

# socialist standard



May 2011  
Vol. 107 No. 1281  
£1.50

Journal of The Socialist Party of Great Britain - Companion Party of the World Socialist Movement

## Doing the sums



### What happens when capitalism doesn't add up



Re-inventing  
the losers  
page 9



Model  
worker  
page 15



Area 51  
page 18

# socialist standard

MAY 2011

## contents

### FEATURES

<b>Crisis? What crisis?</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Profiting from ill-health</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Capitalism – barrier to useful work</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>What was he fighting for?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>UFOs identified</b>	<b>18</b>

### REGULARS

<b>Pathfinders</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Letters</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Productions Values</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Material World</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Cooking the Books 1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Tiny Tips</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Halo Halo</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Greasy Pole</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Cooking the Books 2</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Reviews</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Proper Gander</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Meetings</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Action Replay</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>50 Years Ago</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Voice from the Back</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Free Lunch</b>	<b>24</b>

### The Socialist Party

52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN

Tel: 0207 622 3811

Email: spgb@worldsocialism.org

Website: www.worldsocialism.org/spgb

Blog: <http://socialismoryourmoneyback.blogspot.com/>

### SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS

should be sent to the address above.

**RATES:** One year subscription (normal rate) £15. One year subscription (low/unwaged) £10. Europe rate £20 (Air mail). Rest of world £25 (Air mail). Voluntary supporters subscription £20 or more. Cheques payable to 'The Socialist Party of Great Britain'.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on **Saturday 4 June** at the address above. Correspondence should be sent to the General Secretary. All articles, letters and notices should be sent to the Editorial Committee.

## Contact Details

### UK BRANCHES & CONTACTS

#### LONDON

**Central London branch.** 2nd Wednesday 6.30pm. Coffee Republic, 7-12 City Road, EC1 (nearest Tube and rail stations Old Street and Moorgate).

**Enfield and Haringey branch.** Thurs 12th May, 8pm. Angel Community Centre, Raynham Rd, N18.

Corres: 17 Dorset Road, N22 7SL. Email: julianvein@blueyonder.co.uk

**South London branch.** 1st Tues. 7.00pm. Head Office. 52 Clapham High St, SW4 7UN. Tel: 020 7622 3811

**West London branch.** 1st & 3rd Tues. 8pm. Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace (Corner Sutton Court Rd), W4. Corres: 51 Gayford Road, London W12 9BY

#### MIDLANDS

**West Midlands Regional branch.** Meets last Sunday of the month in the Briar Rose pub, 25 Bennetts Hill, Birmingham B2 5RE. Tel: Tony Gluck 01242 235615. Email: tonygluck111@btinternet.com

#### NORTHEAST

**Northeast branch.** Contact: Brian Barry, 86 Edmond Ct, Ryhope, Sunderland SR2 0DY. Tel: 0191 521 0690. Email: davejewell@bushinternet.com

#### NORTHWEST

**Lancaster branch.** Meets every Monday 8.30pm. P. Shannon, 10 Green Street, Lancaster LA1 1DZ. Tel: 01524 382380

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

**Bolton.** Tel: H. McLaughlin. 01204 844589

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

**Carlisle:** Robert Whitfield.

Email: rewcb13@yahoo.co.uk  
Tel: 07906 373975

**Rochdale.** Tel: R. Chadwick. 01706 522365

**Southeast Manchester.** Enquiries: Blanche Preston, 68 Fountains Road, M32 9PH

#### YORKSHIRE

**Skipton.** R Cooper, 1 Caxton Garth, Threshfield, Skipton BD23 5EZ. Tel: 01756 752621

**Todmorden:** Keith Scholey, 1 Leevieview Ct, Windsor Rd, OL14 5LJ. Tel: 01706 814 149

#### SOUTH/SOUTHEAST/SOUTHWEST

**South West Regional branch.** Meets every two months on a Saturday afternoon in Salisbury. Shane Roberts, 86 High Street, Bristol BS5 6DN. Tel: 0117 9511199

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

**Luton.** Nick White, 59 Heywood Drive, LU2 7LP

**Redruth.** Harry Sowden, 5 Clarence Villas, Redruth, Cornwall, TR15 1PB. Tel: 01209 219293

#### EAST ANGLIA

**East Anglian Regional branch.** Meets every two months on a Saturday afternoon (see meetings page for details).

Pat Deutz, 11 The Links, Billericay, CM12 0EX. n.deutz@btinternet.com

David Porter, Eastholme, Bush Drive, Eccles-on-Sea, NR12 0SF. Tel: 01692 582533.

Richard Headicar, 42 Woodcote, Firs Rd, Hethersett, NR9 3JD. Tel: 01603 814343.

**Cambridge.** Andrew Westley, 10 Marksby Close, Duxford, Cambridge CB2 4RS. Tel: 07890343044

#### IRELAND

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

**Newtownabbey:** Nigel McCullough. Tel: 028 90852062.

#### SCOTLAND

**Edinburgh branch.** 1st Thur. 8-9pm. The Quaker Hall, Victoria Terrace (above Victoria Street), Edinburgh.

J. Moir. Tel: 0131 440 0995.

JIMMY@jmoir29.freeserve.co.uk Branch website:

<http://geocities.com/edinburghbranch/Glasgowbranch>. 3rd Wednesday of each month at 8pm in Community Central Halls, 304 Maryhill Road, Glasgow. Richard Donnelly, 112 Napiershall Street, Glasgow G20 6HT. Tel: 0141 5794109.

Email: richard.donnelly1@ntlworld.com

**Dundee.** Ian Ratcliffe, 16 Birkhall Ave, Wormit, Newport-on-Tay, DD6 8PX. Tel: 01328 541643

**West Lothian.** 2nd and 4th Weds in month, 7.30-9.30. Lanthorn Community Centre, Kennilworth Rise, Dedridge, Livingston. Corres: Matt Culbert, 53 Falcon Brae, Ladywell, Livingston, West Lothian, EH5 6UW. Tel: 01506 462359

Email: matt@wsmweb.fsnet.co.uk

# Introducing The Socialist Party

The Socialist Party is like no other political party in Britain. It is made up of people who have joined together because we want to get rid of the profit system and establish real socialism. Our aim is to persuade others to become socialist and act for themselves, organising democratically and without leaders, to bring about the kind of society that we are advocating in this journal. We are solely concerned with building a movement of socialists for socialism. We are not a reformist party with a programme of policies to patch up capitalism.

We use every possible opportunity

to make new socialists. We publish pamphlets and books, as well as CDs, DVDs and various other informative material. We also give talks and take part in debates; attend rallies, meetings and demos; run educational conferences; host internet discussion forums, make films presenting our ideas, and contest elections when practical. Socialist literature is available in Arabic, Bengali, Dutch, Esperanto, French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish as well as English.

The more of you who join the Socialist Party the more we will be able to get our

ideas across, the more experiences we will be able to draw on and greater will be the new ideas for building the movement which you will be able to bring us.

The Socialist Party is an organisation of equals. There is no leader and there are no followers. So, if you are going to join we want you to be sure that you agree fully with what we stand for and that we are satisfied that you understand the case for socialism.

**If you would like more details about The Socialist Party, complete and return the form on page 23.**



# socialist standard

MAY 2011

## Editorial

### What then must we do?

MERVYN KING, the governor of the Bank of England, kicked off a speech he gave earlier this year by stealing the words of the 19th century Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy, author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. (The speech is available here: [www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/speeches/2011/speech471.pdf](http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/speeches/2011/speech471.pdf)). King turns the opening sentence of the latter novel to his own purposes, stating that, 'all happy economies are alike; each unhappy economy is unhappy in its own way'. He then goes on to tell us what 'happy' economies look like: they 'combine growth, stability of prices and of the financial system, fiscal sustainability, supply-side flexibility and low unemployment'. He leaves aside the puzzling coexistence of such blessed happiness with historically unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety and depression, and presses on instead to give some of the reasons for the present unhappiness.

One reason we might be feeling glum, speculates King, is that most of us are getting poorer. Real take-home pay has already fallen 12 percent and is likely to fall again in 2011 to 2005 levels. 'One has to go back to the 1920s to find a time when real wages fell over a period of six years,' says King. But this 'squeeze in living standards is the inevitable price to pay for the financial crisis and subsequent rebalancing of the world and UK economies'. Here King inadvertently invokes the ghost of another 19th century radical thinker, but does not mention this one's name: it was Karl Marx who taught us that capitalism inevitably goes through periods of 'rebalancing' (i.e., of restoring profitability by destroying capital and devaluing labour), which inevitably leads to a squeeze in living standards

(for the working class).

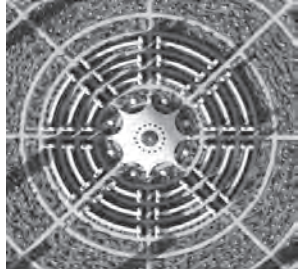
King concludes his speech with Tolstoy's conclusion to *Anna Karenina*. This is that, despite life's ups and downs, happiness is less important than trying to live in the right way. King must have been smugly proud of his intellectual prowess, connecting something as dull as a long speech on inflation with the words of one of the world's best loved novelists. But the result is revealed as putrid when you compare King's intent with that of Tolstoy's.

Tolstoy was disturbed and horrified by the high levels of poverty and misery in the towns of the Russia of his day, and turned his mind to identifying the cause of the misery in his book, "What Then Must We Do?" Tolstoy followed Jesus in arguing that the first thing rich men like himself (and Mervyn King) could do would be to 'get off the backs of the poor' by giving up their own wealth. King misses this advice.

Tolstoy recognized that even such grand gestures of charity would not make a dent in the problem, because the problem is rooted in the whole system of property ownership and money, backed up by the tyranny of the state machine, which Tolstoy said must all be abolished. King strangely missed these lessons too. Tolstoy was on the right lines because he had the courage and intellectual honesty to pursue social problems to the root, and to state his conclusions regardless of the harm it might do to his previously existing beliefs, or social status or wealth. That makes Tolstoy a truth-telling hero. What it makes Mervyn King we leave our readers to decide for themselves.

# Round in circles

EVER SINCE a gaggle of mushroom-intoxicated neolithics first got the idea of piling a big flat stone on top of two uprights people have been having creative ideas about the living spaces of the future. Over the length of social history living spaces have evolved, from medieval all-purpose pens containing bed, hearth, toilet, animals, humans, rats and plague, to the Victorian taxonomic mania for cataloguing and categorising, putting every human function from snoring to shitting to snooker in its own walled chamber. Now things are changing again as central heating and double glazing, as well as a pressure of space and cost, drive a return to more open-plan knock-throughs and multipurpose domestic environments ('The Story of Our Rooms', *BBC Online*, 12 April).



Venus Project circular city

With the high priority now being placed on low-carbon living and low-impact building methods and materials, science is increasingly being designed into planning models. As old structures age and have to be replaced anyway, what if – say the scientists – whole cities could be redesigned to factor in all the

known elements necessary to make them virtually self-sustainable?

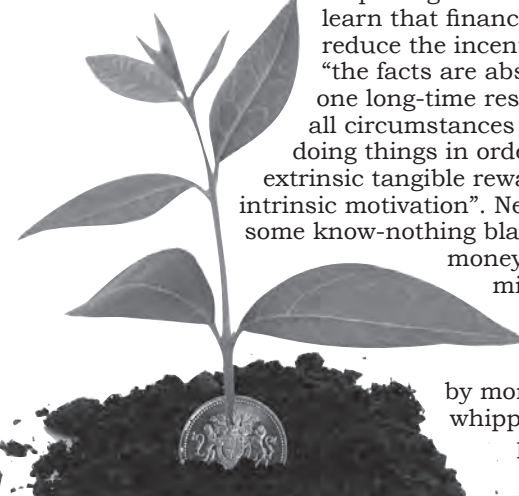
If one were really to rebuild whole cities from scratch, imagine the energy savings. A city like Los Angeles, a chaotic urban mega-sprawl, is a huge energy sink which forces most people to drive miles to their nearest supermarket, and even more miles to work. Rational planning might have optimised all utilities and transport networks into the very crown jewels of ergonomic design. And big cities have their own form of economy of scale, with smaller environmental footprints and higher standard of living per capita than small ones. If one were to pull them down and start again, one could build modular urban centres that were carbon-efficient, pedestrian-friendly, accessible and navigable.

Some planners promote designs for just this (*New Scientist*, 26 March). Zeitgeist's Venus Project is another, 3D rendered attempt. The trouble is, even on the page these symmetrical designs look soul-destroying, like laboratory mazes for lobotomised rats. It's no wonder many Zeitgeist supporters are reportedly in two minds about the idea of self-sufficient

circular cities. Somewhere in the debate about efficiency the human element gets left out. What is beautiful about old cities is their riotous and labyrinthine irregularity, forced on them by the constraints of city walls and overbuilding, as well as their elaborate and artistic but 'inefficient' construction. The more planned a cityscape is, the more dreary it tends to look and the worse it is to live in. Well-meaning but paternalistic experiments in 1950s urban planning gave rise in the UK to the horrors of high-rises and disaffected concrete council estates, with all their attendant social problems, as Lynsey Hanley documents in her entertaining book *Estates: An Intimate History* (Granta, 2007).

Could planners ever plan efficiency to look like Venice or Rouen or York? Does the future always have to look like a plastic Thunderbirds set? Nowadays there is the potential of wiki-citizenry to offer collective input so as to avoid planners imposing antiseptic structures on our aesthetic sensibilities. But this just might mean a committee-designed camel instead of a geek-planned horse. Sometimes there is something human and endearing about organic inefficiency. In socialism there will no doubt be plenty of people calling for large-scale 'social engineering' projects. Let this be the first salvo fired in opposition to such notions.

INTERESTINGLY, GIVEN all the hoo-ha about 'obscene' bankers' bonuses, not many ever question the apparently self-evident truism that money is a great motivator. Socialists have always gone against the commonly received wisdom by claiming that, conversely, money is actually a poor motivator and in many cases no motivator at all. As evidence we cite the voluntary sector, so large that it is known as the 'third sector' of the economy, but then we might be biased given that we propose a social system composed entirely of volunteers. Support however comes from studies which suggest that not only are external motivators like money decoupled from internal ones like interest, commitment or curiosity, they may indeed be inversely related, so that an excess of one can lead to a deficiency in the other (*New Scientist*, 9 April). It is perhaps



surprising and counter-intuitive to learn that financial rewards actually reduce the incentive to work hard, but "the facts are absolutely clear", says one long-time researcher. "In virtually all circumstances in which people are doing things in order to get rewards, extrinsic tangible rewards undermine intrinsic motivation". Next time you hear some know-nothing blather on about how money drives progress, you might point out that the science says otherwise. People are not spurred on by money, they are simply whipped on by fear of poverty.

'OWING TO unfavourable economic conditions the search for the ultimate explanation of life, the universe and everything has been suspended.' Perhaps this is pitching it a bit strong, but with the Large Hadron Collider due to close for a year for extensive repairs you would have thought that this was precisely not the time to be shutting down its nearest and dearest rival, the Fermilab Tevatron. The Tevatron, named because it can accelerate protons up to energies approaching a trillion electron volts or 1 TeV, is supposedly obsolete now because the LHC can manage energies up to 7 TeV. Of course that's in theory. In reality the LHC has only once reached half this energy, has already broken down twice and now is due for another extended pit-stop. Most notably, of course, it hasn't found anything, unlike the Tevatron which last month announced the discovery, to within 3 orders of certainty, of a new particle that may be evidence of a 'fifth force' of nature ('Tevatron accelerator yields hints of new particle', *BBC Online*, 7 April). Meanwhile the famous Higgs, as well as mythical dark matter 'neutralinos' could be lurking out there in any eV range, so even with two colliders operating it would be like two explorers searching for penguins, one in the northern hemisphere and one in the south. Keeping the Tevatron going would cost a measly \$35m – peanuts by their standards – and there's no engineering impediment, but the beancounters have given it the thumbs down. Any socialist comment on capitalist priorities at this point would be as redundant as a Chicago physicist.



## Socialists and War

Dear Editors

The SPGB has opposed all wars. To date my view is that every war the UK has been involved in since WW2 has been unjust. With hindsight do you still stand by your position in the knowledge of what the Nazis did in the holocaust? I'm not trying to catch you out as I find the party interesting but I would just like to know your views on this and whether you think it is ever right to intervene if it is to prevent genocide. Or does it not prevent it?

SIMON O'CONNOR, (by email)

*Reply:* Our policy regarding the wars that capitalism inevitably generates is one of opposition on the grounds that in the modern world wars are fought to defend "vital" capitalist interests – access to sources of raw materials and markets; and to defend strategic points and trade routes. Because we are propertyless members of society we workers have no such interests. It's not a question of "justice" (and

what a weasel word that can be!); it's not a question of "democracy"; it's a question of class interest.

We recognise that Marx and Engels had during their lifetime advocated the use of war as a defensive measure against autocratic and reactionary regimes. Their somewhat romantic view of war ignored the technical developments taking place in the field of armaments. By the turn of the century war had become immensely more destructive. It had ceased to be something remote – it had become "total war" waged on civilians because every worker engaged on the production of mechanised war was now in the front line and everything had to serve war. The destruction of life and property in modern war means that war has become an essentially different thing.

It was in the light of these changes that we adopted the view that war is not an instrument that can be used by socialists or supported by socialists and that democracy could not be defended by fighting. This was the position we adopted in WW2 just as we had done in WW1. Whatever the outcome of wars world capitalism

would remain essentially unchanged. It would still be riven by international rivalries in which national, racial and religious hatreds could be stoked up when the need arose.

In any case democracy in itself cannot solve a single problem of the working class. Democracy for the working class can only be consolidated and extended to the extent that the working class adopts a socialist standpoint. To renounce socialism so that democracy may be defended, means ultimately the renunciation of both socialism and democracy.

Whether we would have decided differently in possible pre-knowledge of the mass murder of European Jews is too speculative a question to be answered definitively—the "ifs" of history are as fascinating as they are futile. That war had its roots in international rivalry. In particular the struggle by two "late arrivals" on the world stage—Germany and Japan—to obtain political and economic position and influence more in line with their economic power and to replace the existing world order

**continued on page 22**



### PRODUCTION VALUES

*A sideways glance at capitalism through some of its products. This month: the laptop.*

ONE OF the more vociferous cheerleaders for capitalism and the wonders of the market system (though he seems to have been a bit quieter on that score in recent years) is Thomas L Friedman. Most famously he is the author of the spurious Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention. This is the theory that no countries which both have a branch of McDonalds have been at war. (That this unlikely theory has – on numerous occasions – in fact been found to be false does not seem to have caused him to review the theory).

In his book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Friedman exalted in the very piece of equipment he was typing his book on. His laptop then, was held up as the epitome of all that is wonderful about capitalism. After all, it comprised hundreds of different parts and sub-components – themselves the product of highly complex production processes and resources from five continents – all magically transported around the world and assembled together in a dozen countries before finally pitching up at his local store when he went to buy it to write his latest masterpiece.

The laptop I am writing on however is no less amazing. While opposed to capitalism, we socialists shouldn't be afraid of acknowledging how massively complex, sophisticated and impressive is global production and distribution inside capitalism. Indeed it is thanks to the increase in the productive forces of capitalism that we can even consider socialism and production for use to be a practicable next step is human social organisation.

Many ideological defenders of capitalism (and not just Friedman) extol the wonders of the market system as it (apparently) enables all the right bits and pieces to be brought together with just the right timing, to be assembled and placed onto the store shelves. Indeed many members of the working class – who oth-

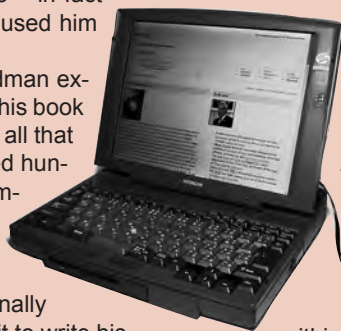
erwise may have no real enthusiasm for capitalism itself – can feel daunted by the argument of socialists that we should do away with the market system as a means for matching supply with demand.

Of course this fear is to a large part a consequence of the great big convenient untruth that has underpinned debates about capitalism and socialism for almost a century now: specifically that the centralised planning of the soviet union is the only alternative to the market system, and somehow has something to do with socialism.

In fact, World Socialists have no time for central committees or 5-year plans. We are opposed to the market system whether it is supposedly "free" or restricted, and whether it is regulated or not. In many ways socialism will be far more responsive to real human needs and genuine preferences. Production decision-making inside socialism – both qualitative (ie how will this be produced?) and quantitative (how much?) – will be far less centralised than the soviet version of capitalism and arguably even "western" capitalism.

We would argue that we can retain much of the (apparently) chaotic, networked decentralised production decisions that are present within capitalism. We should not be daunted by the complexities of industrial production. We can do away with the overarching profit logic of the market, and at the same time have confidence that individual human beings will still express their self-defined needs by going to the local store and taking what they want without the rationing system of money and price. And thereby they – not some planning committee – will enable the dauntingly complex production arrangements that end up in the laptop I am writing this on. Rather than a tribute to the mysterious work of some "invisible hand", the laptop – like so many products – is a testament to the ingenuity of real, co-operative human hands.

**Next month: we shine a light on the crazy world of diamonds.**



THE EXTRACTION, transport and burning of fossil fuels – oil, gas and coal – are directly responsible for widespread environmental devastation. The struggle over control of these resources has also long been a major cause of international conflict.

But let's look to the future. The shift to a "clean energy economy" based on solar, wind and other renewable power sources has finally begun. True, it is too slow and too late to avert some disasters arising from climate change. All the same, surely there is reason to hope that renewable energy will eventually bring us relief from war and pollution?

Not necessarily. Sun, wind and tides are hardly in short supply, but there are certain areas where conditions are best for harnessing their power. It is conceivable that conflict will arise over control of these areas.

## Rare earths

A more immediate issue concerns some of the material resources required to generate renewable energy and produce machines that run on such energy. In particular, our masters are currently very worried about ensuring adequate and stable supplies of the 17 elements known as "rare earth metals". Due to their special properties, these metals have numerous crucial uses in high-tech industrial, medical, scientific, military and computer equipment. Their "clean energy" applications include the manufacture of magnets for wind turbines, energy-efficient fluorescent lamps, and batteries for hybrid and electric cars.

The metallic elements themselves are not all that rare in the planet's crust, but they are highly dispersed. It is the soils (earths) containing concentrated mineral ores that are relatively rare, though they have been found in several parts of the world, such as South Africa, India, Vietnam, Australia and North America. Currently, however, China has a near-monopoly on the extraction of rare earth metals, controlling about 95 percent of global supply – and for certain elements over 99 percent.

## Potential for conflict

In September 2010, China suspended exports of rare earth metals to Japan after a Chinese trawler fishing in disputed waters in the East China Sea collided with Japanese Coast Guard vessels and its captain was detained. He was soon released and exports resumed. The incident prompted hack Paul Krugman to castigate China as a dangerous and irresponsible "rogue economic superpower" (*New York Times*, Oct. 17).

More significant is the long-term trend for China to place increasingly strict limits on exports of rare earth metals to all countries. In 2009 it became known that the Chinese government was planning to ban exports of five especially rare elements altogether. Under strong pressure from Western governments and corporations, the ban was replaced by annual quotas. Despite the accusations that China is exploiting its



near-monopoly to bully other countries, its main reason for restricting exports is probably a desire to give priority to satisfying rapidly rising domestic demand, fuelled by China's own technological development. The US and other countries have responded to the situation by urgently exploring and developing alternative sources of supply. Nevertheless, there is clearly a growing potential here for international conflict (whether involving China or not), especially as the shift to the "clean energy economy" gathers pace.

## Toxic sludge

The mining and processing of rare earths is an extremely dirty process. Refining them to extract pure metals requires the use of toxic acids. Ores are often radioactive due to the presence of uranium and thorium. The disposal of toxic waste is an enormous problem. Almost half (45 percent) of the current world output of rare earth metals comes from a mine in the town of Baotou Obo, part of the larger mining district of Baotou in Inner Mongolia. Baotou is right on the Yellow River, on which much of North China depends for water. The Baotou section of the river is already contaminated with copper, lead, zinc and cadmium (Fan Qingyun et al., *Chemical Speciation and Bioavailability*, June 2008). The waste from the rare earth metal mine in Baotou Obo – a radioactive sludge laced with toxic compounds – is pumped into a reservoir (10 square kilometers in area) surrounded by an earthen embankment. If (when?) there is an accident similar to what happened in October 2010 in Hungary, where another reservoir of toxic sludge burst its banks, this mass of poisonous goo will engulf local residents and pour into the Yellow River, further enriching its chemical composition.

## Not so clean

On close examination, therefore, the "clean energy economy" turns out to be not so clean after all. Renewable energy may still be a big improvement on fossil fuels, but in itself it will solve neither the problem of war nor that of environmental devastation. What will be the policy of socialist society regarding the use of rare earth metals? What will be done with the waste? Or will people somehow manage without these substances?

Socialism will mitigate the problem in a number of ways. Less material will be required because there will be no built-in obsolescence: equipment will be made to last for very long periods. And, of course, there will be no production of military equipment. Without the imperative to maximise profits, much higher priority can be given to protecting the environment.

Yet mitigating a problem is not the same as solving it. What if the supply of a certain material is essential to the satisfaction of human needs, but no technical means can be found of extracting it without serious harm to the environment? Even the people of socialist society are likely to find themselves facing hard choices.

STEFAN



## Organised waste

LAST SEPTEMBER the French Friends of the Earth published a study of "L'obsolescence programmée". In his 1960 book *The Waste Makers* Vance Packard mentioned Brooks Stevens, a well-known industrial designer of the time, as one of those favouring the practice. In the February 1960 issue of *The Rotarian* Stevens quoted from the *Weekly People*, the paper of the SLP of America:

"But there is another form of waste that is deliberately planned by the capitalists, and which the outspoken among them openly admit is essential to their prosperity. It is called planned obsolescence, or forced obsolescence. This consists of a deliberate scheme, carried out by means of advertising and product design, to persuade people to become dissatisfied with what they have purchased a year or two ago, and to throw it away before it is worn out."

He replied that obsolete items such as cars were not in fact thrown away but were bought by people who couldn't afford to buy a new car. His other argument was that it provided jobs. As he had already claimed in 1958: "Our whole economy is based on planned obsolescence, and everybody who can read without moving his lips should know it by now. We make good products, we induce people to buy them, and then next year we deliberately introduce something that will make these products old fashioned, out of date, obsolete."

Stevens had a point about cars and to some extent about some other goods such as fridges, washing machines and TV sets, but that some people are so poor as to have to rely for basic appliances on second-hand, shoddy stuff is itself a criticism of capitalism. According to the French study, some new goods are not much better:

"The search for a low price takes place to the detriment of the solidity and quality of appliances. This is flagrant for other current consumer goods such as textiles, but also affects household electrical appliances: some drums in washing machines are not made of metal today but of plastic, which increases their fragility."

This provides a clue about why capitalism has recourse to "planned obsolescence". It's to provide cheap goods for wage and salary workers so as to keep wages down. To argue that "our whole economy is based on planned obsolescence" is wrong. The organised waste that planned obsolescence represents does take place under capitalism and the fact that it does is part of the case against capitalism, but capitalism is not kept going by repeat sales of goods consumed by workers.

In fact capitalism is not kept going by consumer demand at all as this is only a consequence of what does keep it going – the accumulation of capital out of profits extracted from wage-labour and converted into money through sales on a market. Consumer demand represents for the most part what workers and their dependents are able to buy out of their wages and salaries, and goes up and down with the level of employment which in its turn depends on capital accumulation.

There is no technical reason why solid and reliable electric and electronic appliances with easily changeable and compatible parts and able to incorporate innovations could not be produced. Industrial designers would surely love to do this but under capitalism it is the marketing department that calls the shots, as what is being produced are not simply products to be used, but commodities to be sold on a market with a view to profit.

## PUBLICATIONS ORDER FORM

### PAMPHLETS

	Price and Qty
An Inconvenient Question: Socialism and the Environment.....	£2.00 x _____
What's Wrong With Using Parliament?.....	£1.00 x _____
Ecology and Socialism.....	£1.00 x _____
From Capitalism to Socialism: how we live and how we could live....	£1.00 x _____
Africa: A Marxian Analysis.....	£1.50 x _____
Socialism as a Practical Alternative.....	£1.00 x _____
Some aspects of Marxian Economics.....	£2.00 x _____
How the Gods were Made.....	£1.50 x _____
Marxism and Darwinism by Anton Pannekoek.....	£1.50 x _____
How we Live and How we Might Live by William Morris.....	£1.50 x _____
The Right to be Lazy and other articles by Paul Lafargue.....	£2.00 x _____
Marxism Revisited.....	£2.00 x _____
Socialist Principles Explained.....	£2.00 x _____
The Market System must Go! Why Reformism doesn't work.....	£2.75 x _____
<b>All the above pamphlets (25% discount).....</b>	<b>£15.00 x _____</b>

### BOOKS

A Socialist Life by Heather Ball.....	£3.75 x _____
Are We Prisoners of our Genes?.....	£4.75 x _____
Socialism or your Money Back.....	£1.00 x _____
<b>All the above books and pamphlets (25% discount).....</b>	<b>£20.00</b>

### x \_\_\_\_\_ DVD

Capitalism and Other Kids' Stuff.....	£5.75 x _____
Poles Apart? Capitalism or socialism as the planet heats up.....	£5.75 x _____

**TOTAL** .....£ \_\_\_\_\_

All prices include postage and packing. For six or more of any publication, reduce the price by one third.

Return this form along with your cheque or money order to:

**The Socialist Party of Great Britain, FREEPOST, London, SW4 7BR, United Kingdom.**

(No postage necessary if mailed within the UK)

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

City.....

..... Postcode.....

County.....

PHONE (optional).....

E-MAIL (optional).....



## Putting the Heart into a Heartless World.

SOCIALISTS UNDERSTAND why people accept religious ideas. What can be hard to understand though is the irrationality of some of the beliefs, or what they will do to back them up.

The idea of sin for example. As far as Christianity is concerned we are all sinners. By design. We're born with it, whether we want it or not. We were created, apparently, by a god who wants us to be good, yet programmes us with 'original sin' at birth. It's all to do with Adam and Eve eating that apple in the Garden of Eden.

(But if god is all-knowing he must have known that Eve was going to eat the bloody apple - even before he created her. Why didn't he create her with a bit more will-power?)

When it comes to wacky irrationality though, few are more irrational than Terry Jones in Florida. Jones is the Christian pastor, you remember, who put a Koran on trial in his church. After an eight minute hearing he found it guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to be executed - by being burnt. He has announced his plans to put the prophet Mohammed (who died in 632 AD) on trial next.

The outcome of this (at the time of writing) was that after 2 days of rioting in Afghanistan by Moslems who, in protest of Jones antics, decided to take revenge on Westerners, more than 20 innocent people have been killed (2 by beheading) and numerous more injured. Hopefully the Christian and the Islamic gods will be satisfied with the blood sacrifices made to them so far.

On a happier note it's recently been announced that a thorn from Jesus Christ's crown held at Stonyhurst College (a Jesuit Boarding school in Lancashire) whose previous owners include King Louis IX of France and Mary Queen of Scots is to be displayed at the British Museum.

We know it's a genuine thorn because according to the Catholic Encyclopaedia "two holy thorns are at present venerated, the one at St. Michaels Church in Ghent, the other at Stonyhurst College both professing, upon what seems quite satisfactory evidence, to be the thorn given by Mary Queen of Scots to Thomas Percy Earl of Northumberland".

"Quite satisfactory evidence" you see. You can't argue with that.

The thorn from Stonyhurst College, which is displayed in its own casket, comes complete with a string of pearls (also once owned by Mary Queen of Scots) entwined around it - well you understand, it's not just any old thorn - will be on display at the British Museum from 23 June until 9 October.

If you are unable to get there you may like to console yourself by taking advantage of The Socialist Party's special offer. -

Anyone taking out a subscription to the *Socialist Standard* this month will be entitled to a free whisker from Karl Marx's beard. Like the Catholics and their thorn, we "profess upon what seems quite satisfactory evidence" that our supply of Charlie's whiskers are genuine.



## Tiny Tips

Ever wonder what \$60,000 jeans feel like? You'll never know. Because you didn't buy that \$60,000 pair of Levis 501s from 1890 -- the most paid for a pair of jeans, ever. Here are the most expensive items ever sold -- the record-setting car, baseball card, toy, and even tooth:

<http://tinyurl.com/3ltfsxs>

UK Uncut doesn't have leaders, hierarchy, a PR firm or funders, yet in six months it has changed the face of British politics:

<http://tinyurl.com/5t3vnf8>

The state that infamously hosted the Scopes Monkey Trial more than 85 years ago is at it again. Yesterday Tennessee's General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a bill that would make it easier for public schools to teach creationism. The bill would require educators to "assist teachers to find effective ways to present the science curriculum as it addresses scientific controversies." It lists four "controversies" ripe for pedagogical tinkering: biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning. "This is part of a long held creationist strategy," says Steven Newton, policy director for the National Center for Science Education. "By doing everything except mention the Bible, they are attacking evolution without the theology."

<http://tinyurl.com/6kvkdfp>

In a PPP poll released Thursday, a 46% plurality of registered Republican voters said they thought interracial marriage was not just wrong, but that it should be illegal. 40% said interracial marriage should be legal:

<http://tinyurl.com/3cuyeh1>

A 14-year-old Bangladeshi girl, Hena, allegedly was ambushed when she went to an outdoor toilet, gagged, beaten and raped by an older man in her village (who was actually her cousin). They were caught by the wife of the alleged rapist, and the wife then beat Hena up. An imam at a local mosque issued a fatwa saying that Hena was guilty of adultery and must be punished, and a village makeshift court sentenced Hena to 100 lashes in a public whipping:

Her last words were protestations of innocence. An excellent CNN blog post, based on interviews with family members, says that the parents "had no choice but to mind the imam's order. They watched as the whip broke the skin of their youngest child and she fell unconscious to the ground." Hena collapsed after 70 lashes and was taken to the hospital. She died a week later, by some accounts because of internal bleeding and a general loss of blood. The doctors recorded her death as a suicide. (Women and girls who are raped are typically expected to commit suicide, to spare everyone the embarrassment of an honor crime.)

<http://tinyurl.com/4ouztpq>





# Re-Inventing the Losers

ONE YEAR after That Election, the wretched group who are no longer entitled to be known as Honourable Members Of The Most Exclusive Club In The Land have had time to adjust to their new, cruel reality. Time to accept that they are no longer waved through a doorway by a smiling policeman. To bravely suffer an unaccustomed lack of interest in them by the media. To contemplate a life made unbearable without the weekly session of verbal hooliganism called Prime Minister's Questions. To manage their homes, gardens and the like without support from a self-designed, self-regulated expenses system. To re-invent themselves in a new, bitterly unforeseen image reminding them of those other, unexciting people who voted for them to manipulate their lives in the name of democracy, justice, equity...

## Widdecombe

Some of these victims of the voters' verdict will have clearly had difficulty in rebuilding their self-esteem but this has not been so for Ann Widdecombe, because she slipped away from Westminster without waiting for an election. Which is not to say that her re-invention has been any less grotesque. Widdecombe sat for Maidstone, later Maidstone and The Weald; before that she had tried for the candidature in Burnley and Plymouth Devenport. During the Thatcher governments she was, famously, Minister of State for Prisons under Home Secretary Michael Howard. She quickly assured herself of a welcome from the more apoplectic of the Tory rank and file by calling for zero tolerance for cannabis users, opposition to equal rights for gays and defending the policy of shackling pregnant women prisoners when they were in hospital. More controversially, in the Tory leadership election of 1997 she denounced Michael Howard as having "something of the night" about him. Her meaning was not entirely clear but she provided a lot of material for cartoonists eager to depict Howard as a sort of vampire – which may have helped towards him coming last in the contest.

## Leadership

In fact Widdecombe herself had something of a bumpy relationship with the post of Party Leader; having failed in 2001 to raise enough support among MPs for her own bid she switched her support to a succession of other failures – Michael Ancram (Michael Who?), Ken Clarke, Liam Fox, David Davis. When David Cameron, as the new Leader, was keen to prove his credentials as a new broom or breath of fresh air or whatever, announced a more equal "A List" of parliamentary candidates she opposed this as "an insult to women". Having at first declared, in October 2007, that she would leave the Commons at the next election she soon experienced so dramatic a change of mind that she allowed herself to stand for Speaker of the House in the vote to replace the serially unpopular and questionable Michael Martin. Eventually, to widespread relief, she did retire at the 2010 election,

selling her homes in London and Kent and moving to a house on Dartmoor.

## Media

So – after all the strident hard-lines, diversions, backtracking...there was clearly some need for Widdecombe to demonstrate that there was another person, a reinvention of the MP, within her. Much of that person has, disconcertingly for those who admired her for being above earning any money in such a way, sprouted in the media – where they obviously can recognise a good profitable thing when they see it. She has been an agony aunt in the *Guardian* (which must have caused some hiccups at many a suburban breakfast table) and for both BBC television (Ann Widdecombe to the Rescue) and ITV. She took part in Celebratory Fit Club as both a competitor and a judge and she is a columnist in the *Daily Express*. But the height – or should it be the depth – of all this, in terms of her exposure and the public response, was on the hugely popular *Strictly Come Dancing*. The news that she was to be a contestant in this programme provoked much ribaldry in many a saloon bar, on the theme of speculating about which male partner would be patient and strong enough to twirl someone of her build around the dance floor. To prolong the amusement there were enough viewers, perhaps of the same cussedness as Widdecombe herself had relied on to get her through her career, to repeatedly vote against the judges to keep her dancing. Until December that is, when matters got rather serious and, shrinking from the prospect of voting her into the final, they ended it all.

## Agency

But it does not follow that her re-invention is at an end; that she will sink quietly from sight. She can be engaged for some kind of public appearance through the Gordon Poole Agency and Talent Bureau – who will gladly let you know how available she is for whatever exposure you have in mind and what it will cost you. For the right sort of money she may even tell you what she thinks of it all now, of her devoted preparations for a political career, her change from being an agnostic to a Roman catholic, her hopes of becoming leader of her party and then of the House of Commons itself. It does not make a pretty story.

But the capitalist system with its contradictions its anarchy its impoverishment and diseases is not pretty. The spectacle of cynical politicians presenting themselves in what they hope will be the most effectively deceptive way is stunningly ugly. And if Widdecombe ever gets to reflect on her political career, driven as it was by her abrasive eccentricity and dogged ambition, she might devote a word or two on how it all says as depressingly much about those who were captivated by her as about herself.

IVAN



# Crisis?

## What crisis?

*There is no crisis. That deserves to be said twice. There is no crisis. What happened in Japan was a crisis. Haiti was a crisis. What we have is a failure of mathematics – the mathematics of greed.*

**W**e as a society have never been so productive, and we have never had such wealth available to us, as we have today. Our ability to produce has grown faster even than is needed to provide for longer and happier lives. Think what has supposedly caused this crisis. Too much was produced. In particular, too many houses were produced for poor Americans. We had not yet produced enough for our whole community, but we were doing well – all too well.

What happened? Building workers were stopped from building. People living in good houses were thrown out of them, and the houses left to become derelict. Across the world, workers who were producing wealth for their communities were stopped from doing so, by being thrown out of work; and then we were all forced to live on less.

Why would something so crazy happen? Because production is not for use, it is for a profit. No work is allowed to take place, no houses can be lived in, no food and drink can be consumed, before first one person makes a profit out of another person's work. The basic matter of producing wealth and consuming it is interrupted until first those who claim to own what we all have made in the past, can profit from what we all make now. We are bought and sold: but whereas once we were bought and sold for a lifetime, now it is by the hour.

As workers we all, if we are lucky, have enough to live on, to tide us over when we are ill or unemployed, and to provide some care for when we can no longer work. That is all. Some are more comfortable; some live on far less, or are crushed by debt. And this brings us to the point: indebtedness. What we produce as a community is taken

from us and held by a few. Since we do not own the means to support ourselves, we have to work for these people, in effect paying off the loan of the very things that we and our forebears made. We are like indentured workers, who contract a large debt and are left paying it off for years, decades, except in our case it is our entire lives.

As for students – students are getting indentured servitude for real. Many will retire before ever paying off their debts incurred before even starting work. Slave-owners across the ages would applaud such an ingenious scheme.

The answer to this is twofold. Firstly, as trade unionists, we must resist any attempt to make their problem, our problem. We are able to produce quite handily for ourselves; if the equations of capitalism – the trade in our lives – no longer make sense, then that is a matter for the economists. Our demand here remains a fair day's pay for a fair day's work – that means at the very minimum the maintenance of pensions as they stand and yearly increases in wages at a minimum in line with RPI – along with compensation for the years of restraint that we have had. At all levels, the workplace, the national negotiating bodies, even government, we should turn round and say that we are producing very well, thank you very much, there is no real crisis, and they should put their house in order at their own expense, not ours.

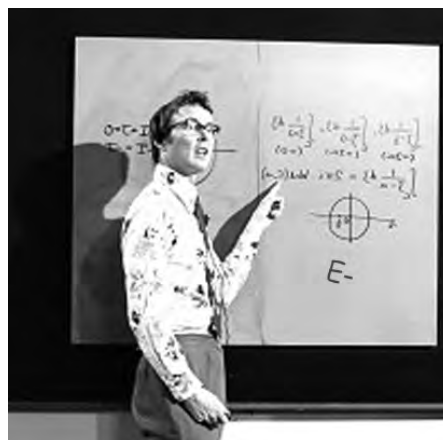
Secondly, we should take this as an object lesson. There is no fairness here, only the war of a small group of people against the entire community to control all of its wealth and keep us poor unless we do as we are told and hand over the large part of what we produce to them for their own entertainment



and to keep us further indebted in the future. It is not a government that needs to be overthrown; it is a new and refined system of slavery, where we are bought and sold by the hour because of the fact that we do not own the things we produce.

All of this will happen again, and again, and again: debt is to us what shackles are to the slave. Capitalism must be abolished, in order for us to do the simplest of things which is to produce and consume in our communities, free from fear and free from exploitation. The equations that hold us in thrall must be overthrown in our minds, and then we must overthrow those who keep us in those mental chains. That doesn't just mean a new capitalist government, no matter how well-intentioned: it's not 'a fair day's pay for a fair day's work'. It's the abolition of the wages system, not in the future, but now; we already produce more than the capitalists can handle, and we can do far more for ourselves. They need us. We don't need them.

**SJW**



**Above: crises in Japan and Haiti, and a failure of mathematics**

## What is CAPITALISM?

Some people associate capitalism just with the sort of financial wheeling and dealing that goes on in places like Wall Street and the City of London. Others – supporters as well as critics – see it as private enterprise and a so-called free market as markets free from state interference and regulation. In fact, this is probably the most widespread definition of capitalism.

The trouble with this definition is that it means that capitalism has never existed or has only existed as a policy or policy objective (ironically, to be implemented by the state). But markets have never existed without state intervention. Capitalism finally triumphed only through state intervention and is maintained by this. Capitalism and the state go together, they are not opposites.

Capitalism is more than financial dealings, a government policy or private enterprise or legal private ownership or private enterprise. It's a way of producing and distributing wealth which has two key, defining features.

First, that the actual production of wealth is carried out by people hired to do this for a wage or a salary. Capitalism is production by wage-labour. (Which already presupposes a division of society into those who own and control the means of production and the rest of us who don't.) Another name for capitalism is that it's the wages system.

Second, capitalism is not just a system of production for sale on a market. It is a system of sale on a market with a view to profit. It's the profit system.

Capitalism is the wages-and-profits system.

It's the pursuit of profits by separate competing enterprises that drives the capitalist economy, but this is not just to provide the owning class with a privileged lifestyle. Not even mainly. The economic forces unleashed by the competitive struggle for profits mean that, if they are to stay in the race for profits, capitalist enterprises must invest most of their profits in new, more up-to-date and modern productive equipment so as to try to keep their costs equal to or below those of their rivals.

So, most profits have to be accumulated as more capital. This is why capitalism was originally called capitalism. It's a system of capital accumulation out of profits made by exploiting wage-labour, an impersonal economic mechanism that in the end is not controlled by anyone (not even capitalists) and is in fact uncontrollable.

# Profiting from ill-health

The coalition government's plan to allow more profit-seeking enterprises to provide health care has stirred up controversy and opposition. But despite the NHS huge profits have long been made out of health provision.

In 2002 it was estimated that the joint profits of \$35.9 billion amassed by the ten pharmaceutical companies that featured in the Fortune 500 were \$2.2 billion more than the profits of all the other 490 businesses put together. So there's plenty of money in drug-dealing. Here's what some of the top dealers pocketed in earnings in 2007 (source *FiercePharma*):

1. Miles White - Abbott - \$33.4m
2. Fred Hassan - Schering-Plough - \$30.1m
3. Bill Weldon - Johnson & Johnson - \$25.1m
4. Bob Essner - Wyeth - \$24.1m
5. Robert Parkinson - Baxter - \$17.6m

The sale of drugs has a relatively short history when it's compared to our

own history. For tens of thousands of years we experimented with the raw materials that are freely found in nature and form the basis of the modern day pharmaceutical industry. It is recorded that pharmacists in Baghdad opened the first pharmacy in 754. This spread throughout the Islamic world and into feudal Europe. As capitalism developed out of feudalism so too did the health business. By the early 20th century the strong had been gradually eradicating the weak leaving the nucleus of today's most powerful pharmaceutical companies.

The mass production of drugs arose from the discovery of insulin in the 1920s and later of penicillin. Wealth, through surplus value, was accumulating in to the hands of the capitalists who owned and controlled these companies. Trade was well on its way to becoming global, and capitalists in Europe and North America must have realised that they had found their own gold mines.

The minor companies that entered the market were continuously swallowed by the major ones via mutually beneficial partnerships, corporate buyouts, mergers and takeovers. The City as ever eased the way, greasing its own palm in the process, so that the global manufacture of drugs is now dominated by a handful of cartels.

*IMS Health* (7 September 2009) estimates that the value of the global pharmaceutical market in 2010 is expected to exceed \$825 billion, and is expected to expand to \$975+ billion by 2013. Capitalism's drug dealers will salivate in anticipation. Only the naive and the ideologically handicapped believe that trade under capitalism is not synonymous with corruption. Once money enters into any transaction, principles, no matter how well-meaning, get undermined. And the drug trade is no exception.

**Theft:** Israeli bio-technology

company Nogdan Immunochemicals Ltd patented a technology that can almost immediately detect any current disease and forecast the probability of disease in the future. The sharks circled Nogdan in September 1995, through the agency of Biosite and Epimmune. And, with the active complicity of an Israeli attorney and two leading academics, conspired to steal the patent. They went on to sign deals with the top drug cartels such as Monsanto, Novartis, Merck and Co., Searle GD, Elan, Pharmacia, Human Genome Sciences, IDM, and others, for the use of the patent. Billions of dollars in profits have already been generated by these companies. And it has been estimated that over the next ten years hundreds of billions of dollars more will be added to their balance sheets ([chemeuropa.com/news/](http://chemeuropa.com/news/)).

**Bribery:** Remember the scare stories that flooded the media in 2008/09 about H1N1; a global flu influenza. A report published by the *British Medical Journal*, reveals the hidden links that made the *World Health Organisation* [WHO] declare H1N1 a pandemic. The result was billions of dollars in profits for vaccine manufacturers. "Several key advisors who urged the WHO to declare a pandemic received direct financial compensation from the very same vaccine manufacturers who received a windfall of profits from the pandemic announcement... All the kickbacks were swept under the table" ...the "WHO somehow didn't think it was important to let the world know that it was receiving policy advice from individuals who stood to make millions of dollars when a pandemic was declared" ([jmbblog.com/2010/06/h1n1-and-who-scandal/](http://jmbblog.com/2010/06/h1n1-and-who-scandal/)).

**Murder:** "During the meningitis epidemic in Niger in 1995, over 50,000 people were inoculated with fake vaccines, received as a gift from a country which thought they were safe. The exercise resulted in 2,500 deaths. Of the one million deaths that occur from malaria annually, as many as 200,000 would be avoidable if the medicines available were effective, of good quality and used



correctly" (WHO, 2003 FS 275).

On 9 March 1983, a Peter Lumley, spokesman for the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), was pleased to inform *Guardian* readers "that drug companies now average a 22 per cent rate of return from the NHS". Twenty plus years later that figure has hardly fluctuated. Between 1988 and 2008 according to *Prescriptions Dispensed in the Community, England: Statistics for 1998 to 2008*, prescription items increased by almost two thirds. In 1998, the net ingredient cost of all prescriptions dispensed was £4,701.5 million. In 2008 The net ingredient cost of all prescriptions dispensed was £8,325.5 million.

Unsurprisingly, *Daily Telegraph* readers discovered in 2004 that "The Royal College of General Practitioners has accused drug companies of 'disease-mongering' in order to boost sales...says the pharmaceutical industry is taking the National Health Service to the brink of collapse by encouraging unnecessary prescribing of costly drugs...The college lists hypertension, high cholesterol, osteoporosis, anxiety and depression as examples of common conditions that, in mild forms, are often inappropriately treated with drugs" (29 August 2004).

Conflicts emerged when Richard Ley, a spokesman for the ABPI, said: "It seems odd for this criticism to come from the Royal College of all organisations, because a decision on when and how to treat a patient is the doctor's." And the conflict continues according to the same article: "Some observers are also worried about "hard-sell" methods applied to general practice. Last year, a survey of 1,000 GPs published in the *British Medical Journal* found that those who saw drugs-company representatives at least once a week were more likely to prescribe drugs that were not needed."

Then there's the *Observer* (29 June 2003) quoting Glasgow GP Des Spence who "had started an advisory post, which meant he influenced prescribing practices for half a dozen local practices, when he started receiving invitations to meetings abroad, 'endless' lunches and dinners and offers of substantial fees for lectures and chairmanships – and felt he was finally getting the recognition he deserved. That is until his wife made him realise that he was just being used and manipulated by big pharma, that it was the patients they were interested in, not me'." He underlined this by claiming that "GPs who see drug reps at least once

a week are more likely to prescribe drugs for conditions that will probably clear up on their own".

Even if your GP has the best of intentions and closes the surgery door to the drug rep (pusher) the drug cartels still influence events, the *Observer* reported, because:

"around half of postgraduate education for doctors is funded by industry. And around two-thirds of clinical trials in Britain are funded by the pharmaceutical industry. A new study shows that such research is four times more likely to be biased in favour of the product belonging to the sponsors than independent studies... Equally worrying, medical experts featured in press coverage of the latest pharmaceutical breakthrough or disaster could well have been 'recruited and trained as opinion leaders to speak on behalf of the sponsoring company.' says the BMJ."

The state has devised new roles for doctors in line with their ideological aims. In March last year Yvette Cooper, then Work and Pensions Secretary under the Labour government, notified us that more than 500 doctors are to be mobilised to assess whether the 2.6 million people on incapacity benefit are capable of work. That's 500 doctors removed from the work that they swore by the Hippocratic oath to undertake. And later in the year that the Coalition's Health and Social Care Bill will allow doctors to take control of a huge slice of the NHS health budget in England, which for 2010-11 is forecast to be just under £110bn. A bait that will have the drug cartels smiling confidently. Or perhaps it is being too cynical to ask a couple of pertinent questions as Michele Bohan did in evidence to a parliamentary committee in February 2011:

"Why is £80 billion pounds of public money to be handed over to GPs with no experience of commissioning health services and why are GPs to be awarded cash bonuses for running the consortia?"

and  
"How are we to prevent

unscrupulous companies like United Healthcare (an American firm bidding to run services

here) – which has been fined millions of pounds over a number of years for defrauding the American healthcare system doing the same thing here in the UK? Their offences involved 'cheating patients out of money', 'denying treatment' and 'overcharging'". (www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmpublic/health/memo/m40.htm)

Good questions Michele, but don't expect a lucid answer.

Here's a tip for survival under capitalism borne out of experience: don't get ill. Unemployment is one quick way to penury. But getting ill compounds that situation. In 1989 Dr Iona Heath, a North London GP drew attention to capitalism's ultimate answer to the problem of ill-health: "How can we escape the logical conclusion of the marketplace that for the elderly and the chronically sick the most economic solution is death." (quoted *Socialist Standard*, January 1990).

So would healthcare be any different if socialism were established? Yes it would. Why? Because from day one money would disappear. And that means the market would cease to exist. Take one or two minutes out and just think how the non-existence of wages, profits and budgets would change the present situation. Then think about the end of the hierarchies that dominate healthcare at present. No more capitalist ponces, and no more layers of useless bureaucrats skimming their share of the kitty.

Instead healthcare would be conceived and administered, democratically by us, the people who brought socialism about. Globally, doctors, nurses, scientists and everyone at present involved in healthcare at the human level would act as guides. Informing people as to where healthcare is capable of going once the artificial barriers of money had been eliminated. It's up to you. Use your imagination and join us. Or sit back on your sofa and hope that you don't get ill.

**ANDY MATTHEWS**



**Snake oil on sale in Marrakech**

# Capitalism – barrier to useful work

*Many are suffering the misery of unemployment while much useful, necessary work remains undone. One of the contradictions of capitalism. We want free time, to reduce the working day so that we can move beyond the tyranny of survival into free and creative mutual activity. Both employment and unemployment are capitalism preventing our human development in this direction.*

**T**he problems of unemployment are huge – worldwide problems affecting millions in some countries and billions globally if we include the massive numbers of ‘informal’

workers, those recognised as outside of the system, many of them non-persons living on the very edge of

existence with no access to even the basic services.

What is this strange system that grants ‘remunerated employment’ to some who produce nothing worthwhile or useful for themselves and others whilst totally rejecting others who have the skills and ability to grow food, to build houses, to recycle others’ rubbish, to contribute all manner of useful work? Why such a seeming imbalance between the work we can all see needing to be done but left undone and actual available work?

Given the way the world economic system is structured, we recognise the logic that requires a surplus of labour, a spare pool to be drawn on as and when required, a surplus that keeps down wages and favours the employer minority over the employed majority. But, as a member of human society, who can recognise any logic based even faintly on empathy or solidarity or common sense use of human capacities for the benefit of society as a whole?

Much of worldwide discontent and dissent is predicated around this matter of unemployment which creates unnecessary and unnatural divisions between sections of both domestic and international communities. Migrant labourers working for a pittance in lands which themselves have high domestic unemployment; migrant skilled workers enjoying artificially high wages in lands where local graduates can’t find work; young people fresh out of education with little or no prospect of finding work while those wishing for retirement are told to expect to work for longer before earning such a luxury; production decimated in many developed countries because overseas underdeveloped countries have won the competition for the lowest wages.

This disconnect, this illogicality

stares us all in the face. We know it makes no sense for any of us as a class, a class of workers, or would-be workers. Over the years we have experienced the circumstances getting worse, not better for many. We worry for our children, our grandchildren, the next generation, the stability of the world and the whole human race. We see the inequity (and iniquities) and worry.

## **The work to be done versus available work**

If we were to approach the problem from a different angle we could see how to turn something totally illogical into something that would work better for everybody wherever they are in the world. Doing this would entail ridding ourselves of useless work and wasted time and effort and result in getting the work that is widely recognised as necessary to be done for the good of the people done, by the people.

It will be natural for anyone considering this topic to focus first on their own country and, in particular, their own locality, if only because this is the most familiar and best understood. However, considering at the same time the wider world in general will greatly increase individual capacity to focus on the enormity of the shortfall facing the global population, a shortfall deliberately ignored by the minority who capitalize greatly by their neglect.

This shortfall, this work needing to be done, includes all the obvious stuff seen around any location but neglected because of a different kind of shortfall, lack of funds in the individual, municipal, national or international budget. It can range from the very basic to much larger issues. Housing in disrepair for which private owners are without the means for proper upkeep, public



*Unemployment during the Depression*

housing which is underfunded and slums which should have been cleared long ago. Holes in the road. Leaks in classroom ceilings. Grubby town centres. Negligence with regard to the safety of the general public. Heavily polluting industries affecting air and water quality. Poor standards of safety allied to working conditions. Old, substandard, decaying or lack of infrastructure of all kinds. Shoddy public transport poorly planned to meet the needs of the greater community. Inadequate and inappropriate energy provision. Lack of local production facilities, whether food or industry. Localities not structured to meet the requirements of citizens. Health and education



remuneration by millions worldwide it begins to become clear just what a crazy system we are operating within. Work that offers no product, service or benefit to society must surely be considered useless work. What cannot be considered useful or necessary includes all the jobs currently involved in the huge financial industry; jobs which are tied to the movement of money from one place or person to another.

Being considered unnecessary because they produce nothing of use, provide no useful service and are of no benefit to society a large number of institutions would be redundant. All banking establishments, insurance companies, tax collection,



on a regular ongoing basis in order to live, whatever the size of their remuneration, is a worker. S/he works. S/he is a member of the working class. Anyone not convinced should ask themselves how long as an individual they can afford to be out of work and without pay before their own personal crisis happens?

Isn't it ridiculous, too, that there are still those who can't recognize the different but equal importance of all contributions to society? Who's to say what or who is more important or necessary to society's functions when we know that (a) even if we wanted to we can't all do everything, all the tasks that are needed in our lifetime because we all have



provision woefully inadequate with insufficient trained personnel to meet the wide and varied needs.

These examples can be expanded ad infinitum according to the local neighbourhood or the wider regions of the globe. The one thing they have in common is that there is much work waiting to be done that, in all likelihood, will not get done for a very long time, if ever, within the constraints of capitalism. The logic of the capitalist system is that profit must be considered above all else, society's needs are a poor also-ran.

Useful work is manifold and includes the production and distribution of material goods and food, scientific research and development, aesthetic and artistic endeavours, service of all kinds including installations, communications, infrastructure, maintenance, health, education, recreational, technological and social; producing and providing the goods and services required and needed by society as a whole on an ongoing basis.

As unemployment figures reach ever higher it must point to the fact that there just isn't enough remunerated work available. Meanwhile, if a comparison is made of the above work waiting to be done with much of the worthless, useless work currently being undertaken for

benefits and pension offices, to name a few, would no longer be required and, as a consequence, many buildings would be freed up for use to be decided upon by civil society whilst technicians, office and other associated staff would be available for more people-beneficial work schemes.

### **The worker – employment or meaningful occupation?**

When we consider in detail the vast range of tasks undertaken by humanity of blue or white collar variety – manager, foreman, labourer, part-time, full-time, self-employed, indentured, casual, indoor, outdoor, on land, sea or in the air – all are employed in order to fulfil the same requirement, their ongoing needs. All require regular remuneration in order to feed and clothe themselves and their dependents and keep a roof over their heads.

We must wonder why then, in some quarters, there is still a derogatory slant to the use of the term 'worker'. For what is it in reality but a misunderstanding of one's own position in the scheme of things? Whether labourer or architect, hairdresser or world-famous model, cashier at a supermarket or hedge fund computer screen minder, BMW production line worker or BMW owner – whoever must work

limited skills and time, (b) we would suffer as a society without all the seemingly menial, dirty, dangerous or difficult tasks being taken care of and (c) as individuals we don't want to be denigrated or undervalued for our own contribution. When we acknowledge these terms we are also ready to accept all others' contributions as valuable too. Apart from not being able to do everything, most of us probably don't want to have to do everything, preferring to have the time to engage in the things that take our individual fancy, interest or passion; time that the majority do not have at their disposal now.

'Not enough jobs to go around!' This is the mantra. Of course there are! In a global socialist society unemployment will be a word confined to the history books. In a world of voluntary work and free access to goods and services, when society is structured deliberately and logically to do the work that we, the people, declare to be necessary and important, there will be ample occupation for all, liberating us, at last, to forsake individual advantage in favour of the common good now and into the future.

**JANET SURMAN**

# What was he fighting for?

## *Phil Ochs as the Sound of the "New Left"*

A new documentary film on the life and music of Phil Ochs, "There But For Fortune", is being shown in several US cities now. It hasn't come too soon, certainly, because Ochs today is largely unknown outside the circle of lefty baby-boomers.

Often Ochs is dismissed as a "topical" songwriter whose music, for that reason, hasn't stood the test of time. "He's *no* Bob Dylan," his critics sometimes say. Dylan himself famously told Ochs he was "just a journalist" (as he threw him out of his limousine).

This image of Ochs owes much to his own statements, for he frankly admitted that the pages of newspapers and magazines were a source of songs ideas, saying "every headline is a potential song." He underscored this by naming his first album "All The News That's Fit To Sing" – punning on the masthead of *The New York Times*.

The origin of a song hardly determines its value, though; and in his best political songs, Ochs cultivated poetry out of such pulpy fertilizer, just like Hank Williams finding song ideas from his sister's *True Romance* comic books.

Whatever one thinks of his music, though, it was clearly linked to the 1960s New Left movement. Ochs's musical career rose with the movement, his songs championed its causes, and by the time of his suicide in 1976 the movement was dead as a social force. Listening to Ochs's albums today is a way of tracing the rise and fall of this radical (but reformist) political movement.

### **Folk re-revival**

The combative optimism of the New Left movement in the days when it was still new comes across on Ochs's first two albums (1964–65). In particular, his song "What's That I Hear" gives listeners an idea of the excitement young leftists felt as fifties conservatism gave way to sixties radicalism, with Ochs describing the sound, off in the distance, of "freedom calling" and the "old ways falling".

Ochs in those early albums is not only looking forward with confidence, but also looking back to see what can be salvaged from the radical past. He had first encountered the history of the radical left in the late fifties through his university roommate Jim Glover, a folk musician who unlike Ochs had been raised in a leftwing family.

The early song "Links On The Chain" shows Ochs contrasting radical past with conservative present, as he compares complacent trade unionist with the militants who formed the unions – and with the civil-rights activists of the time "All that they [activists] are doing is all that you have showed / That you gotta strike, you gotta fight to get what you are owed."

What Ochs and the New Left did not learn from the



history of leftwing radicalism, unfortunately, was its limits: how it never truly sought to replace this social system in which workers continually have to fight just to "get what they are owed". The sixties radicals were thus doomed to travel down the same dusty reformist road the "old left" (Communist Party) had trodden before. Ultimately, the line separating old left and new left was a generational difference in style and temperament, not a true distinction between reformist and revolutionary politics.

The early sixties "folk revival" owed much to the old left and its earlier revival of folk music in the 1930s. The best way to understand the politics of the earlier folk musicians is to listen to the songs of Woody Guthrie as well as the Almanac Singers – a band that included Guthrie, Lee Hays, Pete Seeger, Josh White, and others. These musicians stuck to the CP line through thick and thin – and they started sounding pretty thick after 1941, when they ditched their (good) antiwar songs for crass warmongering songs like Pete Seeger's horrifyingly awful "Dear Mr. President". But even at their political and artistic best, the old-left songs glorify the futile effort to fundamentally reform capitalism.

"Sis" Cunningham, one of the Almanac Singers, and her husband Gordon Friesen took Ochs under their wing when he arrived in Greenwich Village in 1962. That was the year the couple started their soon-to-be influential magazine *Broadside*, which brought Ochs to wider attention by publishing the lyrics and music to his songs. Ochs was influenced by Woody Guthrie, as Bob Dylan and so many others were, but he never tried to imitate Guthrie's folksy ways (as Dylan does at times on his debut album). Rather, Ochs was drawn to Guthrie's approach of using contemporary struggles as songwriting



material and expressing a clear political opinion. This approach comes through on Ochs's tribute to Guthrie, "Bound for Glory", which culminates with the lines: "Why sing the songs and forget about the aim / He wrote them for a reason why not sing them for the same."

### Radical reformist

Ochs was a reformist, as is clear from his songs, but of the radical persuasion. He bandied about the word "revolution" at times and had little patience for timid leftists. Ochs put down such types for all time in his brilliant song "Love Me I'm A Liberal", where his stereotypical (but true to life!) liberal pleads with radicals like Ochs: "Don't talk about revolution / That's going a little bit too far."

It was the revolutionary act of tearing down a rotten system – more than the question of what might replace it – that seemed to fascinate New Left radicals at times. In the song "Ringing of Revolution," Ochs brilliantly depicts members of a once arrogant ruling class cowering before the irresistible power of a revolutionary uprising. What the revolution aims to accomplish, however, is anyone's guess.

"The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing" (Bernstein) – this was the basic attitude of sixties activists. And "the movement" then mainly comprised the struggle for civil rights and the growing opposition to the Vietnam War. These two political issues inspired Ochs to write numerous songs.

On his early albums, Ochs often relied on satire to skewer racists and warmongers. "Whenever there is a deep tragedy, there is always something of the ridiculous," is how Ochs once introduced to an audience his song "Talking Birmingham Jam". For that song and other topical ones like it, Ochs borrowed the "talking blues" format that Guthrie had used. In some of his best satirical songs, Ochs has the target of the satire do the talking, like the pro-war hypocrite in "Draft Dodger Rag" who knows that "someone's gotta go over there [Vietnam], and that someone isn't me".

The absurdity of war and racism also inspired some of Ochs's most mournful songs ("Too Many Martyrs" and "Song of a Soldier"), as well as his angriest and most rousing songs ("Here's to the State of Mississippi" and "One More Parade"). Listening to the variety of songs that the two burning political issues in the 1960s inspired him to write pokes holes in the assumption that topical or political music is a limited art form.

The sheer amount of energy that Phil Ochs derived from, and poured into, the two political movements, however, could only be sustained as long as the movements were still gathering strength.

### New Left grows old

*I don't know / But it seems that every single dream's / Painted pretty pictures in the air / Then it tumbles in despair / And it starts to bend / Until by the end it's a nightmare* ("Cross My Heart").

Songs on his later albums, like this one from the 1967 album "Pleasures of the Harbor", document how Ochs's radical *élan* gave way to despair in the late sixties. At times, Ochs tries to buck himself up, as in the refrain to "Cross My Heart" where he pledges: "But I'm gonna give all that I've got to give / Cross my heart and I hope to live." These half-hearted lines, among the clumsiest he ever wrote, could hardly have raised his morale. Now they seem poignant, though, knowing as we do the suicidal end of his story.

The mental turmoil of Phil Ochs in the late sixties seems to have resulted from a number of different but interrelated crises. His musical career was foundering, he

sensed that his youth had become a memory, and he had always been in tune with the melancholic side of life (as even his earliest songs attest).

On top of this, or perhaps at the bottom of things, was the fact that the radical political movement was no longer in its optimistic early stage. The Vietnam War was widening despite the growth of protests against it, and every year brought new assassinations of civil rights leaders. The frustrations of radicals crystallized with the 1968 demonstrations at the Democratic national convention. Chicago police beating down the protesters came as a shock of disillusionment, leading the more impatient and imbecilic radicals to begin toying with terrorism.

Phil Ochs was in Chicago that summer for the convention and witnessed the "police riot" during the Yippie's Festival of Youth in Lincoln Park. The 1968 event seemed to dissolve the remaining political optimism of Ochs, who was supporting the presidential candidate Eugene McCarthy.

The following year he released an album pessimistically titled "Rehearsals for Retirement," featuring a cover photo of his own gravestone, with the inscription: Phil Ochs (American) Born: El Paso, Texas, 1940, Died: Chicago, Illinois, 1968. The events in Chicago marked his own "spiritual death," Ochs felt.

It is rather simplistic to imagine that the police brutality in Chicago suddenly dissolved Ochs's optimism. More likely, it occurred at point when he already felt that he was reaching a dead end as a musician and an activist, and was looking for a new way forward. (Sadly, the music industry and his own fans at the time did not embrace his later songs, which are among his best.)

Ochs did not abandon leftwing politics after 1968, but the thrill of activism was gone. And how could his radical enthusiasm have persisted without any real belief in the possibility of a post-capitalist society? The movement was everything for Ochs in the early sixties; and he had thought it could broadly reform American society. Even in those years, though, Ochs sensed the fragility of the reform movement and recognized the power of the "establishment", as is reflected in the many early songs he wrote about martyrs. Perhaps Ochs imagined a glorious defeat for himself, which is the ultimate goal when the final aim is nothing.

He did not die in Chicago, though, and the New Left kept going too. A few years later they discovered that it was not glorious defeat but a pyrrhic victory that awaited them. The end of the Vietnam War may have been the victory of the antiwar movement, in a sense, but it was the end of the New Left. Opposing the war was everything to the movement, so its end left activists without a sense of purpose.

But capitalism continued. Later the US government would pluck up enough courage to wage new wars, and the problems of racism and poverty never went away. So a new "new left" could rise to fight the same struggles again. Some point to these familiar problems to demonstrate the "relevance" of Phil Ochs's music today. "Just change a few names and places," they say, "and the songs become contemporary." Yes, quite true. But the same old capitalist problems popping up, again and again, despite the best efforts of activists like Ochs, really speaks to the utter *irrelevance* of reformism.

Ochs's reformism is clear from his songs, but even those songs most clearly inspired by New Left ideas have lines that can sound revolutionary to socialist ears, straining to hear the sound of freedom calling and the old ways falling.

**MIKE SCHAUERTE**

# UFOS



# IDENTIFIED

**S**addam Hussein did not have any Weapons of Mass Destruction. But America has. Many. And stored all over the world, including in England. And, of course, in the United States itself, including the Nevada nuclear test site southwest of the Nellis Air Force Range, also known as Area 51 shown on old maps. Up to 1994, the Pentagon denied the existence of the so-called Dreamland base, although later that year the US Air Force (USAF) finally admitted to its existence. Even now, much of what goes on at "Area 51" is officially secret.

## Lockheed

Area 51 was founded in 1954 as a secret base in which the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation could develop spy-planes, and other aircraft, for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Lockheed first developed, and constructed, the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft there. More than 55, in various versions, are known to have been built, according to Jeffrey Richelson in his *The U.S. Intelligence Community* (p.157).

On November 24, 1954, at a meeting with CIA chief Allen Dulles and other top officials, President Eisenhower gave approval for a programme to build 30 special high performance aircraft at a cost of \$35 million. Richard Bissell, CIA Director of Plans, was given responsibility for the project. On August 8, the following year, the first plane, designated Utility-2 (or just U-2) made its official flight from the secret CIA facility at Groom Lake, Area 51, in Nevada. By 1956 the CIA deployed the first two U-2s from the RAF airbase at Lakenheath (*American Espionage and the Soviet Target*, Jeffrey Richelson, pp.140-142).

On October 29, 1956 the US Air Force awarded Lockheed a further contract to develop Weapons System 117L, later known as Pied Piper; and in 1958, Dulles and Bissell obtained Eisenhower's approval to develop a follow-on aircraft to the U-2, the SR-71, also developed by Lockheed. By then Lockheed were well-established in Nevada, at Area 51.

## UFOS and Aliens from Mars?

For decades, maps of a vast area beginning about 100 miles north of Las Vegas merely showed nothing more than barren desert. Yet there are roads, building, bunkers and a massive runway. And much more besides. There are within Area 51.

Public access to the area is strictly forbidden. One notice states: "Photography of this area is prohibited. 18 U.S.C. 795." Another, ominously, says: "WARNING. Restricted Area. It is unlawful to enter this area without permission of the Installation Commander. See 21, Internal Security Act of 1950, U.S.C. 795. While on this Installation all personnel and the property under their control are subject to search. Use of deadly force authorized." Indeed, trespass-

ers have been arrested, put in leg-irons, strip-searched, heavily fined and even jailed for ignoring the warning signs.

Not surprisingly, ever since the Area 51 base was established, people reported seeing odd-looking objects in the sky. Rumours of alien spacecraft, and little grey or green men from Mars, abounded. At first, such claims were rubbished. There were no UFOs, they asserted. No little men.

In 1997, however, the CIA admitted that it had lied about alleged UFOs, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s. They weren't from Mars or outer space but they did, and do, exist. To some extent, it probably suited the authorities for observers to imagine they had seen flying saucers from outer space.

## The CIA Comes Clear

In a report, "The CIA's Role in the Study of UFOs, 1947-90", published on the 3rd August 1997, the Agency admitted it had lied to the public about the real nature of UFOs, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s to preserve secrecy during the Cold War.

It admitted the validity of reports of hundreds of sightings from the public, aviation experts and pilots. Initially, they were supersonic spy planes such as the U-2 and Blackbird.

Said the report:

"More than half of all UFO reports from the late 1950s through the 1960s were accounted for by manned reconnaissance flights..."

This led the Air Force to make misleading and deceptive statements to the public in order to allay public fears, and to protect an extraordinarily sensitive national security project."

Commenting on the CIA report, the *Guardian* (4 August 1997) says:

"The planes were built at Area 51, or Dreamland base, in Nevada, whose existence the Pentagon still denies. The U-2s flew to more than 60,000 ft and the Blackbird to 80,000 ft."

The CIA report added that the decision to paint the aircraft black, as well as with the Stealth bombers was, not just to camouflage them militarily, but to reduce UFO sightings. The report noted that, originally, the U-2s' silver bodies "reflected the rays of the sun," encouraging the sightings of "fiery objects." At the time, and for years after, UFO fever became a huge obsession in the United States, notes the *Guardian*.

More recently UFOs were reported over Afghanistan and Pakistan. These, in fact, are unmanned drones. Although the CIA, or any other US government agency, is unlikely to admit it, it is more than likely that these pilotless aircraft, which have caused havoc, and killed and injured many people in Afghanistan and Pakistan, were also developed at the Area 51 site.

What a useless and destructive waste of natural resources!

**PETER E. NEWELL**



# Alternative vote or alternative society?

Pick a card,  
any card...



WHEN A magician offers you a choice of cards, it doesn't matter how you decide to pick one, you'll always get the card they want you to.

It's the same with any joker who thinks that capitalism can be made to serve us all. Government is there to make sure that the unequal relations of capitalism are maintained.

Not because of some conspiracy but because any party in power finds itself confronted by the might of the people who own our society. It ends up ruling in their interests, rather than the vast majority who work for a living.

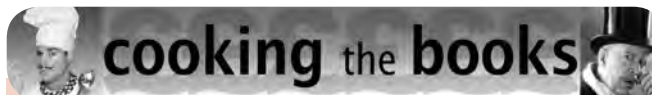
That's why in the financial crisis we're being made to pay with lost jobs and wages.

You're being asked to choose a new way of electing those governments that attack you. It's something that matters a lot to politicians, because it decides how many of them and their mates get the good jobs.

What matters more is what we use our votes for. If we vote for more rulers and the ownership of the world by a handful of people then it doesn't really matter how politicians share the spoils. But if workers use the vote to reject the false choices that are framed within the context of an owning class dominating another class, we will be further on the road towards a truly democratic society.

If we vote to make the wealth of the world common property in which we all have an equal say, then we can finally have what we call Socialism. We can put an end to minority rule, and we can organise our affairs in our own interest.

That's why the real choice before you this May isn't AV or First Past the Post, but choosing to reject class based society. The best choice you can make this May is to join us in campaigning for common ownership.



## A global capitalist class?

IS THERE a global, "transnational" capitalist class? This is an issue that is dividing those in what can broadly be called the Marxist tradition (as those who analyse capitalism using the same categories that Marx did; so, very broadly).

One view is that the world is divided into independent, territorially-based states representing and pursuing the interests of capitalists from within their borders, and that the world economy is characterised by competing separate national capitals only. The other view is that the capitalist system has always been a single economy, even if divided politically and geographically into separate "nation states", and that the recent globalisation represents the emergence of a global capitalist class not tied to a particular national state.

One exponent of the second view is William I. Robinson who argues in an article "Beyond the theory of imperialism. Global capitalism and the transnational state" in *Marxism and World Politics: Contesting Global Capitalism* (edited by Alexander Anievas and published by Routledge this year) that:

"We have entered a qualitatively new transnational stage in the ongoing evolution of world capitalism marked by a number of fundamental shifts in the capitalist system, among them:

- the rise of truly transnational capital and the integration of every country into a new global production and financial system;

- the appearance of a new transnational capitalist class (TCC), a class group grounded in new global markets and circuits of accumulation, rather than national markets and circuits;

- the rise of transnational state (TNS) apparatuses, (...)." Obviously, national states have not disappeared and are still powerful players in the capitalist economy. Robinson does not deny this but argues that the transnational capitalist class uses them, through favourable politicians and governments, to pursue its transnational interests (rather than them being used by a national capitalist class to pursue its national interests).

Ever since the last World War, freer trade has been the policy of the dominant capitalist countries (in fact it could even be said to have been the main war aim of America and Britain). But has this now led to the emergence of a transnational capitalist class? Robinson makes out a good case for this and it would explain the present stuff of national politics in that a transnational capitalist class still has to act via national states to get them to pursue policies favouring free trade and transnational investment and to set up transnational institutions, such as the WTO and the IMF, to facilitate and regulate this (which he sees as an embryonic "transnational state").

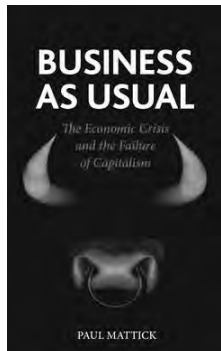
However, any transnational capitalist class would only be a section of the capitalist class of the world. There are still plenty of national capitalists, actual and would-be, whose interests are not the same as those of the transnational section. So, although political power in the advanced capitalist countries, may be in the hands of politicians favourable to transnational capitalists, there is still opposition to them.

The ideology of national capitalism, reflecting the interests of small-scale capitalists, is still strong and finds support both from the "right" and the "left" (who beat the same nationalist drum during referendums and votes on the EU) as well as from conspiracy theorists denouncing the "new world order". Outside Europe there are states controlled by opponents of the transnational capitalists such as Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea, Iran, Burma and, above all and for the moment, China.

Leftists in effect argue that workers should support national as opposed to transnational capitalism. Socialists, on the other hand, don't take sides in this conflict between different sections of the capitalist class.

## **Crisis: the stories so far**

***Business As Usual: The Economic Crisis And The Failure Of Capitalism.* Paul Mattick.  
Reaktion Books: 2011. £12.95**



Just yesterday, we were all supposed to believe that the globalisation of capitalism and free markets was the route to freedom, peace and prosperity for all. Then, with barely an explanation, and somewhat out of the blue, the story changed. Now we are to believe that, due to circumstances beyond anyone's control, prosperity will have to give way to austerity. The good times are over.

It is characteristic of crises that the stories we are expected to believe suddenly change. But how can we understand the change? And might there not be better stories than the rather grim and gloomy one we've been ordered to swallow? Paul Mattick Jnr's short book is just such an alternative. For him the crisis signals the complete bankruptcy and destruction of mainstream economics.

Why did the crisis appear as a bolt out of the blue? Why was it not expected or anticipated by any economist or mainstream commentator? In short, because there is no place in the standard economic story for crisis, any more than there's a place for wizards and interstellar travel in a 19th-century realist novel. The old story goes something like this:

"Capitalism is a system for producing wealth to satisfy consumer needs. Individuals set up in business looking out only for their own interest, but in doing so produce for society. Only what can be sold will be produced; money will be borrowed, land rented and labour hired only because the resulting production meets a need. The money earned by selling one's product will then be spent either on consumption or further production. The economy therefore tends naturally to a balanced state, in which all products find buyers. There may be momentary imbalances between supply and demand, but rising and falling prices soon take care of those.

In this way, capitalism creates the wealth of nations, and all is well in the best of all possible worlds."

No doubt the story sounds reasonable – it is, after all, part of our cultural inheritance, as familiar as Noah and his ark, Jesus and the wise men, Little Red Riding Hood and her granny. But there's no room in this picture for the kind of crisis we're currently living through. The crisis appears as a shock and is regarded as a mystery simply because there's no framework within which it makes sense. We can understand that a very small scale 'crisis' will result if a business fails to meet consumer need: it may go bust, and this will be a crisis for those relying on that business for their living. But there's no reason why this should cause much of a problem for the system as a whole – and economists never expect it to. Within the framework outlined above, there is no room for the sort of crises we actually see in the real world – society-wide and global crises where vast amounts of real wealth and the means of producing it (factories, mines, offices and so on) exist side by side with grinding poverty and unemployment. This kind of insanity makes no sense in terms of the story. Surely, great masses of wealth would just go to satisfy consumer demand? And if wealth outstripped consumer demand, then, well, great! The age of leisure and abundance, long promised by capitalism, would finally be upon us, and we could collectively lay back and enjoy it.

Unable to find a satisfying explanation from within the story, the storytellers are obliged to smuggle in some bogeymen from the wings. The balance we expect from the story is then upset by one of various villains, which one depending on the predilections of the storyteller: state interference or largesse, insufficient (or too much) regulation, greed, and so on. Quite why these things sometimes cause a crisis and sometimes not when they're always lurking in the wings is left unexplained.

However, there are some thinkers, Mattick among them, who were not at all surprised by the crisis. This is not, as Mattick says at the start of his book, because they are cleverer than the mainstream storytellers. Nor have they access to more or better information – in fact, for the most part, rather the opposite. Instead it is a matter "of knowing how to think about what is going on". Or, in the terms we've introduced in this article, of having access to better stories – stories that capture what's actually

going on in the real world. Here's Mattick's story:

"Capitalism is not primarily a system for producing wealth to meet consumer demand, but for making money. This is what business is all about: using money to make more money. The capitalist (or, increasingly, a capitalist institution subsidised and backed by the state) starts off with a sum of money, which he throws into circulation in the expectation that it will return to him as a greater sum than he started with. To this end, the capitalist buys means of production and labour power on the market, then puts these to work to produce goods, which he then takes to market in the expectation not just of sales, but of profits. If he is successful in his aim, and if he is to remain a capitalist and keep up with the competition, he must reinvest at least a portion of that profit in yet more production, buying yet more labour power and means of production, to produce yet more wealth and, potentially, money profits. And then the cycle begins again, on an ever-expanding scale."

The motive here is not the satisfaction of consumer need – a relatively straightforward matter – but the production and appropriation of profits on an ever-expanding scale – a much more tricky thing to achieve. And as the production of social wealth increasingly takes on this capitalist character, the production of the things we need increasingly relies not on our need for them, nor on our ability to produce them, but on the ability of capitalists to make profits from the whole process. When they cannot make or do not expect to make a profit from production, or when they produce too much to sell profitably, they will not invest in production, but in speculation, or will not invest at all, and hoard money. This can affect not just their own line of business, but the whole system of wealth production. Crisis, in this view, is not caused by any bogeyman in the wings, but is a necessary result of the process itself.

Once we've understood this story, our expectations are turned on their head. We are no longer shocked by capitalism's periodic crises, but expect them. The question then is, do we really need to forever make our lives hostage to capitalist profit; or might we be able to do things in a different way? In the mainstream, the debate over how to resolve the crisis is between two alternatives. The first is to just let things collapse so the economy undergoes the necessary correction, restoring profitability and

eventually returning the system to business as usual. The second is that the central banks should continue to print money and the state bail-out bankrupt banks and countries and so on, so that 'business as usual' is not disrupted by potentially catastrophic upheavals (as was the case in the Great Depression of the 1930s). The debate is between the needs of business, on the one hand, and the need to preserve social cohesion (for the needs of business) on the other. Businessmen and policy-makers are damned if they do, and damned if they don't. But what are usually thought of as 'socialist' alternatives are unlikely to work either – history has shown that reformist social democracy and 'communist' central planning have been no better at controlling capitalism's crises than anything else. It's no good, says Mattick, demanding jobs from a system that would happily give us the jobs if it could.

If there's hope, it's in the belief that human beings will eventually tire of walking into brick walls and begin to look for a door. If you have a concern that produces socially necessary goods or services, on the one hand, and poor and unemployed people on the other, and there is no way of putting the two together in a way that produces profits for owners, then that's what capitalism calls a crisis. The solution – bringing workers, the unemployed, the poor and the means of producing wealth together, not in order to make profits, but to provide

for need – is called socialism.

We've left the name of this alternative story till the end because it is liable to scare unwary readers. That's because, in the standard story, it's portrayed as one of those bogeymen waiting in the wings. The name is Marxian socialism. Mattick's is the second major book from a Marxist thinker to appear since the onset of the crisis (the first was David Harvey's *Enigma Of Capital*, favourably reviewed in the June 2010 *Socialist Standard*). And we highly recommend it – it's a brilliantly comprehensive and yet miraculously short history and analysis of capitalist crisis. The Marxists associated with this journal will have their differences with the details of Mattick's account. In particular, we would say he puts too much emphasis on Marx's law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, and throws the baby out with the bathwater when he rightly rejects the old left but places his faith seemingly more in the spontaneous appearance of mutual aid and communist formations than in working-class political organisation. But what's more important than the minor disagreements is the framework that Marxism provides for understanding what's going on in the real world, and for that, Mattick's book is an essential guide.

**STUART WATKINS**

## The Socialist Party of Great Britain enamelled badge



Please send cheque or postal order (no cash) for **£10.00** payable to SPGB SW Regional Branch, c/o Veronica Clanchy, FAO: South West Regional Branch, 42 Winifred Road, Poole, Dorset. BH15 3PU. Any queries, please phone 01202 569826. Please include own phone number or other contact details.

### WSM FORUM

- Want to talk about what you've just read?
- Can't make it to a meeting?
- Discuss the questions of the day with Party members and non-members online.

Join the forum via [www.worldsocialism.org](http://www.worldsocialism.org)



## The Stepford Geezers

THE TERM 'reality television' has become even more of an oxymoron with the latest mutation of the genre. The Only Way Is Essex (ITV2) lets us

in to the lives of a bronzed breed of Essex geezers and girls. For these walking hairstyles, life is just a permanent loop of nightclubs, boobjobs, salons and boy/girlfriend difficulties. Somehow they manage to spend more time talking about relationships than actually having them.

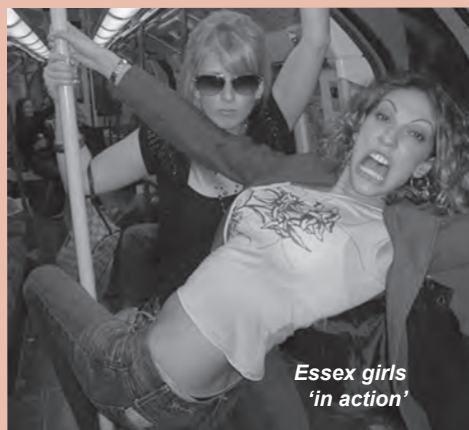
Whether or not the viewers can relate to this lifestyle is beside the point. Where the programme detaches from reality is in its staged set-ups. What the group of friends do is directed by the puppeteers at ITV2, who were no doubt cackling maniacally throughout. It's not clear how much of the show is fake, though. The producers say that most of it is real, despite everything appearing structured, filmed and edited like a cheap soap opera. So, the participants perform as themselves in

scenarios which have been guided to some extent. Usually, this pans out as something like 'hunk x chucks blonde y then flirts with blonde y's friend, brunette z'.

The Only Way Is Essex's bizarre mix of fact and fiction is less disorientating if you think of it as improvisational theatre. The difference, of course, is that this show is lived for real. Who would have such a flimsy grasp on their lives to hand them over to a film crew? Presumably, the participants enjoy the exposure, even if it means being portrayed with less depth than a puddle. For people so self-obsessed, they don't seem to care how much they're being manipulated.

Previous reality TV shows have had the discretion to be set in their own little world, such as a mini-recreation of the past or Big Brother's bunker. But The Only Way Is Essex has been let loose in suburbia. So it's more like The Truman Show, but where everyone's in on it. Or maybe the final episode will reveal that it's all been an extended remake of The Stepford Wives?

**Mike Foster**



Essex girls 'in action'

## Letters continued

with one more advantageous to their national interests. Which would have justified continued opposition to the war.

The full extent of Nazi persecution did not become clear until the war was well under way and the information was not available to the general public at the time. In any case, there is an ongoing debate as to whether the mass murder of the Jews of Europe had been intended all along or whether it was in a great part brought on by wartime circumstances and was a by-product of war rather than a settled war aim. The question is not as clear cut as is often believed. In any case Nazi race hate in Europe does not explain the outbreak of war in the Pacific in 1941.

What is clear then is that World War Two was not fought to save Jews from the massacre as this did not get fully under way until some time in 1942. Even when it was clear that something unprecedented was happening to Jews, the Allies failed to mount any significant rescue operations when these became possible. Their political and military calculation was that not to help the Jews was to help defeat Hitler; killing the Jews meant Germany diverting troops and resources from the front line, thus contributing to an Allied victory. According to Paul Johnson in his 1988 *A History of the Jews*, "...the Holocaust was one of the factors which were losing Hitler the war. The British and American led governments knew this." – Editors.

## Meetings

### Edinburgh and Glasgow

#### Day School

Saturday 14 May 1pm to 5pm  
'A SOCIETY IN CRISIS'

The Middle East Powder Keg: Speaker Gwynn Thomas (South London)

The Rise of Chinese Capitalism: Speaker Paul Bennett (Manchester)

Has Capitalism a Future? Speaker John Cumming (Glasgow)

Admission free, with light refreshments served.

Community Central Halls, 304 Maryhill Road, Glasgow G20 7YE.

### Salisbury

Saturday 14 May 2pm

South West Regional Branch meeting.

SOCIALISM: WORLD OF ABUNDANCE

Speaker: Adam Buick

Railway Tavern, 135 S Western Road, Salisbury SP2 7RR.

### Manchester

Monday 23 May 8.30pm

THE RISE OF CHINESE CAPITALISM.

Unicorn, Church Street, City Centre.

### East Anglia

Saturday 28 May, 2 to 5pm

THE MIDDLE EAST: LESSONS FROM THE POWDER KEG.

Speaker: Gwynn Thomas.

Quebec Tavern, 93-97 Quebec Road Norwich NR1 4HY.

(The meeting takes place in a side room separate to the bar.)

### Birmingham

Sunday 29 May 3pm

West Midlands regional Branch meeting  
The Briar Rose, 25 Bennetts Hill,  
Birmingham B2 5RE

For full details of all our meetings and events see our **Meetup** site:

<http://www.meetup.com/The-Socialist-Party-of-Great-Britain/>



#### Picture Credits

Cover: Ann Widdecombe - Manchester2k6 Public Domain. Model - Guy K.T.Heah © 2008 Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic. Area 51 - Simon Johansson 2006 Public Domain.

p4: Venus Project - Zeitgeist.org

p4: Tevatron, Fermilab, Reidar Hahn, Public Domain

p5: Laptop PC - Marus 2007 Public Domain

p6: Mining in Mongolia, Brücke-Osteuropa, 2009, Public Domain

p11: Haiti - UN Photo/Logan Abassi © 2010

p12: Pill bottle, Chlaborewan, 2010, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

p13: Snake oil in Marrakesh, David Loong, 2006, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license. Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic.

Japan tsunami - US Federal Government Public Domain.

p15: Barber - Robert Lawton © 2006 Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic.

p16: Phil Ochs, Phil-Ochs.com

p18: Area 51 sign - X51 © 2003 GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2.

p20: Business book - www.word-power.co.uk.

p21: Essex girl - Pigotti 2006 Public Domain.

p23: Racing car - slitz © 2010 Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic. Tony Benn - www.sixtiescity.com

p24: Spiderman - 1962, Amazing Fantasy

## 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.



AH, FOR the old days of motor racing, the days of Stirling Moss and co, when the driver's skill was what really counted and overtaking was central. Drivers still need to be skilled and fit and have quick reactions, but their central role is sidelined in favour of large organisation and behind-the-scenes work. As overtaking has become harder and technology has taken over, spectator interest has declined. At the Barcelona track, the last ten grand prix winners have started in pole position on the grid and stayed there, so it's become particularly boring.

With Formula One races becoming essentially processions, some weird ideas to retain public interest have emerged, such as random watering of the track to make things more exciting. Tyres are being developed that will degrade more quickly, thus potentially leading to more unpredictable racing and an increase in the number of pit stops. This season the cars have a movable flap in their rear wing, which the driver can use in specific circumstances, again to give more opportunity for overtaking (but there are worries that it may make overtaking too easy and so undervalued).

From the late 1990s, private teams such as Ligier and Jordan ceased to operate in F1 as the emphasis switched to the big car manufacturers such as Ferrari and Renault. The telecom capitalist, Carlos Slim (the world's richest man, according to some) is now backing one of the newer drivers. This is appropriate since, of course, it's money that guides the F1 world. Melbourne has lost £147m over fourteen years of staging the Australian Grand Prix, but the track in Shanghai was built at a cost of £280m, in the hope of attracting big crowds and TV money. And for some, F1 really is a cash cow: Bernie Ecclestone, the boss of the whole business, is the twenty-fourth richest person in the UK, with a tidy bank balance of nearly £1.5billion.

**PB**



## Kicked upstairs

MR. ANTHONY Wedgwood Benn has fought a furious fight against his transfer to the House of Lords. Despite his struggles, the government showed that they were determined to have him kicked upstairs.

Some lobby correspondents whispered that Mr. Macmillan personally gave the thumbs-down to Mr. Benn's efforts to renounce his peerage. The P.M., said the rumour, is at odds with Lord Hailsham, and doesn't want to set a precedent which might bring *him* back to the commons.

Mr. Benn's predicament is not free of irony. The Labour Party, of course, once stood for the abolition of the House

of Lords. And Mr. Benn's constituency used to elect Sir Stafford Cripps, who was at one time an ardent opponent of royalty, titles and the rest.

By the time Labour achieved power in 1945, they had dropped their old pledge about the Lords. Now, in fact, they do their bit towards helping the Upper House alive by supplying their share of life peerages.

It is Mr. Benn's bad luck to have been born the son of a peer. His membership of the Labour Party is a different matter. He may not be able to resign his title: but he can always leave the party which has supported the system of pomp and privilege.

("News in Review", *Socialist Standard*, May



## FREE

3-month trial subscription offer to the *Socialist Standard*



For more details about The Socialist Party, or to request a free 3-month subscription to the *Socialist Standard* please complete and return this form to **52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN**

Please send me an info pack

Please send me a free 3-month subscription to the *Socialist Standard*, journal of The Socialist Party.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....



# Voice from the Back

## The Class Divide

In a recent issue of the *Guardian* newspaper there was an inserted leaflet from the charity *WaterAid*. It was appealing for £52 million in a campaign to change the lives of 884 million people who still lack clean water and the 2.6 billion who have nowhere safe to go to the toilet. According to the leaflet "It's a fact that around 4,000 children die every day from diarrhoea because they lack clean water and sanitation." If £52 million seems like a lot of money it should be noted in that same newspaper there was an article that reported the sale of super luxurious flats in London. "The property tycoons behind London's most lavish residential development are £62 million better off after fresh details emerged of sales at One Hyde Park. The Candy brothers, Nick and Christian, and their backers have pocketed the sum after selling one sixth floor property for £22m, and one on the second floor for £21.6m .... A penthouse flat in the development is understood to have been sold for £135m, but Land Registry documents have yet to be filed" (*Guardian*, 16 March). *WaterAid's* appeal for £52 million seems modest compared with these sums, but that is how capitalism works. The poor die young and the rich live in luxury based on the misery of the poor. 4,000 kids are dying every day, are you going to do anything about it?



of people are trying to exist on the equivalent of \$1.25 a day. "A comic collector has been caught in Spider-Man's web, paying \$1.1 million for a near-mint copy of "Amazing Fantasy" No. 15 that features the wall-crawler's debut. The issue, first published in 1962, was sold Monday by a private seller to a private buyer, ComicConnect.com chief executive Stephen Fishler told The Associated Press on Tuesday. It's not the highest price ever paid for a comic book, an honor that goes to "Action Comics" No. 1 with Superman on the cover, which went for \$1.5 million" (*Yahoo News*, 9 March). Millions of dollars spent on nonsense while real human beings die of hunger. It is not funny, it is not comic. It is disgraceful.

## Another Day, Another Disaster

Newspapers are quick to cover a story like the miners rescued from the cave-in in Chile, but mining disasters are so common that they hardly register in the media compared to important events like a Royal wedding. So it should come as no surprise to learn of the following event only being covered by a few lines in the national press. "At least six workers were killed and 46 trapped by a methane explosion in a coal mine in southwestern Pakistan. An official said that the mine was declared dangerous two weeks ago, but the warning was ignored" (*Times*, 21 March). The reality inside a capitalist society is that coal and the profits that can accrue from it is much more important than human lives.

## Rich And Poor In The USA

In a recent newspaper debate about the growing inequalities of wealth in the USA entitled "Rising Wealth

Inequality: Should We Care? Why do Americans seem unperturbed about the growing gap between the rich and the poor?", Michael I Norton, an associate professor at the Harvard Business School, who is currently co-writing a book on money and happiness, made some interesting observations: "In a recent survey of Americans, my colleague Dan Ariely and I found that Americans drastically underestimated the level of wealth inequality in the United States. While recent data indicates that the richest 20 percent of Americans own 84 percent of all wealth, people estimated that this group owned just 59 percent believing that total wealth in this country is far more evenly divided among poorer Americans" (*New York Times*, 22 March). It may have escaped the professors' notice, but all the media is owned by the rich and it is in their interest to spread the false notion that capitalism is a fair and equitable society.

## Those Lazy Workers Again

"Almost every NHS nurse works more than their contracted hours and one in five does so every shift, a new poll shows. Some 95% of nurses say they work longer hours than they are paid for, according to ICM research for the Royal College of Nursing. ...Many nurses say they have to skip meals and rarely or never get the breaks at work to which they are entitled..." (*Observer*, 10 April).

## Family Values

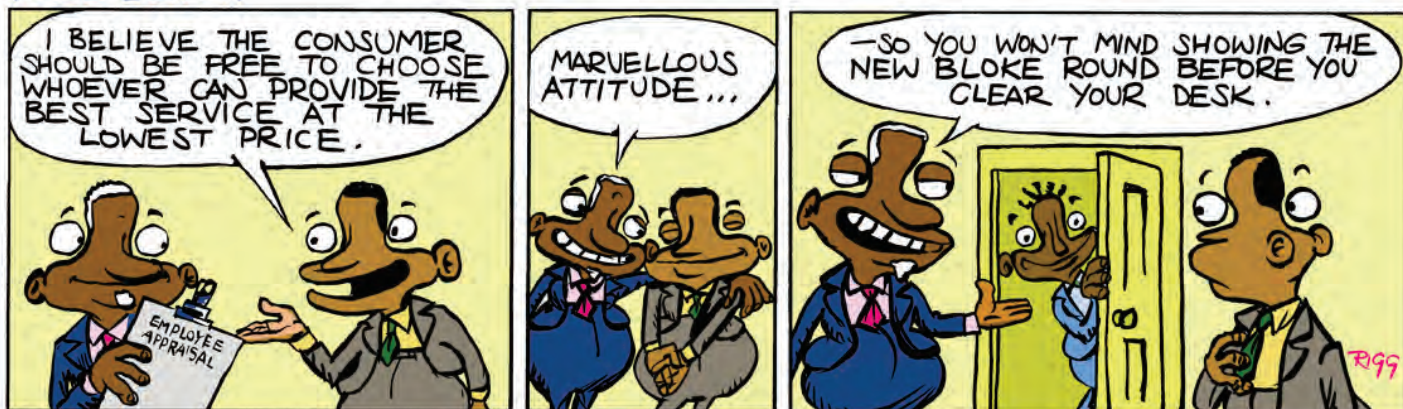
"British families are facing the biggest peacetime squeeze on their finances since 1921, according to a leading economic consultancy. Soaring inflation and weak earning growth will leave the average family £910 worse off than two years ago, according to analysis by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)" (*Sunday Times*, 10 April).



## Comic Book Capitalism

Capitalism is an insane society that values things much more than human beings. The following news item should be read with the knowledge that millions

## FREE LUNCH



ISSN 0037 8259

Produced and published by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN