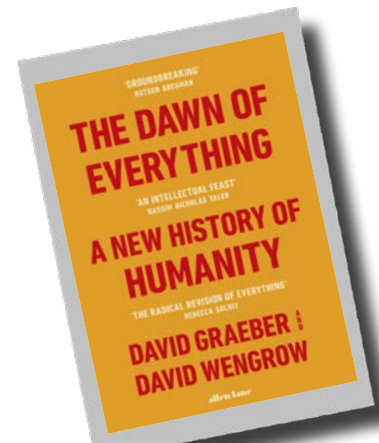
The whole collection has now been published in a new translation with an introduction by Kellog. In the missing

chapters Martov advanced the view that Bolshevism was popular amongst large sections of the working class outside Russia because they had been brutalised by serving as soldiers during the war, hence their belief in violent direct action and contempt for traditional working class institutions and activities (reformist parliamentary action and trade unionism). The newly-translated chapters don’t add much, in terms of Marxist analysis, to the points made in the parts that have been available in English since 1938. In any event, by 1921 the Bolsheviks had abandoned advocating an immediate armed insurrection in favour of electing left-wing governments, which brought them a different following.

As a further dissemination of Martov’s Marxist criticism of Lenin and Bolshevik ideology the new translation can only be welcome.

ALB

How did we get stuck?



The Dawn of Everything. A New History of Humanity. By David Graeber and David Wengrow. Penguin. 2022. 720 pages.

This is the last book written by the anthropologist David Graeber, in conjunction with the archaeologist David Wengrow. It aims to set out a new theory for the pre-history of humanity, and in particular, takes aim at theories of the ‘origin of inequality’. The authors claim to be bringing together facts and ideas that have been coming out of their respective disciplines, and bringing them together to see what the new picture is.

They take aim at unidirectional ideas of social evolution: such as band to tribe to kingdom to empire. They also claim to rebut any notion that scale and social complexity inevitably lead to domination. The central strand of their narrative is that the idea of a lapsarian fall from original equality itself stems from attempts to rebut critiques of European civilisation made by North Americans, for example,

the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia, who are reported as saying of the French in 1608: 'you are always fighting and quarrelling among yourselves; we live peacefully. You are envious and all the time slandering each other; you are thieves and deceivers; you are covetous, and are neither generous nor kind; as for us, if we have a morsel of bread we share it with our neighbour.' The authors argue it was through debates with American interlocutors that Europeans began to grapple with the notion of inequality in the first place.

Their argument runs that these critiques stung, to the extent that, by the mid 18th century, European writers had to recuperate them, and the strategy was to invent the idea of the noble savage: that free and equal societies were a sign of inferiority, where everyone is equally poor. The evolution of society and social complexity brings forth the differentiation and inequality, inevitably.

This book argues that, in fact, there is no basis for such an assumption. The authors cite the emerging archaeology from Ukraine and its environs to show how millennia before the first cities known to history, regular mega sites can be identified where thousands of humans would gather, and build together. They conjecture that these may have been seasonal gatherings (such as the evidence suggests happened at Stonehenge), bringing together people from vast areas.

The argument runs that people could cycle through different political structures, depending on the time of year, gathering in winter, in conditions where some would hold authority, to scatter in the summer to looser organisations. The authors present evidence within recorded history of some groups doing something like this, up to the point where people took up different names and identities within each season. They suggest that these 'hospitality zones' would have been the probable pre-condition for the emergence of the first cities.

They note the absence of indicators of status and authority in Neolithic city formations (and the fact that it seems that the neighbouring tribes, in fact, developed aristocratic traits before the cities). They examine the notion of schismogenesis (something which people on the left would be quite familiar with) wherein groups of people define themselves in opposition to other groups. They note, for example, in North West America, some groups of foragers value wasteful and spectacular consumption, whereas their neighbours consciously espouse frugality.

They argue, that despite a similar mode of production, their cultures are different, because they oppose each other, although it is arguable that if one of those groups is using slaves, then that constitutes a different mode of production: but then, their central point stands that in that case it is still a

conscious choice of the other tribe to not adopt slave taking as a way of living.

Likewise, they note that the invention agriculture, which in some people's arguments leads to social stratification does not in fact seem to have in fact done so. They note that the agricultural revolution itself took thousands of years, with societies 'play farming': cultivating crops as part of a broader strategy of hunting and foraging, without becoming entirely dependent on their crops for survival. Agriculture remained a choice, and the relative social arrangements around it likewise for millennia. Agriculturalists and non-agriculturalists lived side by side in that time.

The authors discuss the operation of a "baseline" communism which applies in all societies; a feeling that if another person's needs are great enough [...] and the cost of meeting them is modest enough [...] then of course any decent person would comply'. This baseline is moveable, and they note, for example, the rights and hospitality of the 'baseline communism' of North American tribes, compared to that of French colonists which formed part of the debates mentioned above. Human societies for millennia have thus oscillated around those freedoms and baseline levels of communism, producing many and varied social forms, not 'in conditions of their own choosing', without being stuck with them.

The question for Graeber and Wengrow is, then, how did we end up stuck in one of them? They analyse three forms of domination: control of information, violence and charisma. They present evidence from ancient cultures which demonstrates that early domination was usually a combination of two of these three factors, and it was only later that elites could combine all three. They note evidence of some tribes, for instance, where the king was known to be highly dangerous, and could order anyone put to death, but pretty much only if they were in the same room as him, and a few miles away he could be safely ignored.

They note that there have been many discoveries of palaeolithic burials with highly valuable grave goods inside, with the bodies posed. They note, however, many of those bodies exhibited unusual physical characteristics (being unusually tall, or short, or deformed). These individuals were in the first place seen as unusual within the tribe. They describe how in known societies, such as that of the Nuer, highly eccentric characters were tolerated and respected within the tribe, "when calamities or unprecedented events occurred [...] it was among this penumbra [of unusual people] that everyone looked for a charismatic leader appropriate to the occasion'. Prominent people could emerge without becoming a permanent part of the

social logic of those early cultures.

They look for the process of getting stuck in the notion of care surrounding these unique individuals. They note that chiefs had a duty of care for the sick, the orphaned, the widowed or anyone else who had no-one to look after them. They could 'take refuge in the chief's residence', this would form the nucleus of a paternalistic relationship, also providing the chief with henchmen and people outside the normal social structures to do their will. They note the culmination, which seems to be ubiquitous in societies with monumental kingship, of a point at which all of those expected to care for a king are entombed with him: slaughtered at his death.

They have an entire chapter dedicated to claiming 'the state has no origins', in which they argue that many different forms of human society can exist, with differing degrees and modes of domination, and it is just as futile to look for an origin of the state as for the origin of inequality. They expressly argue that humans have the political skills and wisdom to imagine their own societies, and not simply react to their circumstances. They suggest a sort of 'play kingship' might well have prefigured the emergence of the real thing.

They note that signs of bureaucracy actually predate the existence of cities, and record keeping (in the form of clay tablets and seals) may in fact have been part of an active attempt to prevent new emerging technologies from creating social hierarchies. As with the principle of care, above, this system was ripe for subverting, and the abstraction and equalisation involved became a powerful tool for later rulers to subvert the village organisation and subsume it into an empire.

The overall thrust of this book is hopeful, it allows us to think about how vast cities of humans could have been run without a state or a ruling bureaucracy. They note that human communities in America, during the Hopewell civilization, were able to live without any signs of warfare: 'for a period of about five centuries or more, human remains across the whole of Eastern North America display remarkably little evidence of traumatic injuries, scalping or other forms of interpersonal violence'. That such evidence exists both before and after this period shows how humans at that time were capable of abolishing war.

Likewise, as they note: 'slavery was most likely abolished multiple times in history in multiple places'. The whole thrust of the book is that the unexplored myth that there was some fall from grace, that size complexity leads to domination are simply ideological presuppositions that rob ancient humanity of agency, and create a straightjacket around trying to think of new ways of running our world today.

P.S.

Conference Report

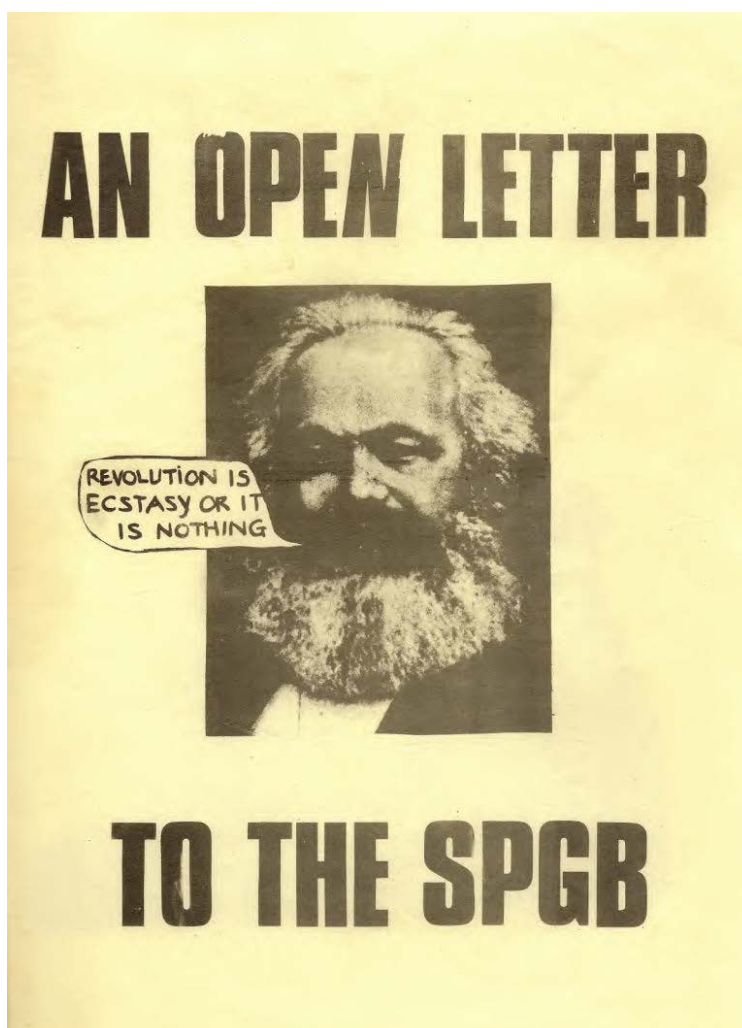
THE 1972 Annual Conference of the Socialist Party of Great Britain was held at Conway Hall, London, over Easter and was attended by delegates and visitors from many parts of Britain. Among the resolutions passed were ones criticising the format of the *Socialist Standard* for being too formal, calling for consideration of publishing *Russia 1917-67* in German and committing the Party to contesting at least one seat in every General Election. (...)

At one point the proceedings were undemocratically interrupted by a group calling themselves “the London Situationists” who noisily stopped a discussion on the need to develop Marxist theory in order to hand out *An Open Letter to the SPGB*. This turned out to be a peculiar amalgam of Freudian pseudo-psychology (both Marcuse and Reich, despite their opposing views), some organisational ideas and an ill-informed criticism of our policy of conscious political action, via the ballot box and Parliament, to establish Socialism. The organisational criticism boiled down to saying

that the time was not yet ripe for a formal, centralised socialist group, while the political criticism failed to take into account that the Socialist Party has never said that the establishment of Socialism involves just a few million X’s for Socialism followed by a parliamentary resolution. We have always said that Socialism can only be established by a conscious, participating working class organised not only politically to capture and destroy the State machine but also outside parliament ready to take over and run industry and society generally.

The best—and most readable (most of it is written in mock political French)—part of the document which called for “the automated economy of abundance” was clearly influenced by our thinking anyway. Unfortunately, though they will the end they don’t will the means. The spectre of the Russian Revolution still haunts them: their alternative of our policy is “workers’ councils”, i.e. soviets!

(*Socialist Standard*, May 1972)



Obituary Keith Powell

In late February, I received the sad news that our comrade Keith Powell had died at the age of 83. Keith joined the SPGB in the early 1980s and was tremendously active in Islington Branch during its period of remarkable growth throughout the 80s. For a considerable time, he served as a very efficient Branch Treasurer. He also became the Party’s Treasurer for a time.

In his advocacy of the case for socialism, he was highly rational and analytical. In his Branch and Party work, he was meticulous, painstaking and thorough. When it came to propaganda activities, Keith was always a keen participant. A regular group of us, including Keith, would often go out selling the Standard, leafleting door-to-door and flyposting all over Islington, in a period when Islington was not so highly developed and we could always find flyposting sites, such as areas with corrugated iron and boarded-up premises. On more than one occasion, we were stopped by the police who, in their concern for private property, forced us to take down our posters. Nevertheless, our posters (both printed and handwritten) were very much in evidence around the area. Later on, Keith moved to the Midlands and

became less active but, according to Beryl, his partner of over 30 years, he remained a convinced socialist and would put the Party case in conversations with friends, family and complete strangers, whenever he saw an opportunity.

He originally trained as a chemist and then got involved in food analysis. He was enthusiastic about many technical subjects, particularly electronics, and later he worked for BT as an engineer. Keith was very much ‘old school’ when it came to repairing equipment rather than slavishly following the wasteful capitalist ethos which prefers us to throw things away and buy new to boost company profits. Knowing this, back in the 80s, I asked him to fix my prized electronic typewriter which had broken down. I looked on in admiration as he meticulously dismantled it, then used a soldering iron to carry out a skilful and careful repair and then reassembled the machine, thus giving it a whole new lease of life.

I have many fond memories of Keith and I very much enjoyed his company, although I had unfortunately lost touch with him some years ago. Beryl tells me he had battled against prostate cancer for the last 10 years but up until the Covid period, they had enjoyed regular walking holidays together. As for me, I will remember him as a highly esteemed, hard-working comrade.

CHRIS DUFTON

World Socialist Movement Online Meetings

To join Discord contact the
Administrator on
spbg.discord@worldsocialism.org.

MAY 2022 EVENTS

World Socialist Movement online meetings

**Sundays at 19.30 (IST) Discord
Weekly WSP (India) meeting**

**Sunday 8 May 11.00 GMT + 1 Zoom
Monthly Central Branch meeting**

Anyone wishing to join in should contact:
spgb.cbs@worldsocialism.org to arrange an invite.

**Fridays 19.30 GMT +1 Discord
Regular Discussion meeting
(except 27 May)**

**Sunday 29 May 11.00 GMT
+ 1 Discord
Regular last Sunday of the
month Discussion meeting**

Socialist Party Physical
Meetings

**Saturday 7 May 3pm to 9pm
Red & Black Clydeside**
The Clubroom, Centre for
Contemporary Arts,



350 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow G2 3JD
The Socialist Party will have a stall at this bookfair.

**Saturday 21 May 11am to 5pm
Levellers Day, Warwick Hall, Burford (Oxfordshire)**
The Socialist Party will have a stall at this event.

Cardiff: Every Saturday 1pm-3pm (weather permitting)
Street Stall, Capitol Shopping Centre, Queen Street
(Newport Road end).

Glasgow: Second Saturday of each month at

The Atholl Arms Pub, 134 Renfrew St, G2
3AU Let's get together for a beer and
a blether. 2pm onwards. 2 minutes
walk from Buchanan Street Bus
Station. For further information
call Paul Edwards on 07484
717893.

**Yorkshire: Discussion group
meets monthly** either on Zoom
or physical meetings. Further
information:
fredi.edwards@hotmail.co.uk

Declaration of Principles

This declaration is the basis of our organisation and, because it is also an important historical document dating from the formation of the party in 1904, its original language has been retained.

Object

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e. land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the

working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

The Strike

OVER the last two months the University and College Union, which I'm a member of, has been taking strike action against the universities that employ them. This has involved not going into work during the strike periods, not doing any 'extra' work outside the strike periods (action short of a strike) and standing on picket lines holding banners and giving out leaflets to people. In the past, efforts, physical ones sometimes, would have been made to persuade those people not to cross the picket lines. But those days are over, and now it's mainly a question of politely informing them, if they'll listen, why you are striking. The days when postal vans and commercial vehicles would turn away from a picket are also over and now they come merrily through, sometimes hooting their horns in support, but that's the extent of it.

Pensions

The strike in some universities is mainly about changes to pensions (in others it is more focused on pay, which has fallen significantly in real terms since 2009). University employers are planning to bring in cuts to university employees' pensions in the USS scheme of around 35%. Staff and their unions are resisting this, as workers will naturally try to resist cuts to their living standards, whether in the present or in retirement. Negotiations have been tried but so far failed, so the only weapon workers have left is to withhold their labour, a tactic that can be successful but in this case has not so far brought about any change in employers' intentions. And in the meantime we are losing the pay withheld by those employers for the days we are on strike.

Built-in antagonism

It's not an easy situation, but it's one that's existed for workers ever since the antagonism of interests between employee and employer first started, in fact ever since the capitalist system first existed. And capitalism, in its current more advanced stage, shows no signs of removing that antagonism. Nor can it, because it's an integral part of the system of workers selling their energies to an employer for a wage or salary and pits one's interests against the others. It's true to say, therefore, that the organisations that exist to defend workers' interests, unions, are a necessary feature of capitalism, even if they don't always manage to do that.



We've had no joy in this dispute yet and it may well be that we end up not having any and having to swallow lost pay for time on strike now and diminished pensions later. I hope not of course and it's not always like that when workers go on strike. Sometimes the balance of forces is tilted in the workers' favour, if, that is, they can cause enough disruption to the working of the enterprise they're employed in. And then they might manage to get the pay rise or improved conditions they're looking for and so secure a slightly larger share of the surplus value they generate. And throughout the history of capitalism, workers organising in trade unions has been a necessary and beneficial accompaniment to their struggle to maintain and, if possible, improve their living and working conditions.

Political agendas

What isn't beneficial, however, is when unions get used for political ends by groups who see an advantage in manipulating or controlling them. These are usually Trotskyist groups who work, and often manage, to have influence in trade unions far in excess of their numbers in order to further their own political ends. This usually means urging workers to strike come what may, as a kind of article of faith. They view industrial action as a consciousness-raising operation for workers, as a rehearsal for bigger struggles to come when the vanguard these groups see themselves as will lead the workers to a different society. It's a society in which they see the state as playing an overriding role, and, though they often call that socialism, it bears no relation to the moneyless, wageless and leaderless society of free access to all goods and services that is socialism for the Socialist Party.

And, in the strike I've been involved in, there seems to be a significant number of Trotskyists who've managed to get themselves elected to the National

Executive of the UCU and are seeking to drive an agenda of strikes come what may. And in so doing, though claiming to be Marxists, they ignore Karl Marx's own 150-year old warning that action by unions, though necessary in capitalism, cannot be more than 'fighting with effects... applying palliatives, not curing the malady'. But for the time being union members, including myself, have sufficient hope that this particular strike is happening for the right reasons, has the backing of the majority of members and will not end up being damaging to our interests.

The struggle for money

Time will tell, but one thing is clear. The dispute I have talked about and almost all such disputes are driven by one overriding factor – money. Employers are constantly seeking to find ways of maintaining or increasing the amount of money or profit that their enterprise can yield for them, while their employees, using unions as a means of defence, are seeking to maintain (or even improve) their conditions of work or living standards, and this usually means pressing their employer not to reduce the money spent on them, or indeed to spend more on them in order to improve their conditions of work or give them better pay packets. This is just one of a multitude of ways in which life under capitalism is an ongoing struggle over money – absurd in fact at a point in history where there is sufficient potential abundance for the money and wages system to be abolished on a global scale so that the whole of humanity can do work that truly fulfils them and live fulfilling lives at all levels in a world of cooperative endeavour, voluntary work and free access for all to all goods and services.

HOWARD MOSS