

socialist standard

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La Crise En Rose



France puts on the pink specs



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The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on **Saturday 7 July** at the address above. Correspondence should be sent to the General Secretary. All articles, letters and notices should be sent to the Editorial Committee.

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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.



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JUNE 2012

Editorial

Voting against austerity

THE PEOPLE of Iceland did it first. Twice. In two referendums they rejected a deal their government had negotiated with international creditors. They even put a former prime minister on trial. It didn't make any difference. Now they have been followed by voters in France and, more dramatically, in Greece. It won't make any difference there either. Because, in capitalism in a slump, there is no alternative to falling living standards for the majority.

Nobody wants their standard of living to be reduced, whether as cuts to their wages or their pensions or as the reduced income unemployment brings. But that's what they get, even though they might vote against it. It's understandable that, given the chance in an election, people should vote to reject austerity. At least it shows they are not prepared to accept things lying down. For the people of Greece to have voted back those promising yet more austerity would have been to brand themselves as gutless.

To imagine that electing another set of politicians is going to make any difference, though, is an illusion. It assumes that governments control the way the capitalist economy works whereas in fact they have to govern on its terms of 'no profit, no production'. They have to give priority to profits and profit-making. In a slump that means imposing austerity.

Henry Ford is reputed to have said that you can have a car of any colour so long as it's black. Capitalism in a crisis is like that. You can elect any government, but that government will impose austerity. Even if Greece defaults and withdraws from the euro, the cruel fact is that any government, even one

elected on an anti-austerity basis, would have to do this.

The fuel that drives capitalism is profits. A slump means that capitalist businesses are investing less than before because it's not so profitable. The only way capitalism can get out of this is if profitability revives. This happens spontaneously in a slump. The assets of failing and bankrupt firms pass cheaply to others, who can therefore use them more profitably. Interest rates fall, allowing firms that borrow money to invest to keep a larger proportion of their profits. Increased unemployment exerts a downward pressure on wages, increasing the share of profits in new production.

Leftwingers and trade union leaders think that the way out of a slump is to increase spending. Get the government to spend more, they say, and that will get production going again. But it won't. For the simple reason that the increased wages or government spending would have to be at the expense of profits; which would make things worse. Some governments may start off trying to do this but they are very quickly obliged by the economic laws of capitalism to effect a U-turn and impose austerity.

That's the way capitalism works, and it's the only way it can work. Capitalism is a system that puts profits before people and cannot be reformed to do otherwise. The only way forward is not to vote for a change of government policy or to reform some aspect of capitalism, but to act to replace capitalism with socialism so that the Earth's resources really can become the common heritage of all and used to serve human welfare.



Jealous Guy

CHEMISTRY AT school has always had a dismal reputation as the boring science, which only gets interesting when it scales down into physics or up into biology. But a recent BBC *Horizon* documentary on the history of materials did an excellent job of correcting this prejudice by showing how new cooking recipes have been behind some of the most revolutionary technologies, from silicon and superconductors to graphene and even silicene. But one story stood out above all for its strangeness, the story of a material called Starlite, recently also picked up by *New Scientist* (16 May). Take some flour, baking soda and a few other sundries, whisk them up in a food processor, then paint the white gunge onto any surface and it will magically become impervious to temperatures up to 1000 degrees Celsius. A raw egg, covered with a thin layer of the stuff and then blowtorched for three minutes, remains raw and scarcely even warm.

This white paste, called Starlite by its amateur inventor, is the most efficient heat-resisting material anyone has ever discovered, and simple to apply to any surface. Nobody is entirely sure how it works. The fact that an untrained, non-scientist working alone in his domestic kitchen was able to come up with a formula that trumps all known products from established professional labs is not even the strangest part of the story. Even more bizarre was what happened next. The inventor, Maurice Ward, refused to divulge the recipe, afraid of course that he would be stitched up by capitalist manufacturers and their sharp-suited lawyers. History is littered with stories of inventors and discoverers not getting their due and Ward was justifiably determined that that wasn't going to happen to him. He rejected every overture and stymied every proposal, obsessed with protecting his intellectual property rights.

Well, he protected them alright. One day he dropped down dead, taking his secret recipe to the grave. To this day nobody knows what went into making Starlite. It may never be known. The world has lost a wonder material.

For socialists the lesson drawn scarcely needs spelling out. Capitalism's obsession with ownership has in this case indisputably prevented significant technological progress. It's no good blaming Ward's paranoia. He had every right to be paranoid. He was the golden goose in the shark tank and he knew it. People close to him have commented that it wasn't even about the money. Ward just couldn't stand the idea of being taken advantage of. Workers have to put up with exploitation every day at work, but sometimes it takes an extra special circumstance for that routine fact to become obvious. Ward saw it, and didn't like it one bit. Even though he would have got rich in any possible scenario, it wasn't good enough. Tragically he preferred to give the world nothing. We shouldn't be altogether surprised. In some versions of game theory, where a player is given the chance to gain but only by making their opponent gain even more, the usual response is to reject the offer and opt for nothing, even though technically this is

illogical.

This simply could not have occurred in socialism. In a culture of free and voluntary cooperation, where ideas are shared for the common welfare not sold for personal material enrichment, there are no private property 'rights' in the first place so there is no sense in which people like Ward could be economically 'ripped off'. There does of course remain the question of who is accorded the credit for an invention or discovery. While it is not strictly impossible that one scientist might try to rob the credit for another's achievement there would at least be no money or power incentive for doing so. Without the corporate muscle that accumulated property can muster, third parties could scarcely be bought or intimidated into silence, so it's unlikely that any such intellectual larceny could get off the ground, much less be sustained. Ward would have got the credit in socialism, no question, and we would all have got the gain.

A quiet revolution

ON A more encouraging note, the concept of free access – the complete antithesis of the property ethic described above – seems to be extending delicate tendrils beyond the parent growth of computer software into the world of higher education. Some US universities including Stanford and MIT are opening up certain online degree courses, free to all comers. Given that a Stanford degree normally costs in the region of \$150,000 this is a significant step. The logic, though, is simple enough. Once the course is devised, written and put online, costs of delivery fall to zero if no interactive sessions or manual marking is required, so what's to lose? Free online courses won't threaten the existing market for taught courses since remote or 'distance learning' doesn't suit everyone, but the idea is catching on fast and it surely can't be long before other universities follow suit.

What is really interesting is how the cheapness and ubiquity of online delivery is 'normalising' the idea of free access. It's not a matter of freebie giveaways, with which the world is already familiar, but a crucial marriage of the terms 'free' with 'high quality', a rare and, for capitalism, counter-intuitive concept. Free software these days is top of the range, not cheap junk written in BASIC. Free apps are as good as anything Apple still hides behind its paywalls. Free information, in the form of Wikipedia, has proven as reliable as anything in commercial online encyclopedias. So 'free' and 'quality' are no longer antonyms.

This normalisation process in turn is changing expectations, giving rise to a modified sense of entitlement. Socialist revolution won't be caused by stirring polemic about how bad or inefficient or even immoral the existing system is. It will be caused – for all we know it is already being caused – by a changed sense of entitlement, of what is 'normal'. People who think it is 'normal' to have to pay for everything will never struggle to abolish the paying system even if they themselves suffer dire poverty as a result. But change what is considered 'normal' and you have the stirrings of a revolutionary mindset.

In computer software it is increasingly the case that if something is worth having it will become free. 3D printing technology may form the bridge across which this new 'norm' crosses into the world of material objects. In any case people are already questioning the commodification process where it applies to genome patenting, because 'owning' a living organism clearly runs counter to public interest. This is the quiet revolution, in which charging money for important and socially useful things begins to be seen as selfish, distasteful and somehow increasingly old-fashioned and obstructive. It is going on in the background, below the surface, underneath the level of conscious thought, and is easy to miss, scoff at or ignore. Anti-socialists will still be dismissing socialism as a pipe-dream when it is already in the pipe-line.

World Without Money

Dear Editors

I remember the struggling “thirties” for my Mum and Dad, hard to find work and being abused by the capitalist system. Then with five children war took place and sent three of us to evacuation. Money I thought of was pounds shillings and pence and farthing and three penny piece Mum put in the Christmas pud.

Peace arrived and as time has gone by you heard of money crisis, tighten your belt,

“you’ve never had it so good”, “a new beginning” and “we’re all in this together”, “big society”, yes Cameron rich and poor!

Money blinds me with calculations I don’t understand, not pounds shillings and pence but millions, billions and trillions now.

The needs for people are to be fed well, sheltered and to understand to have the best of everything. Hospital, housing, schools and everything that provides a good living.

I don’t want to hear that I have an enemy today, I didn’t know him yesterday but my so-called country tells me and my family to fight him and his family. So where in the present money crisis we are unable to put money into every good and necessary need they can suddenly find millions and trillions for fighter planes and every killing machine you can think of.

Is this all insane or could there be another way to live on this great planet of ours. A global moneyless society for the whole human race. Co-operation not competition. We have the manpower, technology, resources and voluntary know-how. Capitalism has shown us how it could be but money gets in the way! So?

I’ve never been any good at understanding maths and missed out education during the war but am able to think about and see things that I hear and see. I don’t need leaders telling me what’s good or bad for me and at the same time dancing to the tune of capitalism putting profit before need.

Florrie Barwick, Aveley, Essex



Barefoot days: a child in the 1930s

What about the family?

Dear Editors

How do we see the Family and the upbringing of children in society after the transition from capitalism to socialism?

In the Kibbutzim in Israel from the 1950s to the 1980s people lived in a collective environment without private property where there were communal children’s homes and sleeping arrangements and the collective upbringing of children. Kibbutzim would ultimately fail as ‘socialist’ enterprises because they existed inside a capitalist framework.

In 1884 in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, Engels describes how humanity in its hunter-gatherer stage of development lived in a primitive-communist society with female solidarity, a brotherhood of man and collective upbringing of children. It is with the end of the matrilineal clan and the beginning of patriarchy we get the beginnings of the family and private property. Professor Chris Knight’s 1991 book *Blood Relations: Menstruation and the Origins of Culture* follows on from the work of Engels and he states that for 95 percent of our existence, our species lived as egalitarian hunter-gatherers without family, private property and the state.

I am not proposing some return to *primitivism-communist* society but that the capitalist system has only been in existence a short time and is not the eternal state of things the bourgeoisie would like us to believe.

Wilhelm Reich in his 1933 *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* sees the family as one of the most important institutions that supports the authoritarian (capitalist?) state and is basically the centre for the production of reactionary men and women.

Following from Reich we have critique of the family in the writings of RD Laing in the 1960s, the seminal work *The Death of the Family* (1971) by ‘Marxist Existentialist’ psychoanalyst David Cooper, and volume 1 of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Anti-Oedipus* (1972) by Deleuze and Guattari.

Marxists have seen the family as an important conditioning agent in capitalist society, the cause of gender inequality and also the cause of much psychological damage to individuals. With the transition from capitalism to socialism will the family be redundant and collective upbringing the way forward?

Steve Clayton, London SW8.

Not free

Dear Editors

Regarding ‘From Handicraft to the Cloud Part 2’ (April *Socialist Standard*),

when you say “Linux”, you probably mean the GNU operating system that I launched in 1983, in combination with the kernel Linux. People often call this combination “Linux”, which is unfair to us.

Linux is just one component of the combination. That component was developed starting in 1991 by Torvalds, who never agreed with the ethical principles of the free software movement. Thus, when people call the whole system “Linux” and give all the credit to him, they lead people away from our ideas of freedom.

Torvalds’ current version of Linux actually includes nonfree pieces, and depends on other external nonfree pieces. When we make 100% free GNU+Linux distributions, we have to remove those pieces from Linux before putting it into the distribution.

See <http://www.gnu.org/gnu/linux-and-gnu.html>

for more explanation of this issue, and <http://www.gnu.org/gnu/gnu-linux-faq.html> about the name question.

If you were thinking of the complete system that people use, that is GNU/Linux or GNU+Linux.

If you were thinking of Torvalds’ program, I never particularly supported that.

Dr Richard Stallman, President, Free Software Foundation, Boston, USA



Richard Stallman



Why Jesus Wasn't a Socialist

NEWS STORIES about the stupidity of religion are sometimes just too bizarre to take in - despite the often serious consequences of the events they describe. A woman facing the death penalty in Saudi Arabia after being arrested for witchcraft for example (*Guardian* 19 April). The Catholic Church in India that had a sceptic arrested for blasphemy after he revealed that the cause of its 'miraculous weeping cross' was a leaking drain (Richard Dawkins website, 14 April). And again from the *Guardian* of 21 April, the latest antics of Terry Jones the nutty pastor from Florida who stokes up equally nutty Islamic fundamentalists by burning Korans.

Depressing stuff so lets leave the loonies alone this month and look at another widely repeated but mistaken idea often bandied about by trendy vicars and religious lefties: the idea that Jesus was a socialist.

In short, no, he wasn't. Nor could he have been. Two thousand years ago the material conditions required for socialism simply didn't exist. More important from a Marxist point of view, the conditions that *did* exist (primitive productive forces, slave labour, widespread illiteracy and superstition) meant that he would not have been able to imagine a socialist society of common ownership and free access - had



he existed, of course, which is doubtful.

Ideas don't spring from nowhere. Before ideas of a new society can be contemplated, material conditions that can give rise to those ideas must be in place. As Marx put it, 'mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation' and 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness' (preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*, 1859).

A light-hearted example of this is provided by one of the dialogues of the ancient satirist, Lucian. In his *True History* (of which he admits not a word is true) he describes an imaginary trip to the moon. Although he was a clever and witty storyteller, he was writing in the 2nd century CE, and the most technically advanced forms of travel familiar to him and which he could have imagined were powered by horse, oar or sail. Living nearly 1,700 years before Stephenson's Rocket, therefore, he was unable to imagine or equip his characters with even a steam-driven sky rocket, and so his moon voyage was made in an ordinary sailing ship which was whisked into the air by a powerful whirlwind and blown through the sky for seven days.

An excellent pamphlet dealing with Historical Materialism and a Marxist analysis of religion is John Keracher's *How The Gods Were Made* originally published in 1929 (and, if you haven't read it, now available from The Socialist Party).

Right! That's quite enough classical culture and Marxian theory from this column. Next month it's back to ridiculing the ridiculous again.

NW

Brief Reports

has no directorships in Murdoch-controlled companies and he has never omitted anything

A Leicester secondary school headmaster was under fire last week for mounting an 88mm howitzer on the roof of the school hall during the annual school egg and spoon race. Local parents complained that their children were being enlisted as gun crews when they had only volunteered for the 100 metres hurdles, and councillors expressed alarm at the unprecedented cost of ramping up school security. The headmaster, Mr Geoffrey Barking, said in a statement: 'It's a rough area. If it's good enough for the Olympics, it's good enough for us.'

in the Register of Members' Interests. In spite of these irregularities I continue to have every confidence in him as a politician of my own calibre.'

Education Secretary Michael Gove is to examine claims the Gay and Lesbian Teachers Association broke impartiality rules on the topic of Catholicism. It emerged this week that the GLTA wrote to nearly 400 state-funded schools inviting them to back a petition against Catholics. Schools and teachers are forbidden to promote one-sided political arguments. The GLTA has denied breaking any laws, saying gay views on Catholics are personal, not political: 'It is central to gay culture to treat everyone with respect, even people who commit unnatural acts in churches.'

It was announced this week that the Home Office was to simplify the induction process for new members of MI5 and MI6 following an internal survey that revealed that recruitment was dropping because the BBC series 'Spooks' is not on TV anymore. A spokesman said: 'We now ask applicants if they want to join the secret service, and if so, whether they can lock themselves successfully into a hold-all while lying in a bath. If they can do that, they're in.'

James Naughtie the Radio 4 presenter who famously introduced the culture secretary during a coughing fit in 2010 as 'Jeremy Cunt the Hulture Minister' has publicly apologised to listeners for publicly apologising to listeners. Mr Naughtie, 60, is seeking to assure Radio 4 fans who may be annoyed at his gaffe: 'I wish to reassure readers that I was right in the first place. I hope nobody was offended by my unforgivable retraction'.

Labour is demanding that David Cameron makes a Commons statement on the row surrounding the Transport secretary, Jodi Walker. There have been calls for Mr Walker to resign after allegations of irregular conduct. Mr Cameron told Newsnight last week: 'Jed has not been taking bungs from BSkyB, he has no special advisor working with the Murdochs, he has never been to one of their parties, he

Business Secretary Vince Cable has condemned proposals to make it easier for firms to sack under-performing staff as "the wrong approach". Mr Cable told reporters: 'There's no sense scaring the pants off workers when they can't afford pants. Besides, we don't want to go round saying that incompetence is a sackable offence. People might get ideas.'



Socialism in one village?

LAST MONTH Graham Keeley, the *Times* correspondent in Spain, reported on a visit to Marinaleda, a small village in Andalusia near Seville, under the headline "Viva la revolución: Spain's tiny answer to a crisis of capitalism" (5 May). He met the mayor who told him that "the village proves that Marx, not Adam Smith, was right".

He is not the first journalist to have written about this village of 3,000 inhabitants whose website proclaims it to be "a utopia through peace" (www.marinaleda.com). Its claim to fame is a council-run farm established on land that originally belonged to a local aristocrat and a housing scheme under which people can rent houses cheaply as long as they help build them themselves and help others to build theirs. The farm provides employment for local people and support for any becoming unemployed. It also generates an income to build and maintain local amenities. There is no local police force and villagers clear the streets and do repairs on a voluntary basis.

"It just shows," the mayor told Keeley, "that when people own the means of production they get more back." It certainly shows that the competitive individualism that capitalism seeks to impose is not the only way to live, even under capitalism, and that Adam Smith was wrong to assume that it is "human nature" to want "to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another". But is this "village socialism" a real "answer to a crisis of capitalism"? The mayor himself doesn't make this claim, only that his village council is a "counterpower" to that of the "bourgeoisie" and the "big landowners", protecting land workers from them and their policies. It may well be (anarchists should note that this involves using the ballot box), but clearly the problems facing workers in Spain cannot be dealt with solely at village level – or even at national level.

Spanish capitalism is in deep trouble and it's the workers who are paying the price. As the BBC reported on 27 April:

"Spanish unemployment has hit a new record high, official figures have shown.

The number of unemployed people reached 5,639,500 at the end of March, with the unemployment rate hitting 24.4%.... Official figures due out on Monday are expected to confirm that Spain has fallen back into recession. Earlier this week, the Bank of Spain said the economy contracted by 0.4% in first three months of this year, after shrinking by 0.3% in the final quarter of last year. Other figures released on Friday showed that Spanish retail sales were down 3.7% in March from the same point a year ago - the 21st month in a row that sales have fallen. In the first three months of the year, 365,900 people in Spain lost their jobs. The country has the highest unemployment rate in the European Union and that rate is expected to rise further this year. It has risen sharply since April 2007, when it stood at 7.9%."

With unemployment up from 8 percent to over 24 percent in five years (and growing), this is a slump of 1930s proportions. The mayor is right. The solution does lie in the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production but, since capitalism is already a world system, this has to be on a world level. A "global village" socialism, if you like.

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IN JANUARY 2008, this column described preparations then underway for a US attack on Iran. It is not impossible that the long-awaited attack may finally be launched this year, either by the United States or by Israel (with or without American permission). Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, defence minister Ehud Barak and foreign minister Avigdor Lieberman all want to go ahead, and are using the 'Israel lobby' in the U.S. to exert pressure on Obama.

They may not get their way, however, because there is strong opposition to an attack from inside the Israeli and American political establishments. Former chief of the Mossad (foreign intelligence) Meir Dagan calls it 'the stupidest idea I have heard in my life.' Former chief of the Shin Bet (domestic intelligence) Yuval Diskin says that Netanyahu and Barak are 'incompetent' and prone to 'messianic delusions' and have 'a poor grasp of reality'. The current intelligence chiefs and chiefs of staff have let it be known that they agree. Less information has become public about views inside the US establishment, but Obama's cancellation of joint military exercises with Israel is a hopeful sign.

Iran has declared that it will draw no distinction between an American and an Israeli attack. Its immediate response in either case would be to close the Strait of Hormuz, through which Persian Gulf oil has to pass to reach the ocean. The impact on the world economy would be devastating. Only a large-scale invasion by ground troops could reopen the strait. US forces in Iraq would be vulnerable, as would Israeli territory (despite Israel's expensive but overrated anti-missile defence systems). An attack may well fail even to achieve its ostensible goal of stopping Iran's nuclear programme; the result might in fact be to accelerate it.

The likely outcome depends in part on the real strength of the Israel lobby. Many people think that American decision makers are so afraid of the lobby that the US is unable to pursue a Middle East policy in line with its own interests (see, e.g., John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2007). Norman G. Finkelstein, who has himself been persecuted by the lobby, cogently argues in his latest book (*Knowing Too Much*, 2012) that this is a grossly exaggerated view. The US supports Israel because it continues to view its client state as a regional asset – all the more so now that its hold over Egypt has been weakened. But the US will not jeopardize important interests of its own at the

bidding of Israeli leaders.

The political situation in Egypt

In our analysis of the democratic revolution in Egypt (March 2011), we distinguished between the Mubarak clan, which had lost power, and the military regime as such. It was unclear at that point whether the popular movement would be able to push through the transition to political democracy and civilian government.

It is now clear that behind a parliamentary façade the military regime has succeeded in consolidating its position. A major factor was the deal that the generals reached with the Moslem Brotherhood, which mobilized its supporters, especially in the countryside, to block further change. Impressive as the popular movement appeared, it was always confined to the cities.

Parliamentary elections were held in Egypt from November 2011 to January 2012. The various Islamist forces did very well, winning a clear majority of votes (65 percent) and seats (70 percent). The liberal groupings – i.e., the parties united in the Egyptian Bloc plus the Reform and Development Party – obtained 11 percent of votes and 8.5 percent of seats, while the 'socialist' groups brought together in the Revolution Continues Alliance gathered merely 3 percent of votes and 1.5 percent of seats.

South China Sea

In April 2009, we surveyed conflicts between China, neighbouring states and the U.S. over the resources of the South China Sea. We suggested that an armed clash between China and the US might be more likely in this region than in connection with a possible Chinese invasion of Taiwan.

Two recent developments support this prediction. In April a confrontation began between China and the Philippines over fishing rights around the Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal, which is claimed by both countries. This is one of 200 or so small islands, banks and reefs in the sea whose ownership is disputed.

This particular problem could disappear over the next few years as the sea level rises with global warming and the islands are submerged. But this will only make the issue of hegemony over the South China Sea as a whole more acute. In May, China took the assertion of its claims to a new stage by starting deep water drilling for oil in the sea.

Mining asteroids

In May 2010, we discussed the possibility of mining Near Earth Asteroids in the context of the US space program. American capitalists have now brought this prospect one step closer by setting up the first asteroid-mining company – Planetary Resources, Inc. (*Washington Post*, 24 April).

We did get one thing wrong. We assumed that mineral-rich asteroids would be brought into earth orbit. It turns out, however, that planners are considering the idea of bringing them into orbit around the moon. So there is a close link between asteroid mining and the issue of control and exploitation of the moon (see *Material World*, December 2008).

STEFAN



A Coalition ship patrols the central Persian Gulf in the vicinity of an oil platform



A kick in the worst nightmares

A FEW weeks ago Nadine Dorries, obsessively thespian Tory MP for Mid-Bedfordshire, sneered that David Cameron and George Osborne are two arrogant posh boys who don't know the price of milk. This was aimed to hit Cameron where it should hurt – his determined campaign to convince us that being an Old Etonian heir to a posh-boy family fortune need not get in the way of his being sympathetic about the emergencies of survival confronting what he and his clique condescend to call decent, hard-working people and their families. And as for what it costs to get some milk onto those stricken meal tables – well, he knows all about that from his regular shopping trips to Chipping Norton with his intimidatingly aristocratic and solvent wife. It would probably be comforting to Cameron in promoting this self-image if he led a party churning out that same cant. But many Tories out there in the wide world insist on having other ideas: to be governed by harshly nostalgic concepts about

society and who should represent them in Parliament.

SAS Training

The Honourable Jacob William Rees-Mogg is undoubtedly posh but says he does not regret it. He is the son of Baron Rees-Mogg whose time



in career journalism peaked with his editorship during 1967 to 1981 of *The Times*, when he was a regular source of material for *Private Eye*. Jacob, who was gratifyingly precocious, wrote his first letter to the *Financial Times* when he was twelve and went first to Eton and then Oxford before spending 15 years in the City in his firm called Capital Management. It was unsurprising that he should have ambitions about getting into Parliament.

This required him to survive an SAS-like training by first standing in the kind of Labour seats where Tories had become the rarest of species. His first such venture was in 1997 in Fife Central, which could be characterised by the fact that it had been the last constituency to elect a Communist Party MP – in 1935 and 1945 – and where unemployment stood at 9 percent. His campaign, feeble as it was, could not have been helped by his canvassing with his nanny (who had, he said, come to Eton “...to change my sheets every week and bring me anything I needed”) and his unwavering accent (“...whatever I happened to be speaking about the number of votes in my favour dropped as soon as I opened my mouth”). As for the result, ‘obliterated’ would be a more useful word than ‘defeated’ and he hung on to his deposit by a whisker. He was given another chance at The Wrekin – a

key seat – in 2001 where the outcome was close enough to give him some optimism about his future in politics.

Cosy Electioneering

This optimism seemed to have been justified in May 2006 when he was selected by the Tories in North-East Somerset as their candidate for the next election. The fact that his sister Annunziata was selected soon afterwards as the candidate for the adjoining Somerton and Frome might have made for cosy family electioneering except that the effect was seen by those closer to the scene as rather less comfortable for Cameron. One correspondent likened the selections as “a kick in the cobbles ... for Cameron’s new-look Tories”. After Rees-Mogg had compared pupils of state schools to “potted plants”, a friend admitted that he was “not an expert media performer”. That same year he strayed into the field of economics with his analysis that it was “...about time we had a recession”. The remark was not apparently based on any world-wide assessment but on the assumption that it would not affect his gold stocks. In March 2009 he was again instructing us on economics and finance when he sent round his constituency a newsletter mentioning the “crashing pound” and “soaring unemployment”. The newsletter’s content was revealed to have been substantially lifted unacknowledged from an article in the *Sun* – of all newspapers – by Trevor Kavanagh, the Associate Editor.

Another Rees-Mogg effort at leafleting, ironically entitled *Honesty On The Economy*, contained a picture of him as the candidate talking to “a lady in Midsomer Norton”. The implications of that title were intriguing because that “lady”, assumed to be a constituent, was in fact an employee in his London office, allowed to make a 206-mile round journey to take part in that feeble deception. Another photograph probably intended to prove his credentials as a devoted countryman tackling a farmyard stile (in a smart city suit) looked as if he had been caught out urinating on the obstruction rather than climbing over it. Considering Rees Mogg’s obdurate tendency to attract such damagingly negative publicity it was little wonder that during the 2010 election – he won the seat in North-East Somerset by 4914 votes – *The Times* saw him as threatening to turn out as “David Cameron’s worst nightmare”.

Strategies

Well, in his public appearances Cameron does now convey the impression, too often for his own reassurance, of being under a degree of stress typical of a political leader striving to dress up his party image – the presentation of outworn, discredited policies – as the offspring of fresh and effective thinking. This dismal aspect of managing our lives is part of what is called politics, a politics in which there is also Rees Mogg, known as “a toff beyond caricature”, struggling to assert his obsolete style of the privileges of capitalism against those already in operation in Westminster. A clash between these two methods is not due to any divergence of principles, for they are solidly together in support of this cruel, stagnant society. Anyone concerned with a valid remedy for progress must stand aside, and move on from this sterile squabble in which our lot is to be kicked where it most hurts.

IVAN

France: No socialist president

Despite what the media said, France has not elected a 'Socialist President'

What did happen on 6 May was that a member of the so-called 'Parti socialiste' (PS), which is not a socialist party but a party of capitalist reform similar to the Labour Party in Britain, won the presidential election there.

François Hollande finished top in the first round of the election in April, but as he polled less than 50 percent a second round took place in which he beat the outgoing President, Nicholas Sarkozy. In the first round 6.4 million (18 percent) voted for Marine Le Pen of the National Front and a further 4 million (11 percent) for Jean-Luc Mélenchon of the Left Front. This means that some 30 percent voted for isolationist nationalism. It seems that the history of the 1930s may be beginning to repeat itself.

Mélenchon, a one-time PS minister (and a former Trotskyist – of course), left the PS in 2008 to form the Left Party. He has been seen as more 'socialist' than Hollande but the *Guardian* came up with some more accurate descriptions. Seamus Milne (3 April) described him as a 'radical left populist' (comparing him to George Galloway) while for Philippe Marlière (19 April) he was a 'radical reformist'. He certainly employed a more anti-capitalist rhetoric but, while he is opposed to 'neo-liberal', corporate capitalism, what he stood for was an isolationist, state-capitalist France.

Record of failure

The PS was formed in 1971 as a result of the merger of the old, reformist SFIO (which, believe it or not, was the French for 'French Section of the Workers' International') and various other groupings, under the leadership of François Mitterrand, who was to be elected President of France ten years later.

In its founding declaration, the PS proclaimed its equivalent to Labour Party's former Clause IV:

'Socialism fixes its object as the common good not private profit. Progressive socialisation of the means of investment, production and exchange constitute the indispensable basis for this'.

It went on:

'The socialist transformation cannot be the natural product of reforms correcting the effects of capitalism. It is not a question of re-arranging a system, but of substituting another one for it.'

This was just rhetoric. When Mitterrand was elected President of France in 1981 he made it quite clear that he had not been elected to bring about a change of system, but only to bring about a change in the existing system. It was the same distinction that had been made by the pre-war SFIO Prime Minister of the Popular Front, Léon Blum, between 'the conquest of power' (for socialism) and

'the exercise of power' (within capitalism).

Like François Hollande, Mitterrand promised 'growth'. His government immediately drew up a plan to reduce unemployment by growing the economy 3 percent a year through increasing both popular consumption and government investment. The government did increase the minimum wage and benefits and it did employ more people as well as nationalising the banks, but the economy didn't grow by 3 percent.

Instead, the workings of capitalism forced the government to devalue the franc three times within two years, the first as early as October 1981 (Mitterrand had only been elected in May of that year). A second followed in June of the following year. The third, in March 1983, was accompanied by a programme of austerity which clawed back the increase in wages and benefits introduced in May and June 1981. (For those who can read French, there's description of what happened and why here: <http://www.worldsocialism.org/canada/frechec.htm>)

In short, the Mitterrand government's attempt to grow the economy by increasing government and popular spending failed miserably. It failed because governments can't control the way the capitalist economy works. It's rather the other way round: the workings of the capitalist economy oblige all governments, whatever their original intention and whatever they might prefer to do, to give priority to profits and the conditions for profit-making. In a slump such as today, this means imposing austerity, as President Hollande will find out, despite the fact that the people of France have just voted against it - yet another demonstration of how the workings of capitalism frustrate what people want.

Bid to reform capitalism

Like Mitterrand before him, Hollande only wants to 'exercise power' within the context of capitalism and its rule of 'no profit, no growth'. On a visit to London in February he blamed financial deregulation for the crisis and said this needed to be reversed. Ed Miliband, who was with him, chipped in:

'We need to reform the way finance works and to reform the way that capitalism works. He is absolutely right' (*Times*, 1 March).

It's clear, then, that Hollande wants to try to reform 'the way that capitalism works'. He has set himself an impossible task. We can predict here and now that he won't succeed in making capitalism work in the general interest, and that, like the last so-called 'Socialist' President of France thirty years ago, he will fall flat on his face. He will then have to pick himself up and accept the economic realities of capitalism and keep austerity to facilitate profit-making. TINAUC. There is no alternative under capitalism.

ADAM BUICK



'Capitalism? No sweat...'

Greek Tragedy *A tourist-*

eye view



ΨΗΦΙΣΕ **ΚΚΕ**

ΕΡΧΕΤΑΙ ΝΕΑ ΘΥΕΛΛΑ

ΙΣΧΥΡΟ ΚΚΕ ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΝΙΚΗΣΕΙ Ο ΛΑΟΣ

ΜΗ ΣΚΟΡΠΙΖΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΨΗΦΟ ΣΟΥ ΔΕΞΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑ

Re-visiting Athens after twenty-odd years and in the middle of a severe economic crisis I wasn't sure exactly what to expect or how visible signs of the crisis would be. The drive from the airport gave few clues and once within the city there seemed to be plenty of large stores full of expensive clothes and all the latest electronic technology for those who could afford them.

Approaching the city centre though it became clear that numerous large shops and businesses were permanently closed and shuttered up. There was a heavy police presence on the streets too and the police motorcycles roaring about, usually two up and with blue lights flashing were a constant sign that all was not well. Angry looking graffiti and political posters began to appear, almost covering entire buildings from one end of the streets to the other. A sure sign of widespread anger and discontent.

Even a non-Greek speaker like myself could tell that this was not the kind of stuff we have decorating railway bridges and derelict buildings at home. The anarchist logo and the hammer and sickle were daubed up everywhere, and non-Greek speakers were well catered for. 'Wake up-Rise up', 'Fuck the politicians', 'Fuck the Police' were scrawled intermittently between Greek slogans. The message of one anarchist poster pasted up every few yards, although written in Greek was perfectly clear. It's artwork showed an angry looking muscular man, standing on a high ledge overlooking the city, hurling

a ballot box far away into the distance.

My hotel, behind Omonia Square in the city centre turned out to be very close to the main office of KKE. The Greek Communist Party. And it was quite an eye-opener to see the constant activity and stream of people, young, old, male and female purposefully filing in and out at all hours of the day, seven days a week.

Obviously with drastic cuts in wages and massive unemployment, the main concerns of most people on the streets was going to be how to feed themselves and keep a roof over their heads – if indeed, they still had one. Discussions with KKE members though, I hoped, would give some idea of their view of what communism was, and how it was to be achieved. Unsurprisingly perhaps, I was told that KKE would first establish communism in Greece. This would happen when workers, through their unions, took control of their workplaces and the state. The process would then be repeated throughout Europe.

One of their slogans in both Greek and English, 'Down with the Dictatorship of the Monopolies European Union' had been reproduced on a massive banner hanging from the acropolis and was intended, apparently, to pave the way for this.

Syriza too, who's supporters I spoke to described themselves as

'Marxist Leninist' and, who assured me that their aim was the establishment of socialism, held a massive rally in Omonia Square. Their 'anti bailout' message was certainly popular and seemed to have attracted vast numbers of converts. These converts however, have only been attracted by Syriza's hopes to reform, or to scramble out of, Greece's current economic mess. Most probably have no knowledge of what socialism is, or any hopes or ideas for its establishment.

My main reason though for going to Athens though was not to see Greece wrestling with its economic crisis. I was here for the history. And to visit the Agora, the market place and centre of activity in classical Athens. And the Pnika (or the Pnyx as the guide books have it). This is the place where the people who came up with the idea of democracy in the first place met to address their fellow citizens, to listen to each others arguments, and to discuss and vote on them.

It's a long, hot, uphill climb to the Pnika (it took half an hour just to descend to the ancient market place again) And it was quite sobering to reflect on what the Athenian citizens who regularly made that trip to engage in direct democracy would have thought of our idea of democracy, where we are just offered the chance to elect a new leader every 4 or 5 years. And what would they have made of that poster in today's Athens showing the angry and frustrated anarchist hurling the ballot box away?

NW

Breivik's philosophy of hate

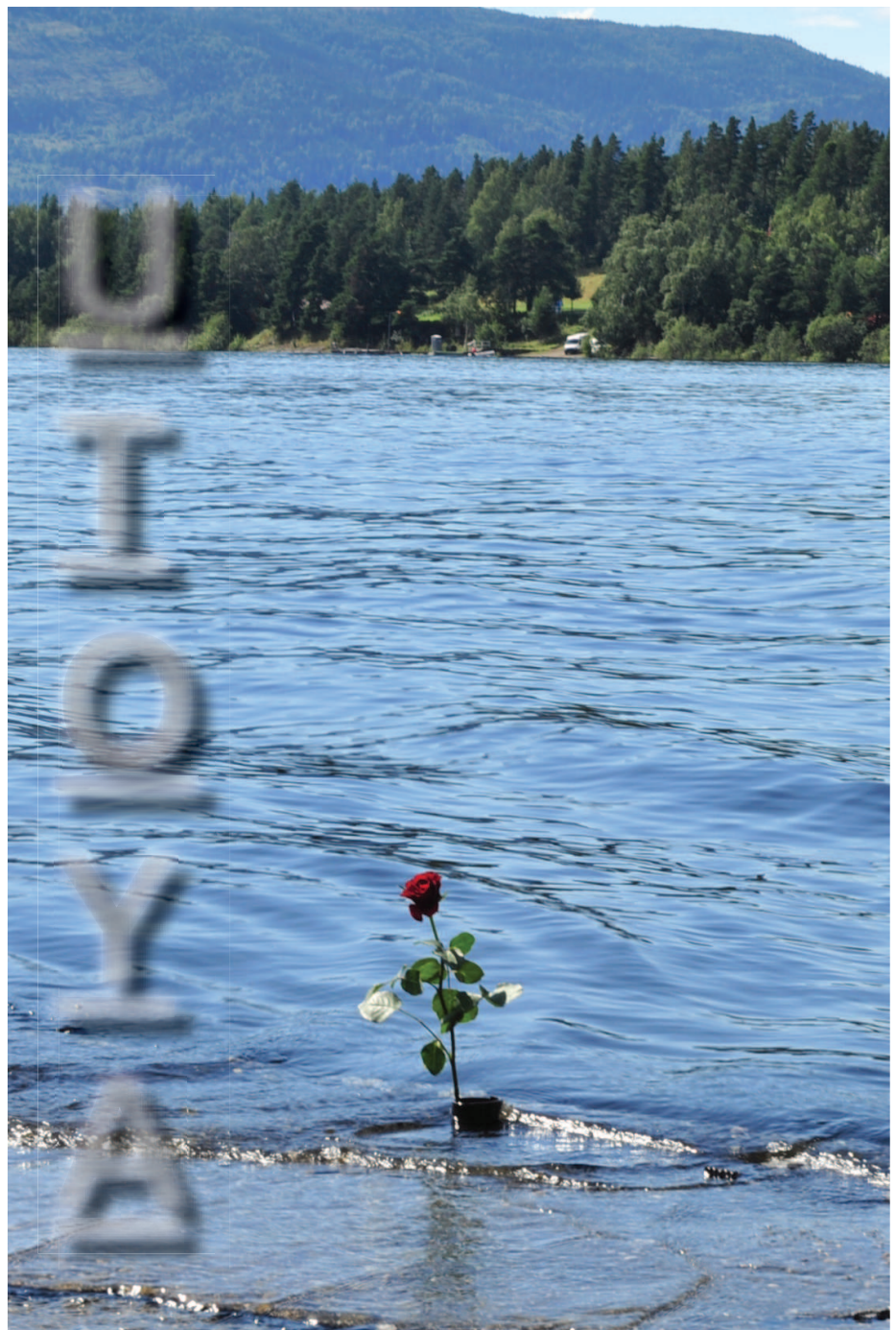
We look at mass murderer Anders Breivik's attempt to imitate Mein Kampf

On 16 April the trial of the Norwegian right-wing terrorist Anders Breivik started and is scheduled to conclude by the end of June. Breivik has confessed to the bombing in Oslo, killing eight, and the shooting of sixty-nine at the Norwegian Labour Party's youth camp in Utoya.

Like young, white, male right-wing terrorists before him, such as Timothy McVeigh and David Copeland, Anders Breivik (despite his claims to be part of the Knights Templar) seems to have acted alone. Like McVeigh and Copeland, Breivik became disillusioned with co-operating with anyone in larger far-right organisations preferring a kind of messianic narcissistic individualism.

All grew up under the capitalist system, but with varying provision for welfare. McVeigh became transient after the leaving the army, and ended up in a dead-end job with long hours. Copeland struggled through a series of failed jobs before working on the London Underground. Breivik perhaps enjoyed the best welfare provision growing up, McVeigh quite possibly the most meagre. All were alienated from society and all found familiar scapegoats for their degrees of alienation. McVeigh expressed some of this in writing before the bombing and after in a 1,200 word essay. Only well-educated Breivik, however, seemed well-paid and not precariously employed (traditionally the far right exploit unemployment), and took a language other than his

first and wrote a 1,518 page manifesto entitled 2083: A *European Declaration of Independence* by Andrew Berwick. This somewhat troubles those keen to label anything outside the political mainstream as 'extremist' and medicalise his condition as insane. He wrote that his main motive for committing the atrocities on 22 July was to market this manifesto.



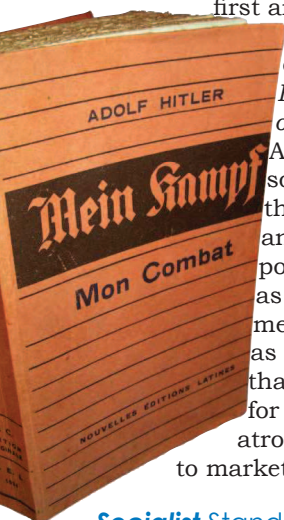
The far-right scapegoat which finds the most traction post-9/11 happens to be Islam. It used to be Jewish immigration or Afro-Caribbean immigration. While Copeland talked of a Zionist conspiracy, the far-right, after 9/11, switched support from Palestine to Israel. In any case, like European efforts of the English Defence League, Breivik is more pan-nationalist than nationalist. He writes:

'One of the reasons why hardcore anti-Semites (David Duke would be a case in point) are unreliable allies is that they hate Jews so much that it shuts down the rational parts of their brain and they end up making common cause with Muslims, based on mutual hatred. The same logic applies to hardcore anti-Europeans, of which there are many even at 'conservative' websites such as LGF.

They have an irrational hatred, a dark cloud in their minds which prevents them from seeing the world clearly. In a way, some LGF-ers thus have more in common with David Duke than they'd like to admit. If mindless anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism should be considered a problem then so should mindless anti-Europeanism.'

What matters chiefly is that the group persecuted by fascists is in a position of weakness. Breivik implicitly acknowledged this 'If I was a bearded jihadist there would be no question of insanity'.

Only about half of the manifesto was written by Breivik and the rest is compiled from other sources. 'I've spent a total of 9 years of my life working on this project. The first five years were spent studying and creating a financial base, and the last



three years was spent working full time with research, compilation and writing.'

The introductory chapter of the manifesto defining 'Cultural Marxism' is reprinted from *Political Correctness: A Short History of an Ideology* by the right-wing think tank, Free Congress Foundation. Very early on, the fabrications and leaps of logic jump out. 'Political Correctness now looms over Western European society like a colossus.' then 'Political Correctness is Marxism, with all that implies: loss of freedom of expression, thought control, inversion of the traditional social order, and, ultimately, a totalitarian state.'



Nazi anti-communist/Jewish poster, 1940s

By the end of the introduction, Political Correctness and other restrictions of freedom of speech or language are treated as synonymous with Cultural Marxism. The conclusion then is to get rid of both, which somewhat discredits later claims to defend free speech.

It should come as little surprise then that Breivik's particular bête noire was 'Marxists'. He is reported to have repeatedly shouted during the shooting, 'You are going to die today, Marxists!' and the badge on the left arm of his diving suit read 'Marxist Hunter'.

A lot of what follows is tortuous, wrongly interpreted, one-sided opinion, or just plain invented. Long-term demographic projections, an old favourite of fascists, make an appearance despite being notoriously dubious.

Book 1, entitled 'History and Islam' focuses on largely historical disputes about genocides, falsification and apologetics. Islam and its adherents are selectively demonised while religion generally gets a get-out-of-jail free card. The manifesto states 'Negationism in Europe is practised

with the most prowess by historians and writers who are under the spell of Marxism. Lenin had wanted to use the Muslims against the French and British colonialists. Modern Leftists with Marxist sympathies see Islam as an ally against Israel and the US.'

Book 2, entitled 'Europe Burning' is dull speculation about a conspiracy theory of 'Eurabia', and some reprinted rambling about Feminism. 'Cultural Marxism' is also used interchangeably with multiculturalism and becomes a phrase for any bad thing you can think of.

One chapter is entitled 'Why the discipline of Sociology must be completely removed from Academia'. As far as Breivik is concerned, the reason for this is that it is Marxist. He suggests replacing it with ideas from The Bible, Machiavelli, George Orwell, Thomas Hobbes, John Stuart Mill, John Locke, Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, Ayn Rand and William James. The selective philosophising is tedious and tiresome to read. Perhaps because he knows he is on shaky ground with capitalism and democracy, the chapter on 'Globalised Capitalism' gets a mere four pages and in any case is traditionally code on the far-right for anti-Semitism.

In the rest of Book 2 he writes chapters entitled 'Discrimination and harassment against cultural conservatives' and 'ANTIFA/Labour Jugend – State sponsored Marxist lynch mobs' where he states, 'These brave Leftists or 'anti-Fascists' do, for some curious reason, seem to behave pretty much like, well, Fascists, a bit like the Brown Shirts in the 1930s, physically assaulting political opponents to silence them.' Some of this unfortunately can be levelled at SOS Rasisme and Blitz in Norway. The manifesto concludes in Book

3 with a mixture of practicality and pure fantasy. One of the final chapters oddly reproduces a 'Marxist' study course. Breivik also credits Wikipedia. All in all, the manifesto represents years of wasted time, money and effort and, most important, wasted lives. It



reads as a hotchpotch of prejudices, has little nuance and is full of generalisations, principally about wrong assumptions. As if to remind us where these prejudices come from, U.S. conservative commentator Glenn Beck came out with the most offensive stupid response. He compared the victims to the Hitler Youth before being reminded that groups affiliated with the Tea Party movement and the Beck-founded 9-12 Project also sponsor politically oriented camp programs for children. The trial continues.

DJW



Oslo, 2011



It says a lot about the society we live in that there are so many war memorials. The latest addition to London's collection is to the men of RAF Bomber Command who were killed in operations over enemy territory during the 1939/45 war. Wait a minute; that war ended nearly seventy years ago. What took so long? Well to answer that we might do worse than think about Terry, who does not rate a place on a memorial because, although he flew in many of those operations he avoided being killed in them. Strip away his agonising dependence on alcohol and nicotine and you are left with Terry as a nice guy – gentle, caring, sociable. Restless, mind you, which may have been related to his comfortably-off family whose farming allowed them to plonk him into a posh nearby grammar school, but which infected him with an addiction to fast motor bikes and big, powerful goods lorries. And which then led to his partaking in a cruelly prolonged and deliberate act of mass destruction and killing.

Rear Gunner

At the time the gossip was that a desire to escape from his family drove Terry, when he was seventeen, to volunteer for Royal Air Force aircrew. Perhaps he dreamed of being a Spitfire pilot - Winston Churchill and The Few and all that. But he was forced to contain such energies when he was classified as a rear gunner - the coldest, most isolated, most dangerous position - in a squadron of Lancaster bombers. This aircraft was regarded as a marvel of speed, operating ceiling

The rear gun turret of a Lancaster bomber



and bomb load, useful to the policy of what came to be known as area - saturation - bombing which emphatically laid waste to a number of great German cities and killed between 300,000 and 600,000 civilians. The casualties in Bomber Command exceeded 55,000 killed - one seventh of all British deaths in action during the course of the war. But the Lancaster offered its rear gunner one hopeful feature, for in an emergency he could use a mechanism to spin the turret so that the armoured doors he had entered through opened out at the tail end of the aircraft; he could then escape by tipping himself backwards and operating his parachute.

Coincidence And Cowardice

Terry contributed to the horror, as he recalled, by completing over sixty operations - well above the average or any expectation - which he survived through a combination of beneficial coincidences and cowardice. On one occasion, in terror while under attack, he used the aircraft Elsan and came back to his turret to find it had been blasted away. On another, soon after taking off and while still in English air space, he heard the pilot shouting that he could smell someone smoking; Terry heard only the word "smoke" so without asking any questions he spun his turret and threw himself out into the evening air. He could give a vivid account of dangling calmly from his parachute while watching the

bomber continue on its way to the flak and night fighters. The most colourful incident was when the pilot found, after landing safely from an operation, that Terry had fallen asleep - which was strictly forbidden. He ordered the crew to leave Terry there while he took the aircraft out to the dispersal point at the remotest fringes of the airfield. When Terry eventually woke up his first, immediate sensation took in only the absence of vibration and engine noise so again he threw himself out - except that in this case he was only a few feet off the ground and had a long walk back to the airfield buildings, dragging an open parachute with him. In the years after the war he could laugh at these experiences but he could not laugh - could not even

talk about - two incidents when his pilot could not get a badly damaged bomber back to base and crashed it into the sea, or another when his squadron came back to be told that they had seriously failed to hit their target and so must return at once to do it as ordered, flying in the daylight formation for which they had no training. Terry's dominating memory of that raid was of spotting another Lancaster alongside, in which he knew a close friend was the rear gunner. As he watched the bomber dissolved into a ball of fire.

Terrifying Force

By the time Terry was flying on operations, the effectiveness of RAF bombers, in terms of their range, power, technological equipment and bomb load, had been vastly improved. Which must also be said about the disciplined brutality of the raids. Now it was all controlled over the target by a designated Leader Marker who dropped a first flare. This was followed by the Pathfinders dropping aiming marker flares, which the

– method of wielding that terrifying force. Should it be against targets such as aircraft factories, oil plants, railways? Or should it be straightforwardly used against human beings, smashing their homes and all around them and killing as many as possible with the object of undermining their morale and affecting the German war effort. In the process of this argument a number of German cities - Berlin, Cologne, Essen and others - had to pay a savage price. A passionate devotee of the policy of area bombing was then at the head of the RAF Bomber Command - Air Marshall Arthur Harris (known, for obvious reasons, as "Bomber" Harris). Air Marshall Harris persisted in the face of some influential opposition and attempts to sack him: "...in the last eighteen months Bomber Command has virtually destroyed forty-five out of the leading sixty German cities. There are not many industrial centres of population now left intact. Are we going to abandon this vast task, which the German themselves have long admitted to be their worst headache, just as it nears completion?" (1 November

1944). The rancour in this dispute over the most likely way to kill the largest number of the enemy was unusually enduring; Harris had to wait until 1953 for the government to award him a baronetcy, there was no campaign medal for the crews and only recently has there been that permanent memorial.

Hypocrisy

Against the odds Terry survived into civilian life, got married, had kids and was soon brought up against the fact that being one of yesterday's heroes - one of the glorious Bomber Boys - was not unfailingly attractive to employers. And then there was the ever-present need to control the more



Above: a destroyed German city. Below: Air Marshall Arthur Harris



main bomber force then used (once the Marker Leader was satisfied it had all been carried out accurately) to aim their bomb load onto the buildings and people below. And while this was happening the higher levels of command, where the policy was laid down, were involved in a long debate about the most effective - the most damaging and most murderous

erratic features in his personality, which may have been acceptable up in the air above some burning German city but not so useful on the ground in peacetime. In bald terms, he and his family had a hard time of it. He split from his wife and was told that he suffered from an aggressive cancer in his lungs. In his last days in hospital he once blurted out that he "...could fight all those fucking Germans but I can't fight this." At that time the ravaged cities were being re-built, the places of those who had died were being taken by others. And now, in a most blatant example of ruling-class hypocrisy, there is offered a monument to the men who died while they did their bit to make it happen. All of them were victims of the propaganda which insisted that there was an enemy who needed to be fought to exhaustion when in truth all of their interests were in unity. Terry was there because he accepted those lies - allowed them to wreck what should have been another useful life.

IVAN

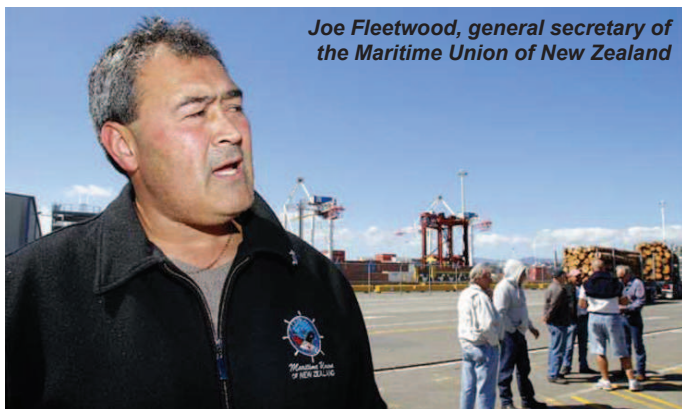
Another Sea Disaster

The MV *Rena* ran aground on Astrolabe Reef off Tauranga in the Bay of Plenty, North Island, New Zealand on 5 October last year, spilling fuel oil and containers into the sea. The *Rena* is a Liberian-flagged, Greek-owned Flag of Convenience (FOC) vessel. The crew consisted of 23 Filipinos.

Not surprisingly, the grounding of the *Rena*, and subsequent oil spill, has caused outrage and concern, and has been reported worldwide. The ship disintegrates on the Reef. According to Joe Fleetwood, general secretary of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, writing in *The Maritimes* (Issue 36, Summer 2011/12), many in New Zealand are confused as to how the disaster happened, and who was responsible. People have a right to know, he said.

Flag of Convenience

The Maritime Union blames the New Zealand government and authorities as much as individual crew members. The authorities have created a situation where FOC shipping has been encouraged. Their “open coast” policy has meant that “unacceptable practices have become the norm in New Zealand waters”.



Joe Fleetwood, general secretary of the Maritime Union of New Zealand

Many in New Zealand were shocked to discover that the FOC system operates on the New Zealand coast. They should not have been. In many of these FOC states such as Liberia, there are few regulations. Says Joe Fleetwood: “This is deregulation operating in a globalized market, with no oversight, no responsibility and no morality.” Quite. He continues:

“Flag of Convenience ships are notorious for their exploitation of crews, and safety risks. They endanger our environment and port security, and are a threat to the future of New Zealand maritime industry... It is a cheap way of doing things. But as we all know, doing things on the cheap has a funny way of ending up being more expensive in the long run.”

Legacy of Neglect

Was the *Rena* faulty? Apparently, prior to its arrival in New Zealand, it had been hauled up in China and Australia for numerous issues and multiple problems.

Was a full inspection by Maritime New Zealand made given numerous documented failings? According to the union, a Maritime New Zealand “inspection” consisted of asking the Master of the *Rena* if the previous problems had been fixed. Presumably, he said they had. So that was OK then! Following the disaster, the Master was arrested. He was blamed two weeks after the grounding and spillage; a convenient scapegoat.

According to *The Maritime*, a TV3 News investigation noted that the government was repeatedly warned that New Zealand wasn’t prepared sufficiently for such an oil spill. An Official Information Act indicated that the New Zealand government had considered whether a specialist oil response vessel was needed. But it decided against. It had, it said, such vessels as “The *Awanvia*”, with suitable equipment which it could seek for assistance. In the event, however, it was almost five days before it arrived on site and began pumping fuel off the *Rena*.

Union Criticism

Not surprisingly, the New Zealand Maritime Union is highly critical. General Secretary, Joe Fleetwood complains that workers are under threat because of lack of proper regulations and enforcement in the industry. Workers are expendable. Both local and overseas workers are being harmed in the workplace because of slack regulations. And, it is worse on FOC vessels.

Says the union:

“The incidents on Flag of Convenience vessels, including foreign charter vessels in the New Zealand fishing industry, make for a long and grim list. Sinkings, drownings, asphyxiations, severe injuries, physical attacks, underpayment, pollution and overfishing, abuse and exploitation are all documented throughout the maritime industry. For years the problem has been out of sight and out of mind.”

And not just in New Zealand, I would add. Indeed, complacent politicians come and go, and “profits kept flowing to the shipping corporations”. Fleetwood observes that in the current environment, profit comes first. “Unless we have strong unions on the job to defend health and safety, and legislation that is backed by some teeth, then we will see more and more preventable deaths and injuries.” Too true. But, unfortunately, legislation and reform measures, even if acted upon, will not solve the problems. Only the abolition of the cause – capitalism and the profit motive system – will do that. This is what the World Socialist Party of New Zealand, and socialists elsewhere, propose and for which they are organised.

PETER E. NEWELL

The MV *Rena* after running aground



William Morris's Red House in Bexleyheath



"My work is the embodiment of dreams" - William Morris

After a train journey from London to Bexleyheath, you walk through roads of 1930's semi-detached private housing to arrive at William Morris's Red House. When Morris lived here this area was an open Kentish landscape of orchards and oast houses above the Cray valley near the hamlet of Upton. Morris commissioned architect Philip Webb to build the Red House. It was the need to furnish the interior of the house that led Morris to establish his textile firm and today you can now relish the aesthetic of his 'Strawberry Thief'.

Inside the Red House Morris, Webb and Burne-Jones created a medievalist environment of furniture, stained glass, wall hangings, wall paintings, panels, embroidered panels, the impressive Drawing Room settle with miniature minstrels gallery, and murals featuring Chaucer, Malory, Froissart and Dante themes.

Ted Hollamby lived at the Red House and founded the William Morris Society but was also an important architect of post-war housing. Hollamby was Senior Architect at London County Council where it was said the department was infused with the ideas of Morris and the formalism of Le Corbusier. Later he was Director of Architecture at Lambeth Council. There was massive council house building inspired by Bevan's "socialist" vision of new estates within capitalism where "the working man, the doctor and the clergyman will live in close proximity to each other". The LCC

and Lambeth were responsible for the design and construction of affordable, high quality housing projects such as Lambeth Towers, the Alton, Thamesmead, Pepys and Brandon Estates. This reformist dream came to an ignominious end when capitalism went into crisis in the 1970's. Ironically, Hollamby ended his career in the 1980's working for the London Docklands Development Corporation where redevelopment of the Isle of Dogs was now private sector in creating homes

host "impromptu CP meetings". The CPGB adopted a reformist policy towards capitalism which was little different from the reformist Labour programme of 1945 and Bevan's "egalitarian" vision for housing inside capitalism. Reforms to capitalism do not work in the long term. The house building of successive reformist Labour and Tory governments was eventually undone.

William Morris explicitly dismissed the whole idea of reformism in the manifesto he drafted for the



Socialist League in 1885. Morris had originally been in Social Democratic Federation (SDF) but this organisation did not have the blessing of Engels, and its authoritarianism and increasing reformism led Morris

for the corporate wealthy.

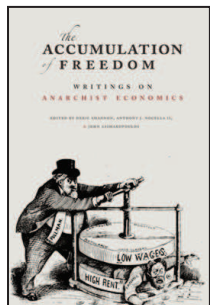
In the Studio you can find Hollamby's book collection and Pevsner's, but also works including *Dialectical Materialism and Science* by Maurice Cornforth (theorist of the Communist Party of Great Britain), Stalin's *Leninism*, and Lenin articles for *Iskra*. The Red House used to

and Eleanor Marx to leave and form the Socialist League. Morris died in 1896. In 1904 members left the SDF to establish the Socialist Party of Great Britain whose avowed policy is the abolition of capitalism and the introduction of socialism not reforms to capitalism.

STEVE CLAYTON

Anarchist economics

The Accumulation of Freedom: Writings on Anarchist Economics. AK Press. 2012



Anarchists have a reputation for being weak in economics. This collection of articles is an attempt to refute this. It doesn't succeed entirely and in fact tends to confirm that most modern-day

anarchists get their economic ideas from Marx (as did Bakunin who was once going to translate *Capital* into Russian). Some of the writers don't seem to be anarchists at all, in particular Robin Hahnel and Michael Albert, the inventors of a blueprint for an ideal future society they call "parecon". Hahnel seems to be a Keynesian, advocating more state intervention (yes!) as a way out of the present crisis and of avoiding future ones. Albert is a supporter of President Chavez of Venezuela, and urges people to vote for him.

Even so, the book does give a view of the range of opinion amongst

anarchists. Some – the modern-day followers of Proudhon – are “market anarchists” who hold that there is nothing wrong with production for the market, except that the competitors should be worker-cooperatives rather than capitalist corporations and there should be no state to interfere in it. This is a minority view these days (though well represented in the US), but there are other anarchists who are against full, free-access communism (known as “collectivists” rather than “communists”) who favour instead relating people's consumption to the amount of work they do.

Marx himself sort of endorsed this for the very early days of post-capitalist society and some in the Marxist tradition still argue for labour-time vouchers. We don't. Neither do some anarchists. In fact, two contributors to this book describing themselves as “libertarian communists” – Deric Shannon and Scott Nappalos - argue against this in the same terms that we do. Nappalos even quotes from our pamphlet *Socialism As A Practical Alternative*.

Nappalos says that, as a libertarian communist, he stands for “a society based on the abolition of remuneration in the form of wages and democratic control” and “an economy based on the destruction of the wage system, and a de-linking of

the value of labor in production from the distribution of society's wealth to its members.” He makes the valid point that it is not possible anyway to measure an individual's contribution to production. He writes “in our time, production is largely social. The contribution of an individual is very difficult to isolate from the contributions of countless others that make work possible”. Any such attribution can only be arbitrary, as in the parecon blueprint, of which he says: “having co-workers judge each other's work would turn gossip and infighting at work presently from an annoyance into a system of power over wages.”

Shannon's criticism is directed more at “market anarchists”. He quotes another libertarian communist, Joseph Kay:

“The assets of a co-op do not cease being capital when votes are taken on how they are used within a society of generalised commodity production and wage labour. That is to say there remains an imperative to accumulate with all the drive to minimise the labour time taken to do a task this requires, even in a co-op.”

Other articles describe anarchist economic practice such as factory occupations, setting up vegan cafés and campaigns directed at particular capitalist firms (called PEDCs or “political-economic disruptive



C, V and S

BRITISH GAS customers have been receiving a diagram with their bills which answers the question “where does your money go?” It shows that 56 percent goes on “gas bought from wholesale market”, 21 percent to “delivery to your home”, 10 percent to “government obligations and taxes”, 8 percent to operating costs, leaving 5 percent as “our profit”.

What does Marx make of this? To explain how capitalism works he employs three basic concepts, C, V and S. C stands for what he termed constant capital, V, for variable capital, and S, for surplus-value. By constant capital he means that part of total capital that is invested in factories, machinery, materials and energy. Constant capital merely transfers its value (hence the name, ‘constant’) to the new product, either in one go or gradually through depreciation. Variable capital is that part of total capital that is invested in the purchase of labour-power and produces a greater value than its own (hence the name, ‘variable’). This comes about because the exercise of labour-power is the source of new value. The value that variable capital produces over and above its own value is S, surplus value.

From this Marx derived various explanatory concepts. S/V was the rate of surplus value or rate of exploitation. S/(C + V) was the rate of profit.

Some of Marx's concepts can be translated into the categories of conventional bourgeois economics, except that Marx's analysis is in terms of values whereas conventional economics is in terms of prices, which in practice are hardly ever the same.

With this proviso, S + V corresponds to what conventional economists call “added value”. But there is a complication, even in Marx, regarding C. It can mean either total capital invested or only that part of constant capital that is transferred to a product in one process of production. Any confusion can be avoided by confining the “rate of profit” to the first case and introducing for the second the concept of “profit margin” as S/(C + V + S) even though this is not in Marx explicitly.

In his *Guardian* column (23 April) Aditya Chakraborty drew attention to a study by the Centre for Research in Socio-Cultural Change (Cresc) on the “Apple Business Model”. He highlighted the fact it cost only \$178.45 to assemble an Apple iPhone in China whereas it was sold in America for \$680, “a whacking gross margin of 72%” as he put it.

There was, however, something more interesting in the article itself (which can be found on the Cresc website). Here the authors employ the concept of “labour share of value added” (LSVA), defining “value added” as “Labour costs including social charges (L) + cash surplus (C) (calculated as depreciation and amortisation + interest paid + profit retained & distributed)”.

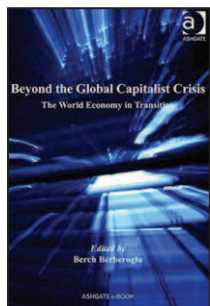
The authors quote figures to show that “in the long run, US manufacturing LSVA has been declining unsteadily from a 70% level since the early 1980s to reach 55% in 2007; the German decline started later but there is a full 10 point difference between the 75% level of the early 1990s and 65% level of the early 2000s”. In China, on the other hand, “manufacturing LSVA ratios are currently at an extraordinary low level of 27.2% in 2007 and an estimated 26.2% in 2008.”

It's good of conventional economics to provide us with a tool for calculating the rate of worker exploitation, since LSVA is L/(L + C), the equivalent in Marx of V/(V + S), from which the rate of exploitation S/V can be derived as C/L.

campaigns”). However, these are not specifically anarchist activities, only activities in which some anarchists engage.

ALB

***Beyond The Global Capitalist Crisis.* Edited by Berch Berberoglu. Ashgate. 2012**



This collection of essays is a restatement of classical Leninist economics and politics. The authors argue that the current global crisis “is permanent and irreversible”. The

theoretical framework is provided by Lenin’s theory of capitalism as imperialism, in which the contradictions of capitalism which “would have led it to collapse on the national level were thus transferred to the global level”. In 1917 Lenin “showed the way forward” by identifying the source of the crisis and its solution: “socialism – i.e. a state and society ruled by the working class”.

One contributor claims that, for a number of unexplained reasons, “actually existing socialism” succumbed to a crisis of its own in which “socialism” in the USSR and elsewhere collapsed. It’s no mystery. These state capitalist regimes stagnated under the rising costs of a bureaucratic-military state machine (since this must be largely financed out of surplus value redirected from the productive sector of the economy) and an increasingly expensive dictatorship *over* the proletariat.

Capitalism will not collapse, nor will the crisis be permanent – if for no other reason than that there is currently no working class movement for socialism. In the absence of that understanding, desire and action for change, capitalism in one form or another will persist. State capitalism (nationalisation or state ownership) is not socialism; nor is a step towards socialism as Lenin believed.

LEW

SOCIALIST STANDARD INDEX FOR 2011

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Theatre Review

***Long Day’s Journey into Night* by Eugene O’Neill**



This 1956 Pulitzer Prize-winning play, written in 1942 and recently staged at the Apollo Theatre in London, was not performed until after O’ Neill’s death. This was because of its autobiographical nature, its inclusion of characters clearly drawn from members of the O’ Neill Irish-American family and its descriptions of real incidents within it.

O’ Neill was a breath of fresh air in American theatre in the 1920s, a writer of realistic dramas inspired by the naturalism of Chekhov, Strindberg and Ibsen. He avoided melodrama and sentimentality and concerned himself with tragedy, pessimism, and socialism. He used vernacular speech and portrayed working-class characters in works like ‘Anna Christie’ and ‘The Iceman Cometh’.

O’ Neill moved in left wing circles in Greenwich Village, New York City, where he met John Reed and Louise Bryant (their meange-à-trois is portrayed in the 1981 film ‘Reds’). Reed, a member of the Socialist Party of America, was in Russia in 1917 at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution and wrote about it in his book ‘Ten Days That Shook The World’. He helped form the Communist Party of America.

In the early twentieth century there were exciting times for socialism in the USA. These saw the formation of the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905, an organisation which advocated the abolition of capitalism and the wage system and opposed the First World War. The increasingly reformist nature of the Socialist Party of America led car workers in Detroit to leave in 1916 and form the Socialist Party of the United States. This later became the World Socialist Party of the United States, the fraternal party of the SPGB.

‘Long Day’s Journey Into Night’ dissects the conflicts of the bourgeois thespian James Tyrone (O’ Neill’s father) and his wife and two sons, and covers themes of patriarchy, the lack of fulfilment for women, addiction (alcohol and

morphine), resentments, self-deception, illness, greed, failure, artistic promise, and general dysfunction in bourgeois family life in early twentieth-century American capitalism. The Irish-born family patriarch emigrated to America at the time of the Great Hunger of the 1840s when the potato famine and subsequent failure of the British government led to a million deaths and mass emigration from the Emerald Isle. O’ Neill describes Tyrone’s experience of child labour and family poverty in the expanding industrial capitalism of nineteenth-century New York City.

Tyrone’s son Edmund (O’ Neill) is a budding playwright, with a TB condition who has left Princeton early. O’ Neill himself left after a year because as the apocryphal story goes “he threw a beer bottle through the window of Professor Woodrow Wilson” (later the US President who promised voters to keep America out of the First World War but took them in, and later oversaw the Volstead Act which prohibited alcohol in the USA for 13 years).

O’ Neill analyses the dysfunctionality of a bourgeois family in capitalism and shows the neuroses associated with bourgeois family life. Marx and Engels pointed out that the bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course with the abolition of capitalism.

STEVE CLAYTON

Film Review

J. Edgar



In *J. Edgar*, Leonardo Di Caprio, under Clint Eastwood’s direction, gives a thoroughly credible performance as FBI Chief, J. Edgar Hoover. Di Caprio portrays him as the paranoid, vindictive, delusional, hypocritical (he refers to Senator McCarthy as an opportunist) and egotistical man that he was; certainly not high on the list of guys you’d want your daughter to marry.

Arnie Hammer as Hoover’s paramour, Clyde Tolson, Naomi Watts as Helen Gandy, his long-serving secretary and Judi Dench as his overly attentive mother (“You will restore our family to greatness”) all turn in fine performances. Hoover is,

in fact, shown as a mama's boy who went in for crime-busting to please the law-and-order obsessed lady.

Too much is devoted to exploring Hoover's sexuality, though screenwriter Dustin Lance Black, who is gay, probably felt it necessary. To quote Black, "it was a thing you couldn't discuss even in the privacy of your own home and even with someone you might have feelings for, because it was still a love that did not speak its name." Black, surprisingly, has Hoover enrage Tolson by confessing he once shared a romantic liaison with Dorothy Lamour.

This gives one some idea how petty he was. Hoover's ambitions knew no bounds; when shut out of the Lindberg kidnapping investigation by the New Jersey State Police, he had Congress pass a law making kidnapping a federal instead of a state crime so the FBI, could horn in.

Surprisingly, Black makes no mention of Hoover's greatest ambition to make the FBI a world-wide intelligence organization, which the CIA eventually became. Hoover had his vast army of agents pursue whatever grudges: criminal, political, sexual or personal, that he held - and he held plenty of them. He kept tabs on the extra-curricular activities of President Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Eleanor Roosevelt. In Eleanor Roosevelt's case that included spying on her trysts with lovers of both sexes. No-one in the FBI was allowed to be more popular than Eddie baby. That meant

destroying the career of agent, Melvin Purvis who had gunned down John Dillinger.

Too much attention is devoted to his relationships with Tolson, Miss Gandy and his mother in this 135-minute movie, which fails to pursue more intriguing matters - such as, Hoover's refusal to pursue organized crime as opposed to nickel-and-dime bank robbers. Rumour has it the mob had photographs of Hoover in drag and in a compromising position with Clyde Tolson who he made his number two man in the FBI.

Nor did the movie show his relentless persecution of homosexuals, eventually forcing them out of the closet as an act of retaliation. One psychiatrist would later say, "They should call that the J. Edgar Hoover Syndrome - persecuting the very thing he was."

When Richard Nixon was elected it was the proverbial and possibly the literal death knell for Hoover. Nixon, though heterosexual, was very similar; mean, ambitious and unscrupulous (no kidding). Nixon wanted possession of Hoover's files and the only way to get them would be to kill him. It isn't mentioned that Hoover wanted to be Director for life, a life many would like to see end ASAP. It is only slightly implied that his doctor injected him with chemicals that wouldn't exactly prolong it. Rumour has it that a life shortening pill, which looked like an aspirin tablet, was put in amongst them.

The most significant aspect of Hoover's career wasn't mentioned. He became head of the FBI in 1924, a year after the Teapot Dome Scandal in which some senior members of the Harding administration were implicated. In 1973, a year after his death, the Watergate Scandal broke out, but in the intermediate 48 years in which he reigned as the Bureau's boss, there were no major scandals affecting the presidency.

One may wonder if the seven presidents he served under and their administrative staffs were not like Nixon's thugs at all; that they were all goody-goodies who wouldn't stoop to an illegal act. Or, perhaps - just perhaps - once or twice they did and J. Edgar was on hand to contain the mess, conditional on getting the laws passed and the budgets he wanted - take your pick.

One comforting thought is that it's highly unlikely in a sane society that anyone would be as sick as J. Edgar Hoover, but if there was such a person, he would receive help, and as the movie makes clear, he surely needed it.

STEVE SHANNON



A masterclass in manipulation

THE GOGGLE-BOX has burned some pretty bizarre images onto the nation's psyche over the years: squirrels wearing yellow trousers learning to cross the road, an unintelligible orange cat warning us not to talk to strangers,

and gloomy icebergs as AIDS metaphors. Public Information Films have lurked in the gaps between programmes for sixty-five years, waiting to jump out and attack us with a government instruction. But not any more. Tufty the squirrel and Charley the cat have been made redundant by the closure of the government's Central Office of Information, which produced the films. *Britain Beware* (ITV1) marked the demise of the Public Information Film with a nostalgic retrospective presented by a jovial Adrian Edmondson.

The early films told bemused middle-aged men how to use new-fangled zebra crossings, and nosey housewives how to sniff out Nazi spies. As the tone and content of the films changed over the years, and as censorship rules were relaxed, the producers set out to shock. Each drink-drive campaign has been a bigger pile-up of gore and emotional blackmail than the one before. And the

notorious *Apaches* film traumatised a generation of flare-wearers into not playing on tractors or drinking weedkiller. Then, when the public grew tired of shock tactics, humour would often be used on the next campaign. Such as slovenly Joe and Petunia, who showed us how not to behave when picnicking in a cartoon field. Occasionally, shock and humour would collide in a mess of awkwardness, like when Jimmy Saville joked to a teenage car-crash victim in a wheelchair that he wouldn't be going to any more discotheques.

As *Britain Beware* points out, Public Information Films told us to avoid dangerous things like using drugs or having unprotected sex, but they also encouraged us to sign up for a risky career in the Army. Each Army recruitment campaign has led to a rise in the numbers of naive applicants hoping for the jet-set adventures the films promised them.

Public Information Films used all the tricks up the advertisers' sleeves - shock, humour, exaggeration - to drive home their message. Watching them is like a masterclass in manipulation. And the changing subject-matter of the films - wearing seat belts while driving, avoiding smoking around children - reflected wider changes in legislation and attitudes. As a gauge of social trends, Public Information Films tell us more than just how to avoid grisly, slow-motion accidents.

MIKE FOSTER

Redundant: Tufty the squirrel



Meetings

For full details of all our meetings and events see our **Meetup** site: <http://www.meetup.com/The-Socialist-Party-of-Great-Britain/>

London

Clapham

Sunday **10 June** 3pm

WAR: ITS CAUSE AND CURE

Speaker: Gwynn Thomas

Sunday **24 June** 3pm

THE SECRETS OF THE INCAS:

HOW THEY RELATE TO TODAY'S

PROBLEMS

Speaker: Bill Martin

Socialist Party premises, 52 Clapham

High St, SW4 7UN (nearest tube:

Clapham North).

Swansea

Monday **11 June** 7.30 pm

IF CAPITALISM CAN'T DELIVER THE

GOODS, WHAT'S WRONG WITH A

MONEYLESS SOCIETY?

Speaker: Richard Botterill

Unitarian Church, High St, Swansea SA1

1NZ (next to Argos)

Glasgow

Wednesday **20 June** 8.30pm

THE CITY OF LONDON AND THE

WEALTH CREATORS

Speaker: V.Vanni

Community Central Halls, 304 Maryhill

Road, Glasgow G 20 7YE

Manchester

Monday **25 June** 8.30pm

Discussion on Why Socialists Oppose

Leadership.

Unicorn, Church Street, City Centre, M4

1PW.

The Socialist Party Summer School:

PROTEST

6 - 8 July 2012

Harborne Hall, Birmingham

Worldwide, people have reacted to the political and economic crisis with new forms of protest. From the Arab Spring uprisings to the Occupy Movement, activists are rejecting traditional forms of political assembly, and are looking for new ways of organisation. But what will be the consequences of these new battles in the class war? Will these protests result in any lasting, positive change for the working class? Could they point towards a revolution? Or will they go the way of all reformism and just prolong the capitalist system which traps us all? The Socialist Party's weekend of talks and discussion will examine protests in all its forms - its aims, methods and effects.

Talks include:

The Occupy Movement: Ian Barker (Occupy Norwich) & Stair (SPGB)

The Arab Spring: capitalism, imperialism and religion or democracy?: Janet Surman

What did the Romans do for us? Bill Martin

Protest and the Environment: Glenn Morris

Policing the Protests: Mike Foster

Full residential cost (including accommodation and meals Friday evening to Sunday afternoon) is £140. Concessions are available. To book a place, send a cheque (payable to The Socialist Party of Great Britain) to Flat 2, 24 Tedstone Road, Quinton, Birmingham B32 2PD. E-mail spgbschool@yahoo.co.uk with any enquiries

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The Socialist Standard examines their case

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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.

50 Years Ago

Russia puts the Clock Back

IN THE first flush of Bolshevik victory radical parties all over the world acclaimed the victory and gave them generous support, even where they had doubts on some of the methods adopted. The German Social Democratic Party, when threatened, sent to Russia the writings of Marx and Engels and other archives for safe-keeping, believing that Russia was now a budding free Socialist state where writings and documents would be safe from interference. How wrong they were!

It soon became evident that Russia was not embarked upon even a democratic society. The secret police and the concentration camp were on the way.

The mass of the Russian people knew nothing about Socialism; most of them could not even read. The peasants, who formed the bulk of the population, wanted land, and all wanted peace and bread. It was on the basis of the peace, bread and land programme that the Bolsheviks were enabled to seize power.

Once in power the Bolsheviks established what they misnamed the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. In fact, it was



A 1920 meeting of the Communist Party

nothing of the kind. It was not even the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party (which again they misnamed the Communist Party), but the dictatorship of a small inner group with Lenin as the guiding star. They established a system of treachery and terrorism, first against opposing elements and eventually internally against those who would not abjectly submit to the dictates of the inner circle. In the end this led to members of the inner circle trying to destroy each other. It reproduced the position in the French Revolution when one group ate another until finally Napoleon was left at the top. First Trotsky, then Kamenev, Zinoviev and Radek fell victims to the terrorism they had built up. Fortunately for him, Lenin died before he could become a victim of the system in which he was the leading actor.

(From article by Gilmac in *Socialist Standard*, June 1962)

ACTION REPLAY

Playing Partners

THE OLYMPICS will soon be on us, with their massive TV and press coverage and their never-ending opportunities for sponsorship and money-making, as well as some sporting contests. The International Olympic Committee is a brand in its own right and a very powerful one at that, as it can require host governments to introduce legislation protecting its copyright.

So in 2006 the UK parliament passed the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act, which went even further than existing law in preventing companies who have not paid for sponsorship or partnership rights from making any use of Olympic terminology or symbols. Even using 'Games' and '2012' together might con-

stitute an offence, unless you've paid for permission. So Coke and Adidas (as official sponsors) will be OK, but Pepsi and Nike will have to be very careful about what they say. During the Games themselves, athletes will not even be able to blog about their breakfast cereal unless it's made by a Games sponsor. A spokesperson for the local organising committee put it bluntly: "Without the investment of our partners, we simply couldn't stage the Games."

This is not working as well as those behind it might wish, however, with so-called ambush marketing (where a non-sponsor manages to link itself to an event in some way) proving very effective. Thus Adidas is apparently less associated with the Games in people's minds than Nike, and British Airways (the official airline partner) less so than Lufthansa.

Just imagine the effort that intelligent and creative people are putting into ensuring that companies keep within the law but exploit the Olympics for their own profit.

PB



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Voice from the Back

Youth Unemployment

The economist Paul Krugman paints a frightening picture about youth unemployment. 'In Spain, the unemployment rate among workers under 25 is more than 50 percent. In Ireland almost a third of the young are unemployed. Here in America, youth unemployment is 'only' 16.5 percent, which is still terrible — but things could be worse' (*New York Times*, 29 April). Supporters of capitalism often laud its 'efficiency' but it is difficult to think of anything more wasteful than debarring young workers from taking part in the production and distribution of wealth. Half of all young Spanish workers on the dole? Some efficiency!

The Plight Of The Elderly

It is only one case amongst thousands of how elderly men and women of the working class are treated, but it highlights the daily experience of workers everywhere. 'A health board has been ordered to apologise to the family of an elderly man sent home from hospital in winter in his shirt, trousers, dressing gown and one slipper. David Spelman, 85, had hip replacement surgery at the Southern General in Glasgow after a fall in February 2011. Days after being discharged he fell again and died shortly afterwards' (*BBC News*, 8 May). An apology from the health board may satisfy some jobsworth official.

The Uncaring Society

As the government looks for more and more ways to cut support for the sick, the elderly and the disabled, recent figures show how it is affecting voluntary carers. 'Almost six in 10 admitted that taking care of vulnerable family members had put them under so much stress and strain it caused depression, anxiety and nervous breakdowns. The same number said their caring responsibilities had harmed their careers, research by the newly-formed Carers Trust found. There are about six million unpaid carers in Britain looking after older parents or disabled children'

(*Daily Express*, 8 May). Capitalism always seeks to cut overheads to increase profits and caring is just not one of its priorities.

Another Cunning Plan

In the BBC TV comedy series *Blackadder* the character Baldrick keeps coming up with a 'cunning plan' that always turns out to be completely useless. The present government has a cunning plan to deal with the economic crisis. Cut the workers' wages, increase their pension contributions, slash their pensions benefits and increase the pension age to sixty-eight. This has led to hundreds of thousands of public sector workers taking part in a 24-hour, UK-wide strike in a dispute with the government over pension changes. 'Cabinet Office minister, Francis Maude said pension talks will not be reopened and 'nothing further will be achieved through strike action'. Mark Serwotka, general secretary of the PCS union - which estimates that an 'overwhelming majority' of its 250,000 public sector members are on strike - said the UK would have 'the highest pension age of any European country' (*BBC News*, 10 May). The truth is that inside capitalism slumps and booms are part and parcel of the system and there is no cunning way to plan it despite the efforts of Baldrick or Francis Maude.



social classes' (*Daily Express*, 11 May). 'Morally indefensible' it may well be but as an out-and-out supporter of capitalism, an Old Etonian and a Conservative MP he has aided the day-to-day running of this 'morally indefensible' social system.

Piety And Poker

It should come as no shock to socialists to learn that outwardly religious devotees are often dreadful hypocrites. We have, after all, had plenty of evidence of the Vatican covering up child abuse cases. The following news item nevertheless is an extreme example of religious

hypocrisy. 'Six leaders of South Korea's largest Buddhist order have been forced to resign after being caught on video drinking, smoking and playing high-stakes poker at a memorial event for a dead Zen master'

(*Independent*, 12 May). Well, at least they didn't interfere with young children and unlike the priests they did resign.

National Ill-Health Service

Capitalism rewards the exploiting class and victimises the working class. A case in point is the treatment of the sick and the infirm. 'Patients are being left lying on trolleys for up to 24 hours because hospitals are alarmingly short of beds, the union representing Britain's nurses has claimed. Pressure on beds is so great that some people end up being treated in corridors, especially in A&E departments, according to a survey of 1,246 UK nurses and healthcare assistants belonging to the Royal College of Nursing who look after some of the sickest patients' (*Observer*, 13 May). This treatment only applies to the working class; if you can afford it you will get the most expert care quickly and efficiently.



FREE LUNCH

