

# The Libertarian **Communist**

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A Discussion Bulletin:

In Opposition to the Rule of Capital in all its forms and  
for Anti State, Non Market Communism

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**Ukraine**



**Popular Peoples' Revolt or Fascist Coup?**

The purpose of The Libertarian Communist is to promote discussion amongst the Anti State, Non Market sector irrespective of whether individuals or groups consider themselves as Anarchist, Communist or Socialist as all such titles are in need of further qualification. If you have disagreements with an article in this or any other issue, wish to offer comment or want to contribute something else to the discussion then please get in touch. If any article focuses on a particular group then that group has, as a matter of course, the right to reply. So please get in touch with your article, letters and comments. You can do this by contacting [libcom.bulletin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:libcom.bulletin@yahoo.co.uk) or writing to Ray Carr, Flat 1, 99 Princess Road, Branksome, Poole, Dorset, England, BH12 1BQ

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**A Critique of Stephen Philip Clayton's Review of Moishe Postone's Anti-Semitism and National Socialism:**  
**Michel Prigent**

The recent review of Moishe Postone's Anti-Semitism and National Socialism in **The Libertarian Communist**, no 25/winter 2014 was done by a certain Stephen Philip Clayton. The review is simply awful or shall we say offal. Clayton like many of his colleagues in *Aufheben* or Chris Arthur of *Historical Materialism* are classist guard dogs. In more than one way they impede change. They still live in the past, they dream of a 1917 remake. Amazing stuff. They are the best bet for the present system, since they do not challenge modern capitalism at its modern roots.

Of course this document does not mean that classes, the working class, the proletariat do not exist, all these realities are still there but they are incorporated, integrated, harnessed to the value system. Marcuse understood that society had changed in the sixties when he published his *One Dimensional Man (1964)* (1) It took Guy Debord 21 years to reach the concept of integration. But he never said where he got the idea from. One should always mention one's sources. It creates a dialogue. And in any case it is fair. But fairness is not something you meet everyday in the political world, whether on the right or left...It is shameful. And of course the capitalist system carries on devastating the planet. When we embarked on *The Truth about dogs' lives under capitalism in Britain*, we had in mind to tell the truth. We will continue on that route. If you tell the truth one idea brings another one. The classist idiots whether on the left or the right are stuck in a real quagmire. They resemble dog food. We prefer what Hegel said about dialectics for him it was the "bacchanalia where no one remains sober". No wonder many people on the left drink tea.

Classism reminds us of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao, the Castro's, Kim Jon III, etc... Classism is a trench where everyone gets mowed down and disillusioned. From the point of view of the dominant system it is excellent, since people who join classist orgs will be burnt out in a few years, or even a few months. Robert Hue, one of the leaders of the PCF – a few years after he had left a top position – used to make jokes, he would often tell the story of a militant who did not come to the last meeting of the party. And the militant said: "If I had known it was the last meeting I would have come".

*Back to reality*  
*"Wages are falling for longest period in 50 years".*  
*Evening Standard, 31st Jan, 2014...*  
*So much about growth!!!*

What is written a few lines earlier about the militant, illustrates the horror of separate politics. And as we have seen many still indulge in classist *scenarii*. Some never learn from history. Many still indulge in classist games (1)... No wonder the old world is still standing. But some footballers like Rooney are "earning" £300 grand a week! And it could get worse.

So let's come back to Mr Clayton, the character we mentioned to start with. First he put the Holocaust in the same bag as the Armenian and the Turkic genocides. Clayton failed to distinguish what the Holocaust was about. When he lumped what took place against the Armenian and Turkic people, he failed to say that these people did not have to wear a badge like Jewish people did with the word "**JUDE**". Clayton fails to understand that anti-Semitism is very old... Jewish people were always linked to money, finance. Even Shakespeare indulged in that practice, see his Shylock.

First Jewish people were not allowed to work except in the money exchange business. It was a Catch-22 situation. But many Jewish people were tradesmen, and many more were workers. The idea that only Jewish people were involved in the money business – as if other people were not involved -, is ludicrous, in fact Jewish people were made scapegoats. Postone is right to describe P J Proudhon "*as one of the forefathers of Anti-Semitism*" Clayton prefers George Woodcock's assessment of Proudhon as "*The Man of Paradox*". Auschwitz is there as proof of that paradox!

All this nasty medieval stuff was resurrected by Adolf Hitler in his ghastly book *Mein Kampf*. Many took up his hatred. And many still do to this day. Some never learn from History. And even to this day, many goons still agree with him, namely that Jews equal money. It is horrific. It is a simplistic view of the world. But Hitler's view of the world was going to lead to concentration camps. Clayton fails to distinguish the difference between the genocides of the Armenian and Turkic peoples and the Holocaust.

The editor of *The Libertarian Communist* [Ray Carr] knew that the Clayton piece against Postone's text (*Anti-Semitism and National Socialism*) was no good. But he went ahead with it. At least he wants a response against it. Ray Carr wants to be a dialectician. Many people on the left have given up. We commend Ray's call for a response to Clayton. We can do it. Here it is. We have to honour the memory of

those who were murdered in the death camps. We don't want history to be Claytonised. Moishe Postone's text *Anti-Semitism and National Socialism* stands out as one of the best explanations of what took place, during the period 1933-45. Postone's *Time, Labor and social domination* [1993] is one of the best books which attempts to understand modern capitalism. For *Aufheben* Postone in his two texts mentioned here "*Seeks to invert Marx in order to re-mystify capital all over again*". Clayton can easily quote the classist donkey yard *Aufheben* at the end of his ghastly review but there is worse to come. For Clayton, Postone is "*pro capital, anti working class, excuses capitalism for Hitler, Nazism and the Holocaust. Postone is attempting "to roll back the wheel of history"*."

Clayton has crossed the line. From now we will read everything he writes.

*Written by M.P.W. Prigent on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2014 in London.*

#### Notes.

\* The left is flummoxed when it comes to the Middle-East. See how Chomsky supports Hezbollah. Hamas in their constitution even quote the czarist anti-Semitic forgery: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Incredible but true. Some people call Chomsky a cunning linguist ... In any case he is a semi-dialectician... See the excellent critique of Chomsky in the French edition of Postone's *Critique du Fetichisme Capital- le capitalisme, l'antisemitisme et la gauche-*, [PUF, 2013 Paris].

So where does all this leave us? TLC [The Libertarian Communist] can reprint our text. We have no wish to meet Clayton, until he realises that he is wrong. If he insists in saying that he is right, we might have to invent a new verb: to clayton. We have no wish to do so. We prefer dialogue. But it is difficult having a dialogue with someone who carries excess ideological baggage. In the end you have to shed the load. Can Clayton move forward? Only he knows the answer. We have tried to be truthful about the Holocaust and the six million people who were murdered by the Nazis.

\* Even the Wehrmacht soldiers must have been aware of the horror of the final solution when their leave trains were cancelled at the last minute, so that trains with Jewish people could go through towards the death camps. The Final Solution was a top priority of the Nazi State. So the Wehrmacht knew but did nothing against it.

Many people on the left, all over the world, would be quite pleased if Israel was overrun and abolished. In the end the Israel state will have to reach an agreement with the Palestinian authority. Not Hamas...

Real life is always complex. It is never black and white; there are many shades of grey. It is better to know it. The old stuff from the left must go. Classism is a bad joke. Especially when the middle-classes are feeling the pinch. You only have to think of the floods in Somerset at present. The insurance premiums will be increased. Many people will have to leave the Somerset levels.

Many pinko-leftists remind you of Neville Chamberlain when he shook his piece of paper after meeting Hitler. Chamberlain had illusions. He bought all the crap that Hitler threw at him. It is a good job that Churchill was around. The Nazis were on their way. He was stopped by the Spitfires and the Hurricanes, in other words by those who flew these planes and those who serviced them. I am glad to say that my dad was involved in that struggle, he joined the Free French on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1940, when he heard De Gaulle's message on the radio. Later, in May 1968-, he was no longer in favour of him, he often said that he was an historical Gaullist ... I learnt a lot from that history. From the year when I was 10, my dad had been a member of the famous 340 RAF Free French squadron, with Mouchotte and Clostermann, and many others as pilots and mechanics. It is a good job that the Nazis did not take over the UK. If they had concentration camps would have been set up.

Maybe Mr Clayton can reflect on this, if he is allowed to think and write freely it is precisely because people made sure that he could do so. Maybe Mr Clayton ought to reflect on this. It is up to him.

### Footnotes

(1) Herbert Marcuse's book *One Dimensional Man* (1964) contains an important critique, here are some quotes: "*The reality of the labouring classes in advanced industrialised society make the Marxian "proletariat" a mythological concept, reality of present-day socialism makes the Marxian idea a dream*". [page 153].

"*Class struggles are attenuated and "imperialist contradictions" suspended before the threat from without...*" [page 30].

"(...) "*And yet this society is irrational as a whole*". [page 9]

"*With the growing integration of industrial society*" [page 13]

"(...) "*The technological society is a system of domination which operates already in the concept and construction of techniques.*" [Page 14]

At the end of *One Dimensional Man* Marcuse quotes Walter Benjamin who said at the beginning of the Fascist era: "*Nur um den Hoffnungslosen willen ist uns die Hoffnung gegeben*" [It is only for the sake of those without hope that hope is given to us].

### A few notes from the editor on Michel's article.

In his article Michel writes that the editor of the LC knew that Stephen Clayton's review of Anti-Semitism and National Socialism was "*no good*". It is certainly true that we had some email correspondence with Michel over this issue and that we felt that Stephen Clayton's article warranted a response. It is also true that when Stephen contacted us about replying to the original review, we felt that what we would receive would be a critical response to Postone's work and our review. However this is entirely different to describing the article submitted by Stephen as being "*no good*". If we held this opinion it would not have been included. The point is that the LC is a discussion journal and articles are accepted providing they are written from a perspective that is critical of the capital system in all its forms. Within these guidelines we do not refuse to print articles that we disagree with, if we did so the LC could no be described as a discussion journal. Therefore in the future we would **not** refuse articles that did view things from a classist perspective. Most of the ASNM sector still believes that the working class are the revolutionary subject; it is the view of the LC that this is in need of critical discussion and we are pleased Michel has raised the issue. However we also believe that if ideas are going to be challenged there needs to be free discussion and the point is not to censor ideas we may believe to be wrong but to give them space and subject them to critique; this is the way to move forward. It is true that over the time that the LC has been published its position on certain issues has changed, whilst still rooted in the ASNM sector, **which we do not see as leftist**; we believe that some ideas in that sector are in need of re-evaluation.

As for some of the views expressed in Michel's notes on the Second World War and Churchill, these are personal comments and in no way reflect the opinion of The Libertarian Communist.

**Editor**

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**Anti Semitism and National Socialism**  
**By Moishe Postone: a reply to Stephen P Clayton: Ricardo Monde**

To paraphrase our comment in our review of Moishe Postone's pamphlet; *Anti-Semitism and National Socialism* in issue 24; maybe you will not agree with all Postone has to say, but his arguments will make you think and that is a positive [1]. In his critique of the same pamphlet Stephen P Clayton's (SPC) seems to be suffering from a bad case of class struggle fever that renders thinking difficult. This confines one to defending some outdated theories of a Marxism based primarily on the labour movement/ working class which has been long overdue for critical re-evaluation [2]. This being the case this reply, in the main, will focus on a theme that runs through SPC article regarding the working class and capital and the class struggle but firstly we will consider briefly the evidence in SPC's article that Postone is pro capital, anti working class and excuses capitalism for Hitler, Nazism and the Holocaust.

Firstly just why SPC concludes that Postone is pro capital is mystifying as it is unexplained in his article. Postone, in the article is accused of a re-interpretation of Marx's economic analysis which Postone has readily accepted as Time, Labour and Social domination is followed by; a Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory. He is also accused of misunderstanding but even if this was the case it in no way provides proof that Postone is pro capital. So this seems to be an unsubstantiated and ridiculous claim to make.

So how about the claim that Postone's pamphlet excuses Capitalism for Hitler, Nazism and the Holocaust? Firstly the pamphlet was more about examining the connection between anti-Semitism and National Socialism rather than directly focusing on the rise of Hitler and Nazism [3]. Postone states:

*"My intention is not to explain why Nazism and modern anti-Semitism achieved a breakthrough and became hegemonic in Germany... Such an attempt would entail an analysis of the specificity of German historical development..."* [4].

However despite this for someone who is pro capital and who excuses the capital system for the horrors of Nazism Postone spends some time, especially starting at **page 11** examining basic features of capitalism, and Marx's concept of the fetish and these are vital elements in the argument he develops.

One can agree or disagree with Postone's analysis and his reinterpretation of some of Marx's economic analysis but it is something else to argue that he lets capitalism off the hook in the way suggested by SPC. Modern anti-Semitism, Postone argues, viewed industrial production and capital in that sphere as well as modern technology as more or less natural to any society whereas what they attacked was the negative forms of capitalism, capital in its abstract dimension in the form of finance and interest capital [5]. This analysis is very much in line with a critique of capitalism concentrating on the concrete and abstract aspects of capitalism or the essence of the capital system and how it appears on the surface [6]. As Postone puts it:

*"The affirmation by modern anti-Semitism of industrial capital indicates that an approach is required that can distinguish between what modern capitalism is and the way it manifests itself, between its essence and its appearance." He goes on to state: "Such an approach would attempt to relate the pattern of social critique and affirmation we are considering to characteristics of capitalist social relations themselves" [7].*

This does not sound pro capital to the present writer.

Later Postone sums up his argument about how this relates to the rise of modern anti-Semitism when he states:

*"...the Jews were identified not merely with money, with the sphere of circulation, but with capitalism itself. However because of its fetishized form, capitalism did not appear to include industry and technology. Capitalism appeared to be only its manifest abstract dimension which, in turn, was responsible for the whole range of concrete social and cultural changes associated with the rapid development of modern industrial capitalism. The Jews were not seen merely as representatives of capital (in which case anti-Semitic attacks would have been much more class specific). They became the personifications of the intangible, destructive, immensely powerful and international domination of capital as an alienated social form." [8].*

SPC may not like the way Postone examines the relationship between capitalism and anti-Semitism but to suggest that this analysis excuses capitalism for the Holocaust is another ridiculous and unsubstantiated argument. This analysis of a critique of capitalism examining what it is and how it appears is relevant today and we need only refer to the most recent crisis where many (some of them self acclaimed Marxists) focused merely on "greedy bankers" and called for increased state

regulation for this sector rather than linking the crisis to the capital system itself.

### **Looking for the grave-diggers**

What really gets under the skin of SPC in Postone's work and most of this lays outside of the pamphlet; Anti-Semitism and National Socialism is the rejection of the concept that the working class have an historic role as the grave diggers of the capital system. So SPC issues statements such as Postone's further work;

*"...leads to a complete rejection of the significance of class struggle for socialism" (Chris Arthur); "there is no foundation for the emergence of proletarian class consciousness; basically he has abstracted class struggle away" [9].*

He goes further;

*"Postone theory discourages the working class to identify as a class and rejects the concept of the working class as the revolutionary subject in history" [10].*

Well it could be argued that so far the working class have not needed anyone to discourage them to organise as a class and they have rejected the role others have imposed on them "as the revolutionary subject in history". Lets be honest it is no easy matter to cast aside ideas we have held most of our political lives and come to the conclusion that they are in need of re-evaluation. For much of the time this journal has been published it has taken the stance that the working class are the basis of opposition to the capital system. The LC still carries articles arguing that this is still the case, there could be some in this issue and as this is a discussion journal the ideas surrounding the role of the working class within and against capitalism are likely to continue to be discussed. However the idea that the working class will perform the role of the grave-diggers of the capital system is in need of serious discussion and critique and since SPC has raised the issue this seems a good time to open up that critique.

### **The Working Class.**

The major problem for the left and some sectors of the Anti state non Market sector (ASNM) is that any rejection of the theory that capitalism can only be overcome by working class organisation and revolt leaves all opposition to the capital system itself in tatters. There is not even agreement as to a definition of the working class. Traditionally the working class was seen as blue collar manual

workers whilst most white collar employees were seen as some section of the middle class. Some on the left may even still hold to such a definition with variations on the theme. An alternative definition is that the working class is made up of all those who to live have to sell their physical or mental energies for a wage or salary. This second definition seems to make more sense in modern capitalism and there seems to be no division between manual and white collar workers in developing a consciousness that goes beyond capitalism in real terms, if it exists at all it is only on the very thin margins. If this second definition of the working class is accepted than it virtually encompasses the overwhelming majority of people because apart from those employed, there are those seeking employment, former workers who have retired, the families and relatives of those employed, so we may be near the 99% versus the 1% or 95% versus 5%. So why concentrate on something defined as working class when it includes the overwhelming majority of people, some of whom are not directly involved in the class struggle, if by that we mean a struggle that is mostly supposed to take place at the point of production or the workplace?

Before proceeding with this question, lets be clear, there is no claim being made here that the working class does not exist nor with the idea that it comes into conflict with the capital system, what is being questioned is the level at which that conflict takes place. There is, of course, no harm in supporting industrial or other struggles of the working class providing we are clear that we are not engaged in a struggle against the capital system. In many ways despite the timeline between Marx's time and our own there is a similar problem when we base revolutionary ideas on involvement with working class struggles. *John Crump* in his thought provoking pamphlet "A Contribution to the Critique of Marx" (1976) compared the writings of Marx and Lenin on communism and argued that it was only by quoting the best of Marx that a clear division could be seen between the two whilst there are passages of Marx that can be used to illustrate a continuing line between Marx and Lenin [11] The reasons for this, Crump argues, is that in the time Marx was living there was no prospect of developing Communism so therefore he had two options; to either work alongside the working class movement for reformist measures or at the most to work for goals which had to fall far short of the ends that he was striving for: or to stand aside from the working class movement and theorise about a society that had no prospect of being brought about at that time.

[12] The difference between Marx's situation and the present day one is that a fully developed Communist system is now a material possibility however what we still share with Marx's situation is that what is lacking is not only a majority communist consciousness but any signs of the development of one.

Writing in the late 1980s, Maximilien Rubel offered a similar critique [13]. Examining Marx's critical evaluation of Utopian Socialism in The Communist Manifesto, (CM) Rubel quotes Marx

"all previous movements were movements of minorities or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority".

To be logical, Rubel argued, this should read: "*the proletarian movement will be or ought to be the self conscious independent movement of the immense majority*" [14].

Rubel poses the question of whether, in the time Marx and Engels were writing the working class showed any signs of developing the type of class consciousness that was attributed to them in The (CM). This question remained relevant to the time he was writing, Rubel suggested, as there was no sign of any such working class movement developing. That was written in the late 1980s and the analysis is even more relevant in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Rubel suggested it seems likely that Marx's analysis of the working class was based more on hypothesis or an ethical imperative rather than a scientific analysis. The present day proletariat, he argued had little resemblance to that of the nineteenth century but it still rejected or lacked the intellectual development to grasp the basis of socialist/communist thought. So whilst Marx may have been correct with how capitalism would develop such as the concentration of capital and the hardships that would be imposed on the working class (in a modern context) the forecast of an organised intelligent revolt based on the working class is absent.

He suggested; that Marx's theory that:

*"What the bourgeoisie, therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable"*.

Is a: "deterministic formula". [15]

Most groups, and not just on the traditional left, but within our own sector, groups that maintain that they stand for the abolition of capitalism spend time and energy engaging in working class struggles, strikes, lockouts and

various forms of industrial action. As Robert Kurz argued it is not the case that we should decry all social struggles within capitalism. He suggested:

*"These struggles constitute a necessary point of departure; everything depends on the direction in which they develop. In this respect the motives play an important role."* [16]

As he indicated trade unions tend to develop arguments for particular struggles not in terms of their members needs but how they can benefit the smooth running of the capitalist system. Very often in struggle workers conditioned by their limited aims identify themselves with their role within capitalism which is confined to be able to continue to produce surplus value [17]. With these limited, internal to capital, objectives how can such struggles possibly lead to a growth of consciousness beyond the system they are trapped in as some argue they can do. This is one of the main critiques against the theory of class struggle for socialism/communism as argued for by SPC. Never mind about turning back the wheel of history we have to learn from history, Marx did not live long enough to see the class struggle integrated within capitalism we have viewed that development and should not persist with misguided theories.

### **Is labour an opposing force to capital?**

We need to consider firstly what we mean by labour. The term has been confused with our need to produce the necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter and as time has passed to produce much more than the basics so as to have a more fulfilling and satisfying life. However in reality such activities have nothing to do with labour which is a situation where men and women are economically coerced to sell their ability to work (human energy) in the form of labour power for ends that are separated from them. Labour, in this instance emerges as the substance of economic value. [18] As it has been described elsewhere the purpose is:

*"...the blind end in itself of capital accumulation"* [19].

Labour is revered by the political left and beyond; and through the system of exploitation the Marxism related to the labour movement sees it as oppositional to capital. However it is oppositional to capital in only a limited sense as one of the two poles of interest held within the framework of the system itself. The aim of the class struggle is not to end capitalism itself but to gain rights for labour within that system. This can be seen by the kind of struggles

undertaken such as increased wages, the defence of jobs, better working conditions or so on, all are within the boundaries of the capital system itself. Okay, it can be argued it is necessary for labour to engage in such battles but the point is such struggles continue to go round in a seemingly never ending circle. As it has been suggested there is no one social grouping alone that is predestined to form an opposition to the rule of capital [20].

The Marxism based on the working class has come to accept the basic social relationships and general features of the capital accumulation system such as abstract labour, value/commodity-form, money, the state and so on as natural conditions [21]. This has led to that movement focusing on workers' rights such as improving working and living conditions within the confines of the labour society which it believes is inevitable. It has imprisoned itself within the system rather than developing a critique of a process whereby human energy is transformed into money as an irrational end in itself [22]. So the working class and the movement related to it, far from becoming the grave-diggers of the capital system, became its very opposite – supporting the process of capitalist socialization [23].

There is an obsession with the working class and labour and this is not just confined to the traditional left. Involvement in the class struggle is deemed absolutely necessary if these groups are to retain their revolutionary credentials. There does not seem to be any time for any reflection on where such struggles are heading or for examining what the class struggle is. Not all groups see such activity as necessary but most have clauses which confirm that they view the working class as potentially revolutionary, perhaps SPC belongs in the second rather than the first group but he obviously sees class struggle as a forerunner to revolution. Is it not time that we at least subjected this theory to some radical critique? Can we not even consider that we need to break with labour/working class as a revolutionary subject?

We have previously defined labour as a situation which is tied to economic coercion for the end of capital accumulation, ends which the coerced are separated from. But how many groups speak in terms of their aim being the abolition of labour; spelling out that the aim is **not** the liberation of labour but liberation **from** labour. This would seem to be the basis for developing a new radical critique of capitalism, an anti labour one, reinventing the one which existed from around the 16<sup>th</sup> to the early part

of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when capitalism was developing [24]. Of course this radical critique needs to develop in the conditions we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It basically seems misguided, to the present writer, at least, for SPC to seemingly reject any analysis that fails to fetishise the role of the working class, the concept of labour and the class struggle. This sort of argument seems as it is more or less heading in the direction of "Market Socialism" type analysis. "Market Socialism" focuses on the exploitation of the working class and sees the solution as labour receiving the full value of their labour power. You end up with a society of worker owned enterprises, more like workers' capitalism than any type of socialism worthy of the name. Such a system would be doomed to failure as at best it would lead back to capitalism as it is now. Meaning labour and capital would remain along with all the trimmings of commodity production and it is not something we should be aiming for. SPC, it is true, does not make this connection but the type of arguments he makes tend to lead in this direction. This focus on the working class is one that as we have attempted to outline, has been proved by history to be misguided and mistaken.

Apparently there was an email sent to libcom.bulletin by someone who said that they heard the following comment while in a pub – *"making a fetish of the working class stops you thinking"*. Maybe this has happened to SPC and like minded people. Look beyond the limited boundaries of the working class, exploitation of labour and the class struggle and there exists a far wider critique of capitalism. One of these is surely the irrationality of the capital system itself embodied in the concept of production for the sake of production for the end of capital accumulation. This productive madness has nothing to do with usefulness or the satisfaction of human needs. Tied to this is the ever increasing situation of global heating which the capital system simply cannot come to terms with that alone begin to tackle. Once you consider the abolition of a society of labour or the liberation **from** labour rather than **of** labour a new world awaits. The ceaseless production system known as capitalism not only curtails the freedom and ruins the lives of the humans trapped within its tentacles but its continuation is destructive and untenable.

Those who oppose the idea of a society where labour has been abolished argue that it is impossible, that it would lead to a breakdown of society as it would remove the social constraint where a majority have to spend a



greater part of their lives earning a wage or salary in order to survive. But this is an admission that the present system is based on a concept of physical as well as mental coercion.

The argument in favour of increased leisure time is looking backwards to go forwards as it is about restoring a culture that once existed but was gradually removed to impose a relentless and senseless system of production designed to feed economic madness. The abolitionists of labour (wage and salary slavery) aim at the:

*"shutting down all those branches of production which only exist to let keep running the maniac end-in-itself machinery of the commodity producing system, regardless of the consequences" [25].*

That aim is not confined to the sectors of productive capacity which are obviously destructive such as motor manufacturing and the defence and nuclear industries. There are a host other sectors which are only necessary under a commodity based system for purposes of:

*" "mental crutches" and silly fancy-goods designed to create the illusion of a full life."*

In a sane productive system many other occupations will disappear such as those that:

*"only came into being because the masses of products had and have to be forced through the bottleneck of money form and market relations. Or do you think we will be still in need of accountants, controllers, marketing advisers, salesmen, and advertising copywriters if things are produced according to needs and everybody can take what he or she wants? Why should there be revenue officers and police forces, welfare workers and poverty administrators when there is no private property to protect, no poverty to administer, and nobody who has to be drilled in obeying alienated systemic constraints"? [26]*

The esoteric Marx, Kurz noted:

*"is basically about: overcoming of the demands made by capitalism on the human being, of the ending of the social catastrophes produced by capitalism; neither more nor less". [27]*

Kurz went on to state:"

*Even after capitalism, there will still be sickness and death, envy and contemptible individuals. But there will no longer be the paradox of mass poverty produced by the abstract production of wealth; there will no longer be an autonomous system of fetishistic relations or dogmatic social forms. The goal is great, exactly because, measured against utopian exultation, it shows itself to be relatively modest, and*

*promises nothing more than liberation from completely unnecessary sufferings" [28]*

The main aim of this article has been to point out where classist theories like those advocated by SPC end up; examining only certain aspects of the capital system rather than seeing a wider perspective. This classist position is all too often taken as beyond critique: if SPC and like minded people do not want to be classed as leftist they need to question the idea that opposition to capitalism must be confined to the limited and internal to the capital system struggles of the working class.

This, of course does not mean that working people will not be fundamental to social movements seeking to abolish capitalism, they will have to be, if any meaningful movement is to be built as they make up the overwhelming part of the world's population. It does mean that there is not something defined as the working class which is predestined to be the "gravediggers of capitalism. What we are looking towards is the formation; it does not presently exist anywhere to our knowledge, of a social movement that goes beyond the current limited critique of capitalism. Social emancipation would have to be the work of a majority of human beings with the aim of constructing a society fit for human beings. If that movement is not based on class that does not make it idealistic, it will be based on a realism that will challenge the realism that the capital system currently imposes on us.

#### References

- 1) See *The Libertarian Communist Issue 24*. pp.19-21
- 2) *Ibid*, Issue 25. pp.3-6
- 3) *Moishe Postone - Anti-Semitism and National Socialism*. P.5
- 4) *Ibid*
- 5) *Ibid*. pp16-17
- 6) *Ibid*. p. 11
- 7) *Ibid*.
- 8) *Ibid*. pp.19-20
- 9) *The Libertarian Communist*, 25. pp.3-4
- 10) *Ibid*. p.4
- 11) *John Crump - A Contribution to the Critique of Marx*. P.4
- 12) *Ibid*. p.6
- 13) See *Maximilien Rubel. Pages 10-34, Non Market Socialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*.
- 14) *Ibid*. pp22-3.
- 15) *Ibid*. p.24
- 16) *Robert Kurz - No Revolution Anywhere*. P.21
- 17) *Ibid*. pp.21-2
- 18) *Robert Kurz - Marx 2000*. p.6

19) Norbert Trenkle - *The Terror of Labour. P.4 In Contributions to the Critique of Commodity Society*

20) *No Revolution Anywhere. P.20*

21) *Interview with Robert Kurz on The Black Book of Capitalism: libcom.org*

22) *Manifesto Against Labour- Krisis Website*

23) *Robert Kurz - Reading Marx in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: libcom.org*

24) *See No Revolution Anywhere. P.40*

25) *This quote and the analysis contained in this section can be found in Manifesto Against Labour Op.cit*

26) *Ibid*

27) *Reading Marx in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century op.cit*

28) *Ibid*

## **UKRAINE: POPULAR UPRISING OR FASCIST COUP? Stefan**

### **Introduction**

Was the Yanukovich government in Ukraine overthrown in a popular uprising (as Western propaganda claims) or by means of a fascist coup (the official Russian version)?

The broad movement of social protest that led to the change of regime, called in Ukraine 'the Maidan' (meaning 'the public square') or 'Euromaidan', was on the whole democratic and liberal in orientation. But it also included ultra-nationalist groups, the two main ones being the political party named 'the All-Ukraine Union Svoboda' – henceforth 'Svoboda' – and the paramilitary coalition that calls itself 'the Right Sector' (RS).

In order to answer the question in the title, we have to tackle three subsidiary questions:

**First**, how much justification is there for calling Svoboda and RS fascist?

**Second**, how crucial was their role in bringing about the collapse of the old government?

**Third**, how much influence do they have in the new government and over the general political situation in Ukraine following the change of regime?

I shall assume that the reader has a general idea of the regional division in Ukrainian politics between 'Oranges' and 'Blues'; I have already written about this elsewhere [1].

### **Were the 'Banderites' of 1929–1953 fascists?**

Both Svoboda and most of the groups that make up the RS belong to what is known as the 'Banderite' tradition of Ukrainian ultra-nationalism, which harks back to the activity of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists

(OUN) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA) over the period 1929–1953 [2]. The OUN/UIA fought in Western Ukraine for an independent Ukrainian state at a time when the region was successively under Polish (up to 1939), Nazi German (1941–44) and Soviet (1939–41, 1944–53) rule. When German troops arrived in summer 1941 the Banderites proclaimed a Ukrainian state in Lvov in the hope that it would become part of the Nazis' New Order, but it was promptly suppressed.

The Banderites were 'organic' or 'integral' nationalists, meaning that they imagined the nation as a single organism whose interests superseded the rights of individuals. Most students of fascism regard organic nationalism as essential to fascism but insufficient in itself to qualify a movement as fascist. Aleksandr Zaitsev argues that the OUN did not satisfy all the other criteria of fascism: in particular, it never acquired an effective leadership cult. Thus it came close to fascism and had the potential to develop into fascism but did not realize that potential [3]. Anton Shekhovtsov, by contrast, regards the OUN even in the interwar period as an example of fascism – specifically, 'clerical fascism' [4].

Alexander J. Motyl views the fascism of the OUN as purely opportunistic. Like any other nationalist movement, its only fixed goal was to establish a national state. Ideology was just a means of gaining allies and therefore changed with the international situation, 'adopting some fascist elements by the late 1930s and early 1940s and abandoning them by 1943–44.' There is clearly some truth in this, but Motyl overstates his case. 'Fascist elements' were already present when the OUN was created in 1929, well before Hitler came to power. One of the three main groups that merged to form the OUN was the Union of Ukrainian Fascists, while Dmytro Dontsov – revered by the movement as its most important theorist – made no bones about his allegiance to fascism [5].

Nevertheless, the fascist reputation of the Banderites probably owes less to their ideology than to the atrocities they committed, whether in collaboration with the Nazis (a Ukrainian division of the SS, the Waffen-SS Galizien, was created in July 1944) or independently of them. Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe summarizes their achievements in this field as follows [6]. The OUN militia killed 13–35,000 Jews and the UIA killed 70–100,000 Poles in an effort to cleanse Western Ukraine of non-Ukrainians. The UIA also killed over 20,000 anti-Banderite Ukrainians, mostly people accused of

collaborating with the Soviet regime after the re-entry of Soviet forces in late 1944.

### **Are today's 'Banderites' fascists?**

The Soviet security forces succeeded in suppressing all armed Ukrainian nationalist resistance by 1953. For the next third of a century the slightest manifestation of Banderite activity was crushed. Only the advent of Gorbachev's perestroika and then Ukrainian independence made it possible to revive the Banderite tradition. Nevertheless, until quite recently neo-Banderite groups remained marginal, even in Western Ukraine.

Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to ask how much real continuity there is between the original Banderites and those who claim to be their heirs today. If such continuity is lacking, then the historical record is irrelevant to an assessment of the contemporary Ukrainian ultra-right.

However, significant elements of continuity do exist. The Banderite tradition was maintained among Ukrainians abroad. And even inside Soviet Ukraine the memory of the struggle for independence was secretly preserved within individual families. A few elderly survivors of that struggle were even able to join the new organizations.

Continuity is demonstrated by the return of old Banderite terminology and rituals. For example, the attempt to create a Ukrainian state in Western Ukraine in 1941 was dubbed a 'national revolution' – and this is also what the ultra-right call the recent uprising against the Yanukovich government. Or take the old OUN ritual in which one group makes a raised-arm salute and calls out 'Glory to Ukraine!' and another group responds 'To the heroes glory!' In January 2014 Andreas Umland, a German political scientist based in Kiev, commented on the current revival of this ritual:

*The Euromaidan's podium presenter, Yevhen Nyshchuk, an otherwise little known actor and a DJ in the Orange Revolution, has helped to make this slogan the protest movement's main motto – repeated hundreds of times like a mantra during the last few weeks.'*

The main ultra-nationalist organization in recent years, Svoboda, has made a continuing effort to conceal its (semi-)fascist roots. This effort dates back to 2004, when the organization that is now called Svoboda (Freedom) but then went by the name of the Social-National Party of Ukraine (SNPU) decided to adopt a less 'ideological' name and

cultivate a 'moderate' and 'respectable' public image. The SNPU's emblem – the Wolf's Hook (Wolfsangel), used by the Waffen SS and popular among West European neo-Nazis – was abandoned and its paramilitary youth wing 'Patriot of Ukraine' was disbanded.

Specialists in ultra-right politics regard the shift as deceptive – a tactical 'rebranding' rather than a real change of heart. Many examples could be cited in support of this assertion. Let me just mention Yuri Michalchyshyn, one of the most prominent Svoboda politicians, who in 2005 established a 'Joseph Goebbels Political Research Center' but later changed 'Joseph Goebbels' to 'Ernst Jünger' (a German writer widely regarded as a precursor to the Nazis). Nevertheless, the facelift has been effective in giving the renamed party social acceptability and enabling it to make the breakthrough into mainstream national politics with a substantial presence in parliament (rising from 0.36% of the vote in 2006 and 0.76% in 2007 to 10.4% in 2012, giving it 37 seats) [7].

The rebranding of Svoboda has continued since its entry into parliament. It foreswore anti-Semitism and announced its support for the goal of joining Europe – a civilization that it had previously denounced as decadent. These moves enabled Svoboda to enter the new governing coalition and its leader Oleh Tiahnybok to meet the US envoy to Ukraine, assistant secretary of state Victoria Nuland, as well as the Israeli ambassador.

The newfound respectability of Svoboda opened up a political space to its right and the RS moved into this space. At least initially, the RS did not try to appear respectable. It did not conceal its hostility to ethnic minorities and to present-day Europe and continued to display the Wolf's Hook. Nevertheless, the leaders of the two organizations do not denounce one another but publicly declare that they 'share common values'. They maintain close contact, with Mykhalchyshyn reportedly acting as liaison. I think it is fair to say that there exists a division of labor between Svoboda and the RS as parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forces working toward the same goals.

### **Videos**

It may help the reader decide whether the Right Sector is a fascist force if he or she watches a few videos. There are plenty of videos about the Right Sector on the internet (search 'Pravy Sektor'). Some are overt propaganda from the RS itself, appealing for support and recruits. Others are exposes by

Russian or pro-Russian media. Yet others are of unclear origin.

Some videos are scenes of spontaneous incidents, presumably shot by bystanders. Others may have been circulated by RS without attribution as covert propaganda. For example, a police car is stopped at a RS checkpoint; the driver is intimidated by the RS man and forced to show his ID – that is, acknowledge the RS man's authority. Circulation of this video would have helped intimidate other police officers.

Another video shows a large group of RS men surrounding a regional governor whom they regard as an enemy. They force him to his knees, kick him, and make him shout slogans and self-accusations ('I shamed the nation!') until he agrees to resign. This scene may also have been filmed for 'educational' purposes. It reminded me of how the Red Guards treated 'capitalist roaders' during China's Cultural Revolution.

One video in the 'expose' category presents testimony about an incident that took place in Cherkassy region on February 20. RS men stopped several buses carrying unarmed citizens from Simferopol (Crimea). Passengers were dragged out, beaten, tortured and humiliated. Some were killed with baseball bats. The buses were set on fire. The reporter concludes: '*The Crimean authorities informed Kiev of what happened. No reaction. The Revolution does not punish its heroes*' [8].

A video probably recorded by a bystander starts with a couple walking along a street. The man spots a group of RS fighters across the street and yells: 'Bandera was a pedophile!' (an accusation made by his detractors). The RS men cross over and set upon the man while his companion screams.

Another video just shows a line of young RS men chanting a particularly bloodthirsty slogan: 'Russkies [moskaliv] to the knife, Commies to the gallows!' ('Commies' includes all leftists, anarchists and trade union activists.) [9]

### **Maidan: from civic protest to 'national revolution'**

Let us proceed to our second question – the role played by Svoboda and the RS in the 'Maidan' and the collapse of the Yanukovych government.

Like all mass movements, the Maidan was a complex phenomenon. Different tendencies were discernible within it and to a certain

extent they conflicted with one another. I would distinguish between a civic and an ethno-national tendency, and also between the grassroots and the politicians.

The 'civic Maidan' was a movement of citizens of all ethnic affiliations against corrupt, unresponsive, incompetent and oppressive government. As such it had the potential to spread from Western and Central Ukraine to the south and east of the country – that is, to become a truly nationwide movement. When residents of Eastern Ukraine are interviewed, they often express sympathy for *this* aspect of the Maidan. However, there is also an 'ethno-national' Maidan that opposed the Yanukovych government not because it was corrupt or violated human rights but because it was 'not Ukrainian enough' – and this Maidan is perceived as a threat in the Russian-speaking regions.

At the level of political parties, the civic Maidan is best represented by the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform (UDAR) while the ethno-national Maidan is represented by Svoboda, with Fatherland situated between the two.

The grassroots Maidan is more impatient to achieve the democratic goals of the movement and less willing than the politicians to compromise with corrupt interest groups such as the oligarchs. Thus, grassroots activists are far from satisfied with the composition of the new government, which includes oligarchs (some regional governors), individuals known to represent the interests of specific oligarchs (the ministers of energy and finance are placemen for 'Benya' Kolomoyski) and individuals widely viewed as corrupt. Part of the popular appeal of the ultra-rightists is their hostility to the 'anti-Ukrainian' oligarchs [10].

Initially the Maidan was a completely peaceful movement in which the civic tendency was predominant. It seemed reasonable to anticipate a rerun of the 'Orange Revolution' of November 2004 – January 2005, when sustained non-violent mass protests removed Yanukovych (reelected in 2010) and brought Yushchenko to power.

This time round, however, events took a different turn. First the ethno-nationalist tendency became increasingly salient. Later peaceful protest gave way to violent conflict between armed insurgent groups and the Berkut riot police. In January 2014 Andreas Umland described the ascendancy of the ethno-nationalist tendency in a post that is worth quoting at some length:

*Svoboda and similar groups have managed to insert into the entire protest movement a number of their own specifically ethno-nationalist themes, symbols and slogans. This concerns above all the Ukrainian Insurgent Army's red/black blood-and-soil flag, more visible today than during the 1990 and 2004 protests, and the OUN's battle cry "Glory to Ukraine! - To the heroes glory!" ...*

*Moreover, even such explicitly ethno-nationalist slogans as "Ukraine Above Everything!", "Death to the Enemies!" or "Glory to the Nation!" have started to circulate on Independence Square - a fact explicitly criticized by the popular folk-rock singer Oleh Skripka among others. The spread of these mottos is probably also a result of their promotion by Svoboda and other ethno-nationalist groups over-represented on the Euromaidan, including the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, Ukrainian Platform "Sobor" and the Right Sector. In his speeches, Tiahnybok has used formulas like "national revolution" and "national state" to describe his vision of the nature and aims of the uprising. Before the current protests, Banderite slogans and symbols were heavily used only in Western Ukraine and played a minor role in earlier protests. Today, by contrast, they have become mainstream to the entire opposition protest movement, whether party-affiliated or not, and can be heard and seen all over Kiev as well as other Ukrainian cities [11].*

We cannot be sure who fired the first shot (or threw the first firebomb), but we can identify factors that contributed to the outbreak of violence. In sharp contrast to past protests, there was no consensus in favor of a commitment to nonviolence under all circumstances. As confrontation with the Berkut intensified, 'Maidan self-defense forces' were set up. The RS also began preparations for armed struggle, organizing combat groups and arming their men with Molotov cocktails and crude explosives produced in makeshift workshops and with firearms stolen from state armories. [12] 'Maidan self-defense' and RS forces were organizationally distinct, even though ultra-rightists were involved in both. Yanukovich, informed that such preparations were underway, authorized the Berkut to 'use force if necessary' (later he was to withdraw authorization, turning the Berkut officers into sitting ducks).

Given the high level of tension, it was now unlikely that escalation to violence could be avoided. However, there is considerable evidence suggesting that the RS did not want to avoid violence. Quite a few observers reported RS fighters throwing Molotov cocktails at the police and inferred that they were

deliberately provoking a violent reaction against the mass of demonstrators [13]. Besides fighting the police, RS men vandalized the Kiev offices of Blue parties (Party of Regions, Communist Party of Ukraine, etc.) and took control of 'autonomous zones' in and around Kiev.

There were also groups of snipers ensconced in the Philharmonic Hall and the Ukraina Hotel who targeted both protestors and police officers. As these were skilled marksmen using sophisticated equipment, they were presumably mercenaries. There is mounting evidence that Andrei Parubiy, who commanded the 'Maidan self-defense' and had a Banderite past, was at least complicit in this operation, although who organized it remains a mystery. The possibility of CIA involvement cannot be excluded [14].

It was violence and the threat of further violence from the Banderites that settled the fate of the Yanukovich regime. Fearing for their lives, deputies from Eastern and Southern Ukraine fled the parliament building through underground tunnels, leaving the parliament in the hands of pro-Maidan parties. Yanukovich himself fled to Russia because he feared for his life.

Svoboda, the respectable wing of the Banderites, also contributed to the outcome. It was their deputies who assumed the leading role in the proceedings of the rump parliament (now representing only half the country) that formalized the change of regime.

Was this then a popular uprising or a fascist coup? There was a popular uprising. True, it was confined to one half of Ukraine, and now a no less popular counter-uprising is underway in the other half. But the popular uprising turned into a power grab by an armed ultra-nationalist minority. Whether this counts as a 'fascist coup' depends on whether we describe the insurgents as fascists and on the extent to which the power grab is successful. A tolerably accurate if nitpicking term would be a 'semi-fascist semi-coup'.

### **Composition of the new government**

Several ministers in the new government are members of Svoboda: Oleksandr Sych (deputy prime minister for the economy [15]), Admiral Ihor Tenyukh (minister of defense), Ihor Shvaika (minister of agrarian policy and food), and Andriy Mokhnyk (minister of ecology and natural resources). Serhiy Kut (minister of education) is sometimes added to this list,



although it seems he is at most a sympathizer (he was active as a Banderite in the past). The General Prosecutor, Oleh Makhnitsky, also belongs to Svoboda.

'Maidan Commandant' Andrei Parubiy, who became secretary of the National Security and Defense Council, is currently affiliated with Fatherland, but has a long history on the ultra-right. He was a co-founder (with Tiahnybok) of the Social-National Party of Ukraine, Svoboda's predecessor. Dmytro Yarosh, leader of the RS, was appointed his deputy.

The pro-Russian blogger who calls himself 'the Saker' (vineyardsaker.blogspot.co.uk) claims that ultra-rightists have been placed in control of all state bodies with armed force at their disposal (the so-called 'power structures'). This is a gross exaggeration: the two most important posts from this point of view are occupied by men who have no known connections with the ultra-right:

(a) The first deputy prime minister, whose specific area of responsibility is the power structures, is Retired Police Lieutenant General Vitaly Yarema, a law enforcement professional and member of Fatherland who served as minister of internal affairs under Yushchenko (2005--2010).

(b) The new minister of internal affairs is Arsen Avakov, also a member of Fatherland. 'The Saker' writes that he is '*officially a member of Fatherland but in reality an agent for the Right Sector.*' I find this implausible in the extreme. First, Avakov is of Armenian origin and therefore unlikely to align himself with Ukrainian ethnic (as distinct from civic) nationalists (nor would they trust him). Second, Avakov has lived most of his life in Kharkov, where he served as head of the regional state administration under Yushchenko. In 2010 he stood as Fatherland's candidate in the elections for mayor of Kharkov and lost to the candidate of the Party of Regions by a very narrow margin. In an East Ukrainian city like Kharkov he could not possibly have done so well had there been the slightest evidence that he had ever been associated with the detested 'Banderites' – and his opponent would certainly have dug up any such evidence and exploited it to the hilt.

Although the ultra-right does control a few important posts, the most influential element in the government is the leaders of the liberal Fatherland party, whose nationalism is of a relatively liberal variety. The second most influential element, especially in the economic

sphere, is the Orange oligarchs and their placemen (although these two groups overlap). However, it is true to say that the dominant elements in the new government are not resolutely opposed to the ultra-right but value it as a legitimate participant in the movement against Yanukovych. At least they regard Svoboda in this light, and Svoboda in turn, in accordance with the division of labor between the two main components of the ultra-right, extends its protection to the RS.

The Maidan did contain one major element that denies the legitimacy of the ultra-right – namely, the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform (UDAR) led by ex-boxer Vitaly Klichko. On February 1 the press office of UDAR released a statement by Klichko, who at that time still expected to be in the new government:

*It is already absolutely clear that the radical wing of the protests, headed by the Right Sector, is working solely to discredit the opposition. I want to promise these fighters that after our victory and the change of regime we shall form new law enforcement bodies, which will deal firmly with radical groups. All members of the militarized bandit formations that are now fighting in the center of Kiev will be held criminally liable. Provocateurs can expect no mercy... The Right Sector is a fifth column in our state [16].*

Klichko pointed out that the actions of the RS were alienating Western politicians who would otherwise be willing to support the opposition, specifically mentioning Polish foreign minister Radoslaw Sikorski in this connection. Indeed, the prominence of Banderite forces has especially alarmed Poles, who still remember the atrocities committed by Bandera's men against the Polish minority in Western Ukraine under Nazi rule, when hundreds of Polish villages were burned to the ground and tens of thousands of Poles massacred.

It had been announced that the new government would be a three-way coalition of Fatherland, UDAR and Svoboda, but after the release of Klichko's statement Svoboda leader Tiahnybok began to express unwillingness to join a coalition that would also include UDAR. There would have to be a two-way coalition. As the largest of the three parties, Fatherland had to choose which of the other two parties would be its coalition partner. It chose Svoboda. At least for the time being, why must remain a matter of speculation.

### **Are the neo-Banderites still a 'marginal' social force?**

In electoral terms Svoboda has burst out of the fringes and entered the mainstream of

Ukrainian politics. In the opinion of knowledgeable observers like Andreas Umland, however, the party's reliable support base remains marginal and its current national prominence is likely to prove temporary. Svoboda achieved its breakthrough by winning, largely thanks to its rebranding, a new 'non-ideological' electorate that supported it for tactical reasons, as a disciplined force that could be trusted to put up a fight against Yanukovich. Recent polls indicate that Svoboda's electoral support has fallen back to 5–6%. That is, it has already lost again most of its new 'non-ideological' voters [17].

A correspondent in Lvov describes the rapid disillusionment of ordinary voters with Svoboda and contrasts the 'right-radical ideology' with the 'humane patriotism' of Maidan:

*The appearance and some activities [of Svoboda] always were rather suspicious. People never trusted its leaders. It was elected to parliament as a new (and, supposedly, less corrupted) force, benefiting from the loss of influence of other parties. But Svoboda happened to be an empty structure. The most 'cool' and 'revolutionary' party ideologist Michalchyshyn fortunately sits quietly, not declaring himself in recent months. The party leader Tiahnybok has liberalized his views and position significantly (all his earlier radicalism was largely specious to attract public attention). The party's rating is falling. People say: 'They are just like everyone else.' And especially so in the western regions, where Svoboda controls most of the local authorities. Above-average incompetence and corruption at the general level do not add to its credibility.*

*But the most important thing is that all these ups and downs of Svoboda's popularity, its coming to power and so on have no effect on the atmosphere in the society. Maidan's patriotism is something entirely different from the right-radical ideology, even its opposite. Whoever was not there can hardly imagine the high spirit of Maidanites and their humanity.*

Another illuminating source on the social atmosphere in Western Ukraine is a blog maintained by a British lecturer currently residing in Ivano-Frankivsk. On March 12 he commented as follows on relations between the RS and ordinary Maidanites:

*On my way back from work I encountered the Right Sector march in the city centre and decided to follow it to the police HQ. After Right Sector left, I spoke to the Self-Defence lads remaining by the entrance to the police HQ. I introduced myself as a Briton who has been in Ukraine for nearly two years and is keenly interested in events. They put forward a tall young man... He told me that he had come back from working in the USA at Christmas and has been involved with Maidan Self-Defence since then.*

*I asked him what he and his colleagues thought of Right Sector. He answered, and his comrades agreed, that 'they just came here for the publicity... A colleague of the man who had been to America said that in a month Right Sector would fall apart and they're a bunch of posers with no idea of discipline. The tall man who had been to America said that they were sick of Right Sector promoting themselves and forgetting that Self-Defence had been there from the start... There is clear tension between the groups and any cooperation seems to be uneasy. The Self-Defence lads on the door of the police HQ were very demonstrative in refusing to take Right Sector's newspaper that teenage girls with RS badges were handing out to the crowd.*

*With the lack of evident structures of law and order in the city, it is possible for far-right organisations to march armed and unopposed through the city, while promising a much more radical 'national revolution' and preparing, as Abramiv said today, not only for war against Russia but also for battle against any authority deemed unsuitable. Although there was an appeal to the mayor to stop masked, armed groups from marching through the city, there is little evidence of them being stopped. And, sadly, there is little readiness for any kind of civil resistance to such groups... [18].*

It is very hard to judge whether or not the neo-Banderites are still a marginal force in society. On the one hand, we have the reports of their prominence in the Maidan. One observer estimated that 30% of the demonstrators in Kiev marched under the banners of the Right Sector; another observer gave an estimate of one third. This is a minority, but hardly marginal. On the other hand, we have evidence strongly suggesting that they do remain marginal.

I think that two sources of bias are at work here. First, the focus of many commentators on electoral politics ignores people who are too young to vote – though not too young to fight! I get the impression that it is this age group that provides the RS with most of their recruits. Second, the understandable focus on the events in Kiev may be generating a misleading picture of the situation in Ukraine as a whole. Here I agree with Umland's point that the ultra-rightists were overrepresented in Kiev's Maidan [19], because they had deliberately concentrated their forces in Kiev. This means that everywhere else in the country, including Western Ukraine, they must have played a much less prominent role than they did in the capital.

Thus, despite the crucial role they played in the change of regime the ultra-nationalists may well still be marginal to Ukrainian society. This is not to say that there is no cause for concern.

By now we should know from historical experience that even quite small minorities can wield power out of all proportion to their numbers if – like the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917, for instance – they are determined, well organized, well armed and willing to resort to intimidation and violence.

### Conclusions

This is not an article about relations between Russia and Ukraine or the crisis over Crimea (which I have written about elsewhere [20]). However, I shall now try to place the issue of the nature of the change of regime in Ukraine within this broader context.

I have argued that the Russian characterization of the change of regime in Kiev as a 'fascist coup' contains a considerable element of truth. This does not mean that I accept the claim of the Putin regime that its motive for intervening in Ukraine is to protect people against the threat of fascism [21]. The real impact of Russian aggression on the problem of Ukrainian ultra-nationalism is quite the opposite. It fuels the war psychosis in Ukraine – and fascism feeds on war psychosis. It strengthens the spirit of ethnic solidarity, so that Ukrainians who would otherwise publicly denounce the ultra-nationalists feel obliged to paper over the cracks and present a united front to the world. Ukrainian society has the capacity to face and deal with the problem of Ukrainian ultra-nationalism, but it is only likely to do so when Ukraine's security as an independent state is no longer under threat and Ukraine has normal relations with Russia.

### Notes

[1] See my article: 'Ukraine: Between Oranges and Blues', *The Socialist Standard* (<http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/socialist-standard/2010s/2014/no-1315-march-2014/ukraine-between-oranges-and-blues>). Although not published until the beginning of March, the text was finalized on February 15, before the downfall of the Yanukovich government.

[2] The term 'Banderite' as a label for the movement as a whole is a little misleading because Bandera was the leader of only one of the two factions into which the OUN split in winter 1940/41 (Melnyk led the other).

[3] 'Ukrainian Integral Nationalism in Quest of a "Special Path" (1920s--1930s)', *Russian Politics & Law*, 2013, no. 5. He suggests that the OUN's fascist potential might have been realized had the Nazis accepted the Ukrainian state proclaimed in Lvov in 1941.

[4] 'By Cross and Sword: "Clerical Fascism" in Interwar Western Ukraine,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, June 2007, v. 8, no. 2, pp. 271-85. [https://www.academia.edu/194084/By\\_Cross\\_and\\_Sword\\_Clerical\\_Fascism\\_in\\_Interwar\\_Western\\_Ukraine](https://www.academia.edu/194084/By_Cross_and_Sword_Clerical_Fascism_in_Interwar_Western_Ukraine). I think this is

because his criteria for fascism are somewhat looser than those of Zaitsev. I discuss criteria for fascism in the first chapter of my book *Russian Fascism: Traditions, Movements, Tendencies* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2001).

[5] It is hard to explain Professor Motyl's numerous distortions and omissions except as a deliberate effort to whitewash the Banderites and thereby legitimize their heirs. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/03/20/ghosts\\_ukraine\\_stepan\\_bandera\\_putin\\_crimea](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/03/20/ghosts_ukraine_stepan_bandera_putin_crimea)

[6] Celebrating Fascism and War Criminality in Edmonton: The Political Myth and Cult of Stepan Bandera in Multicultural Canada. (<http://defendinghistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Grzegorz-Rossliński-Liebe-on-Celebrating-Fascism-and-War-Criminality-in-Edmonton-Canada.pdf>)

Defenders of the Banderites often emphasize their conflicts with the Nazis and the fact that at certain times some of them fought the Nazis. This may all be true, but it does not establish their credentials as opponents of fascism. If the Banderites were fascists, they were Ukrainian fascists who extolled the superiority of the Ukrainian nation and not German fascists, who regarded Ukrainians as Untermenschen. There is no reason to expect fascists belonging to different nations to see eye to eye.

[7] For further analysis of Svoboda's breakthrough, see the articles by Vyacheslav Likhachev in *Russian Politics & Law*, 2013, no. 5.

[8] For a full translation of the audio, see: <http://vineyardsaker.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/neo-fascist-ukrainian-insurgents-attack.html>.

[9] For the sake of balance, the reader may also like to watch a few videos exposing violence on the part of pro-Russian forces. For example, here is a video of activists from Klichko's Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform trying to address a crowd in Kerch (Crimea) but getting shouted down as 'fascists', pelted, kicked and beaten up to the accompaniment of cries of 'Beat the fascists!': <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ry3PPOCsY4>. In fact, it is most unfair to call Klichko and his party 'fascist'; on the contrary, Klichko is one of the rare Orange politicians to have taken a firm stand against the fascists on 'his own side' (see below).

[10] The difference between the anti-oligarch attitudes of leftists and ultra-rightists is that the latter stress the Jewish, Russian and other non-Ukrainian ethnic origin of most of the oligarchs. They suspect that even Yulia Tymoshenko, who is a very wealthy woman as well as a leader of the Fatherland party and appears to be an ethnic Ukrainian, is of partly Jewish descent.

[11] Source: [www.geopolitika.lt](http://www.geopolitika.lt). First published in Ukraine on website of weekly Kyiv Post. See also: [https://www.academia.edu/5693544/Is\\_Tiahnybok\\_a\\_Patriot\\_How\\_the\\_Spread\\_of\\_Banderite\\_Slogans\\_and\\_Symbols\\_Undermines\\_Ukrainian\\_Nation-Building](https://www.academia.edu/5693544/Is_Tiahnybok_a_Patriot_How_the_Spread_of_Banderite_Slogans_and_Symbols_Undermines_Ukrainian_Nation-Building) (January 6, 2014).

[12] They were joined by groups of volunteers from Serbia and Israel. The Israelis seem to be politically naïve young IDF veterans with family roots in Ukraine.

[13] See Nicolai Petro at [http://www.democracynow.org/2014/2/24/a\\_coup\\_or\\_a\\_revolution\\_ukraine](http://www.democracynow.org/2014/2/24/a_coup_or_a_revolution_ukraine).

[14] Alexander Yakimenko, former chief of Ukraine's Security Service, has given the fullest account of this affair



so far on Russian TV ([www.russiatoday.com](http://www.russiatoday.com), March 13). There is also the evidence of a leaked telephone conversation in which EU representative Catherine Ashton and Estonian foreign minister Urmas Paet discuss an assessment by Dr. Olga Bogomolets, who treated sniper victims and found that both protestors and police officers had been wounded by the same type of bullet.

A CIA operation to destabilize Ukraine would seem to be at odds with President Obama's cautious approach to the crisis, though not with the Cold War rhetoric of secretary of state Hillary Clinton. However, Obama is afraid to exercise his authority over the CIA. He prefers to avoid the fate of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

[15] Ukraine, like other post-Soviet states, retains the Soviet practice of having several deputy prime ministers, each of whom is responsible for a 'block' of ministries.

[16] <http://from-ua.com/news/d468a0a3169c4.html>

[17] <https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/studio/multimedia/20140131/index.html>

[18] <http://uauk.wordpress.com/2014/03/12/right-sector-march-police-blockade-local-news>

[19] Source as for note [11].

[20] See the April 2014 issue of *The Socialist Standard*.

[21] Nor does it mean that I ignore the problem of fascist tendencies in Russia. I have written a whole book about them (see note [4]).

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### **War on War! Declaration of Internationalists in Connection with the Threat of War in Ukraine**

#### **War on war! Not a single drop of blood for 'the nation'!**

The struggle for power among the oligarchic clans of Ukraine threatens to escalate into an international military conflict. Russian capitalism intends to take advantage of the redivision of Ukrainian state power in order to achieve its long-established imperial and expansionist ambitions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, where it has solid economic, financial, and political interests.

On the threshold of the next phase of the economic crisis in Russia, the ruling regime is inciting Russian nationalism in an attempt to divert the attention of working people away from growing socioeconomic problems, their miserable wages and pensions, and the dismantling of affordable healthcare, education, and other social services. Amid the din of nationalist and bellicose rhetoric it is easier to complete the formation of a corporate

authoritarian state based on reactionary values and repressive policies.

In Ukraine an extremely acute economic and political crisis led to an intensification of the struggle between 'old' and 'new' oligarchic clans. The 'old' clans used various forces, including paramilitary ultra-rightist and ultra-nationalist formations, to carry out a coup d'état in Kiev. The political elite of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine do not intend to share their power and property with the latest rulers in Kiev and are seeking assistance from the Russian state. Both sides are resorting to unrestrained nationalist hysteria—Ukrainian and Russian, respectively. Armed clashes are taking place. Blood is being shed. The Western powers have their own interests and ambitions; their intervention in the conflict may lead to World War Three.

As usual, the warring cliques of our masters force us—ordinary people, whether wage workers, unemployed, students or pensioners—to fight for their interests. Intoxicating us with the narcotic drug of nationalism, they set us against one another and make us forget our real needs and interests. Their 'nations' are no business of ours. We have much more vital and pressing problems to deal with—how to make ends meet under the system that they have established in order to enslave and exploit us.

Don't get carried away by the nationalist hysteria! To hell with their states and 'nations' with their flags and anthems! This is not our war, and we should not take part in it and pay with our blood for their palaces, bank accounts and state offices. And if our masters in Moscow, Kiev, Lvov, Kharkov, Donetsk and Simferopol start it, our duty is to resist by all available means!

Down with war between peoples! Down with peace between classes

#### **Signed by:**

Russian Section of the International Workers' Association  
Internationalists of Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Israel, Lithuania, Romania and Poland  
Federation of Anarchists of Moldova  
Fraction of Revolutionary Socialism (Ukraine)

*The declaration is open to new signatories.*

Translated by Stefan from Russian text at <http://www.aitrus.info/node/3607>

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## **News from the U.S: Joe Hopkins**

On 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 – in the West Virginia town of Nitro, situated in an area of the state known as “Chemical Valley” – Freedom Industries, a chemical distributing company for Eastman Chemical Company based in Kingsport, Tennessee, allowed a reported 7,500 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexane methanol (MCHM) to escape from one of its 35,000 gallon storage tanks into the Elk River. 9<sup>th</sup> January was the day the MCHM leak was discovered and reported. It is a valid question – and probably unanswerable – for how long a time had MCHM been pouring into the Elk River, before being discovered? This leak was not discovered by any regulatory agency. In public briefings, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) officials said their inspectors investigated the situation at “Freedom” on January 9<sup>th</sup> not because of an alert from the company, but because people living close to Freedom Industries storage “tank farm” were complaining of a strong chemical odour that resembled that of liquorice. Upon arrival at the site the WVDEP inspectors reported seeing “a 4-foot-wide stream” of what was later determined to be MCHM (a coal processing chemical used to remove impurities from coal before being burnt and known to be harmful to humans and wildlife) running into the river. After a little further reconnaissance the inspectors found evidence that someone had tried, unsuccessfully, to stop the leak.

There is no way to prove a negative so it’s impossible to know what the official state response to Freedom Industries chemical leak would have been if the Elk River did not flow down from the spill site through Charleston, W.Va, the state’s capital city. In fact the MCHM spill happened a mere one-and-a-half miles upstream from Charleston’s sole municipal water-supply intake. According to the American Association of Poison control centres MCHM is harmful if swallowed or inhaled and can cause skin irritation, nausea and vomiting. As it went on Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>, West Virginia’s governor Earl Ray Tomblin declared a state of emergency in nine counties – affecting 300,000 “customers” – and urged residents not to use their water for cooking, drinking or baths. On the morning of 10<sup>th</sup> Jan, Barack Obama signed a federal emergency declaration allowing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide direct aid. By Jan.13<sup>th</sup> FEMA had delivered 3 million litres of water to West Virginians. On Jan.13<sup>th</sup> the water ban was eased for downtown Charleston.

American Water Works (AWW) provides water utility services to 14 millions of customers in 30 states and parts of Canada; Jeff McIntyre, president of AWW’s West Virginia’s division, arranged with the WVDEP to post instructions on the internet to flush toilets for 5 minutes and to run in-door water for 15 minutes to clear any remaining MCHM from the water lines. These instructions were put up alongside a map of the nine affected counties. McIntyre asked that the flushing of toilets and running of in-door water be staggered according to highlights on the map to prevent low water pressure or “dry pipes” due to the draining measures he was recommending. The map showed contaminated counties in red and the newly cleaned and safe counties in blue. The map was close to being totally blue by Jan.15<sup>th</sup>. On Jan.17<sup>th</sup> Freedom Industries filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Chapter 11 allows the company filing for protection to legally remain in operation.

On Jan.21<sup>st</sup> Dena Capiello (an EPA expert) reported the discovery of poly glycol ethers (PGE) in the tank that had leaked the 7,500 gallons – now revised upward to 10,000 gallons of hazardous chemicals into the Elk River. The internet map of safe zones disappeared. 450-500 people had been sickened to the point of nausea, vomiting, skin rash and eye infections by MCHM and gone to the hospital. Randy Huffman, WVDEP’s department chief had stressed during local television interviews that as far as his agency was concerned, “MCHM isn’t hazardous and doesn’t require any sort of special permit”. According to a press release given out by a spokesperson from Eastman Chemical “MCHM has a U.S occupational safety and health administration rating of “Hazardous”; PGE is a known carcinogen that has been shown to cause genetic mutations. The W.Va division of American Water Company through its president Jeff McIntyre says “there is a possibility (emphasis added) we got the PGE stripped out of the drinking water”. Ken Ward, the reporter said: “the disclosure [of PGE] at such a late date probably is a result of the industry’s self-regulating process and policy”.

## **The Back Story of Freedom Industries**

Gary Southern, Freedom Industries’ president apologised for the chemical spill of Jan 9<sup>th</sup> on Jan 9<sup>th</sup> and vowed to co-operate with federal and state investigators – (lame lines read directly from the corporate standard operating procedure manual). On January 12<sup>th</sup> Charles Ryan Associates, a prominent Charleston public-relations firm, dropped “Freedom” as a

client, with no explanation. Calls to Freedom corporate office were answered by a woman on January 14<sup>th</sup> who said that executives were not available to answer questions; she referred inquiries to a public relations firm in Florida which did not respond to phone messages.

West Virginia corporate filings show that Gary Southern was joined by Carl Kennedy II to charter Freedom Industries in 1992. Ken Ward, a reporter at the Charleston Gazette wrote on January 12<sup>th</sup> that Kennedy had pleaded guilty to selling cocaine in 1987. The arrest and conviction of Carl Kennedy II for serious illegal drugs created a scandal that spread to Charleston W.Va Mayor Roark that caused him to resign. Ken Ward also reported that Carl Kennedy II, according to charges filed in Federal Court in Charleston, was sentenced to 40 months in prison in 2006 after pleading guilty to tax evasion and failure to collect taxes from Freedom Industries in his role as an officer and accountant at Freedom – the guilty plea included an admission that he had used corporate funds for his personal benefit. This 40 month sentence was later reduced to 22 months in exchange for Kennedy helping the government in a separate drug investigation. The state corporate filings show that Kennedy ceased his executive role with Freedom in 2005.

On New Year's Eve, December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013, Freedom Industries merged with three other smaller chemical suppliers. Given some of the past illegal activities of Carl Kennedy II listed above some red-flags should be fluttering because the change in corporate structure and its legal (financial) ramifications happened only nine days before the spill of MCHM and PGE was detected. Paul M. Barrett, a reporter for Bloomberg Business week writes, "Any potential connection between the December.31<sup>st</sup>, 2013, corporate combination and the tank rupture isn't yet clear"

### **The Back Story of the Back Story**

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) was passed by the U.S Congress in 1976. This act was supposed to provide public safety through testing of chemical concoctions for adverse effects on humans, other animals and the environment. "Industry" lobbied and weakened the law in two major respects among many others. 1) Corporations through their mouth-piece lobbyists and lawyers had 80-100,000 chemicals "grandfathered" in, it would be too expensive to go back and test all of these chemicals that were already being used in profit-making ventures merely to protect

people working with them from being killed from exposure to them while working with them. 2) Chemicals can be kept secret. The composition of a given chemical cannot be forced out of a manufacturer or end user if it is claimed by the manufacturer to be "proprietary" i.e. a trade secret. The TSCA specifies that the EPA must provide evidence against a chemical to restrict or ban it outright; this is where the "trade secret" mantra has the intended consequence of preventing testing that could provide the evidence to restrict or ban a chemical outright. Catch 22 anyone? An example is PVDE (I still don't know what that is) – PVDE was used as a flame retardant in baby clothes and bedding. After the number of children sickened and/or killed by PVDE rose to the level that caused outrage the manufacturer pulled PVDE from the market and the extenuating circumstances (the tender age of the victims) lead finally to testing PVDE. The tests showed PVDE effected hormones, blood composition, body tissue cells, and caused genetic mutations.

The method used to come up with 1ppm (part per million) "safe level" for MCHM in "Chemical Valleys" drinking water was explained by the Charleston Gazette reporter Ken Ward on The Diane Rehm Show, a National Public Radio (NPR) broadcast, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014. Ward explained he had only been able to locate a single lethality study done on MCHM; it was done by a laboratory that wished to remain anonymous. The 1ppm was derived from "how much HCHM is required to kill a Rat outright. Then the median range is determined by where fifty per cent of the Rats live on after exposure". The ratio is then mathematically reduced using high-range mortal concentration and median range mortal concentration to extrapolate downward in concentration. "The 1ppm seems to be nothing more than an informed guess", Ward said. The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) had been touting the 1ppm number through the mass media at the beginning of the drinking water emergency but now admit they are unsure, that they don't know if there is a safe level.

Diane Rehm, a shrewd and savvy old bird, asked Ward if he knew why a recommendation by the Chemical Safety Board (CSB) to place Charleston's municipal water intake upstream from Nitro that had been made in a CSB report several years earlier had not been implemented. Ward replied the American Water Works probably did not consider that action cost effective and that "due to the pervasive coal pollution and many accidents of the coal industry it was simply not followed up.... Raligh

and Ben counties ignored the report". Asked why, Ward answered, "Most states have a political soft spot for industries that provide a lot of jobs in the state". West Virginia produces more coal than any other state except Wyoming, and uses HCHM to clean the stuff. Chemical and polymer manufacturers employ nearly 13,000 people in West Virginia. (The Economist, Jan 18<sup>th</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> 2014) p.34 "The WVDEP", Ward said, "is under-funded and under-staffed".

Daniel Horowitz, Managing Director of the CSB – an independent federal agency whose members are appointed by the U.S President and confirmed by Congress – was asked by Ms Rehm on the same programme if PPH had been in the ruptured Freedom Industries storage tank. He said, "we're looking into it". Asked if there are "100,000 chemicals we know nothing about that we are ingesting" Horowitz said, "There are many thousands we do not have full toxicology on". Asked if he knew of the chemicals involved in the spill before, Horowitz answered, "We've never encountered these chemicals before". Ms Rehm (pissed off) SAID, "I can't believe you represent the CSB and do not know about these chemicals!" Horowitz actually snickered into the microphone and then responded that, "the CSB is under-funded", has only 40 members - scientists, engineers, and lawyers among them – and that, "the CSB is not a regulatory agency".

Diane Rehm asked Ken Ward whether the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) had been "inhibited" in their work? Ward responded "For a dozen years or so there has been a corporate push back against the Agency: you cannot get elected to public office in West Virginia without being anti EPA. The Tea Party rail against federal over-reach that is trying to deny state-sovereignty, and the chemical spills, and the health risks, and illnesses and deaths caused by the lack of chemical, pollution and safety regulation is a side-effect of that mind-set". In closing the programme Ward commented, "What can we expect from a state level where regulation bashing is a competition sport among all of the political officials the whole state over"? Ward finished by saying that the political class portray the EPA as, "jack-booted regulatory thugs smashing down factory doors and throwing people out of work".

### **What does all this mean for the 99% - us?**

It's pretty telling when the political representatives that are voted into office on almost every level abdicate the responsibility

owed to the people in favour of the capitalist business class. It is the political class after all that dictates the funding of regulatory agencies that are there to protect public health and safety and to safeguard the environment for future generations, not only for human beings, but for all of the other animals too – including their natural habitats.

This does not mean THAT BY merely changing the staff in our political institutions the world will suddenly become a safer, better, more satisfying place, to live, work, play and raise our children. For the most part, many of the people in political power and calling the shots in our name are not evil creatures per se. It is the system that conforms these representatives cum leaders to its own logic of narrow self-interest and short-term gain. These politicians are lured and lulled by power of position – they become courtesans to those with economic power and bask in the reflected glory of their suitors. In more common, that is, vulgar language, they are whores that do the bidding of silver and gold in a world where people sicken and die by the means they use to support their oppressors.

Its obvious government cannot be trusted; with Gross Domestic Product as the measure of National-State prosperity we see that as GDP rises so too does poverty and homelessness, sick people dying needlessly from lack of proper medical treatments.

The state is a monster that kills and consumes its young through competition. The alternative music band Go Go Bordello sings "Borders are scars on the face of the planet". There is no way I've been able to conjecture the state, money, market, division of labour, exploitation out of existence except through the creation of a political party that possesses the values tailor-made to benefit the 99% of humanity that under the present system is dominated by the 1%. An Oxfam study done at the end of 2013 found that the cumulative wealth of the richest 85 people on the planet was equal to the cumulative wealth of the 3.5 billion people at the bottom – the money of 85 people is equal to that of 3,500,000,000 other people.

How is it to be accomplished that the shackles of imposed servitude be broken without the consequence of ultimate doom; the state has shown its capacity and willingness to destroy humanity in great numbers to remain the supreme material force on earth. The revolution is to be a long one comrades and fellow travellers – the revolution must come from within. A political party actively working

toward making itself antiquated and superfluous is the only answer. Labour unrest, strikes, boycotts, collectives, co-ops (co-operatives) are not revolutionary – they may best be seen as a revolt; a putsch. These actions weaken the resolve of people engaged in the struggle as they are seen to fail – or not to succeed beyond a very limited ambit. These programmes are mostly populist-aimed at individuals rather than at the class writ large. Our class has been divided by the state; fragmented. A politically unifying political party is an answer to reconstructing the working class along lines of solidarity. The ASNMS seems bent on denigrating the World Socialist Movement (WSM) and its component parties and this is beyond my personal understanding. Not being a supremely intelligent person I've tried to make up for the lack by maintaining interest, paying attention, and using my memory and associate skills in the categories of origin-genesis, ontology, epistemology, axiology and praxeology. This chain of reasoning has led me to the conclusion that popularly elected socialists in parliament – of the SPGB say – will reflect a social desire that would snowball into a greater mass via the reality of example seen. This would provide the buffer between the power of the state and the people when the social-political revolution gains the steam necessary to change the foundation and cornerstones society currently rests upon. A populist revolution does not necessarily have a foundation (unless it be the rhetoric of a demagogue) to ensure durability. Support socialism at the ballot box while doing all you can to bring about a change of values to society as a whole.

Minacious Mouse Joe [Hopkins@verizon.net](mailto:Hopkins@verizon.net)

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*SECOND VERSION with more materials...added*

*[Jan/21/2014]*

*with a correction added 22 Jan 2014. / More info added 23 rd Jan 2014*

### **The Truth about dogs' lives under capitalism: Michel Prigent**

*"The criticism of religion ends up with the teaching that man is the highest essence of man -hence, with the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable essence, relations which cannot be described than by the cry of a Frenchman when it was*

*planned to introduce a tax on dogs: Poor dogs! They want to treat you as human beings."*

***A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right.***

**December 1843-January 1844.**

**First published in *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbucher*, 7th and 10th February 1844 in Paris.**

*"If you want a friend, get a dog".  
Gordon Gekko in Wall Street.*

*"The State is the crystallisation of all the illusions about the commodity".*

*"There will be growth in the spring".  
Being There (1979) [The last film of Peter Sellers in which he played Chancey Gardner].*

*"Making a fetish of the working class stops you thinking".* Phrase heard in a pub...

First I must present myself to you; I am a dog called Karl. I have escaped from a kennel, my best friend is called Robert, he is much younger than me, and he too has escaped from such a place of detention. In fact he has taken up where I left off... Karl and Robert never wrote anything, they just observed their masters and those around them, i.e. the people who went to work everyday. They are keen observers, they saw many contradictions. They did not like other dogs being slavish towards their masters; it was the same with cats. In fact all domesticated pets and farm animals. It was a different kettle of fish -excuse the pun-, with wild animals. It seems you can't domesticate a crocodile, a piranha, a grown up lion or a wolf. But they can end up in a zoo! Karl and Robert lived in the streets; they had to hide from the RSPCA and other State agencies. Karl and Robert were particularly scathing towards the police-dogs and those which worked with the Army. They understood how complex the situation is in the world of the commodity. That is why a lot of people do not even try to understand the world they live in. They are content playing bingo, or going to football matches, or being avid consumers. But today *Capital is the subject* as Moishe Postone as pointed out on more than one occasion...Many on the left would like the working class, the proletariat to be the subject in 2014..Unfortunately things are very bad, the system has made inroads at all levels. Is it not by chance that Ed Miliband in Britain is trying to get the middle-classes on board...The Ukip kennel has thrown all parties into frenzy. The Ukip kennel master a certain Farage wants all immigrants to be barred from Britain. (1) But then who will do all the dirty, hard jobs of

picking fruits and vegs in all weathers, plus all the navy jobs in the construction industry and all the rest ..Farage belongs to the past. He is a little Englander. (2) When in fact Capital relies on cheap labour, to keep value going strong.

As I said my name is Karl, I was recently thrown into the streets of London, by my master who could no longer keep me. It costs around £400 per year to keep a dog in London, £14 grand for a lifetime. So many people are abandoning man's best friend... The Battersea dog home is full of lost dogs. It is shameful. Especially when you are constantly told that the English are a nation of dog lovers. Blue Cameron and his sidekick called Clegg have not said a word about it all yet. It is a thorny subject...

As a dog I know exactly what concrete domination means. I had a collar around my neck and I was often tied up, so that I would not run away. I was also expected to bark if intruders came round my master's property. As a pet dog my life was assured. I resemble many wage-slaves all over the world. As long as I did not rebel I was o.k. master and his wife would pat me on the head saying: "that's a good dog". In many ways workers are treated like dogs. They are fed, watered, as long as they turn up on time, everything will be alright. My friend Robert, another dog who escaped from his nasty master, has also many things to say. He noticed abstract domination, which dominates his ex-master, that is to say Capital. So even masters are also like dogs, they too are fettered to unseen shackles, abstract ones, which are even more insidious. That is the nature of capitalism. It is there every day of the year, day in, day out. All over the world. As Karl and Robert roamed the streets of London, they could not stop noticing that more and more people were sleeping rough in doorways. *The Housing Question* in Britain is becoming more and direr. The price of houses has gone through the roof; renting a flat in London has become a nightmare. Poor people are being pushed to the suburbs... This syndrome is being replicated all over the world. And yet there are many empty buildings in London and other cities. The present coalition in power seems to be powerless to do anything to alleviate the massive crisis of housing. In fact the coalition is being dictated by the capitalist automaton which rules the entire world. Abstract domination is concrete. But the concrete is not translated into bricks and housing! One way out is to promote the idea of housing coops...

So all creatures on Earth who are fed up with

their conditions of modern slavery ought to rebel, in order to bring a new world where everywhere will be free. To do nothing reminds you of the motto of the Society of Jesuits [Ignatius of Loyola , 1534]: *Perinde Ac Cadaver* (Act as if a zombie, i.e. to obey like a corpse in all matters in which one does not fall into sin). To criticize religion is thus a necessity!

As long as you have kennels, factories, offices, where people, animals are badly treated, there will be no harmony on Earth. People are feeling the pinch at all levels. That is why dogs are being abandoned. Hence the phrase: "A dog is for life" rings hollow in 2014... But as a friend in Paris has pointed out:"In this society, the dog is not a dog: it does not eat food, it eats a capital prop, it can't eat anything else, it is conditioned to eat nothing but that. The dog is an element in the assembly line of valorisation of value. It is capitalised". (3)

No wonder there is no table of contents when it comes to dog food and cat food. Animals who are fed that stuff seem to be addicted to the tins. They remind you of people who eat in fast-food places. In fact the commodity system and its corollary value resemble what Virgil described in his *Georgics* 1, V. 514:

*Fertur equis Auriga nec audit currus habenas* [The horses have swept away the coachman and the carriage no longer obeys the reins]... How appropriate, and well said. Maybe people ought to study Latin a bit more in 2014..But as Andre Gorz quoted a Gaullist minister Christian Fouchet [1964], who spoke of "industrialising the University"..(4)... No wonder some situationists and students wrote *De La Misere En Milieu Etudiant*. This text is partly responsible for the May-June events in France in 1968...Today we need such a document.

Maybe this present text will be one of the documents which herald a new world. If you don't try, you don't experiment. If you do not experiment you stagnate. See the present classist left all over the world. They live in the past; some still even admire Lenin and Trotsky. It won't do... Their ideological output is a real dog's breakfast. It is pitiful. The sooner they dissolve themselves the better, to leave the way clear for a new theoretical critique more in tune with 2014...

As if life was not bad enough for dogs and people, another disease has appeared in the New Forest in England, it is called *Alabama Rot*, it first was seen 25 years in the USA. The



disease attacks the kidneys of dogs, it also provoke lesions over the body of dogs. This canine disease has spread to more than one county in England (Cornwall, Dorset, Worcestershire, etc...)... Dozen dogs have died. The cause of this disease is not too clear. But the contamination of the water supply could be one cause. (cf. The BBC web for more details, Jan 21st, 2014)

Let's come back to Farage for one minute, "he provoked controversy yesterday by claiming that women who take time off work to have children are "worth less" to City employers than men". (Rowena Mason, *The Guardian*, 21st of January 2014)...Farage in many ways resembles Proudhon and the Proudhonists were hostile to the idea of women being involved in urban production. The woman at home was their ideal. Hitler and the Nazis had the same idea! No wonder Karl Marx was against Proudhon....

At the same time as Proudhon was mouthing his ghastly conservative garbage, The Paris Commune was in full swing in 1871. (\*\*\*)

One must recall what some women did during that time, notably Nathalie Le Mel, who was secretary to the Union of Women of the Commune. She was a revolutionary feminist who came from Brittany and lived in Paris. In the Rue Larrey [now demolished], she set up the first community restaurant called "La Marmite" (The Cooking Pot). More than one hundred women also fought on the barricade of Place Blanche, under the stewardship of Nathalie Le Mel. She tried to commit suicide the eve of her arrest by drinking half-litre of absinthe. She survived. She was denounced by a nun who had recognised her. Nathalie Le Mel was deported to the penal colony in New Caledonia with Louise Michel (she was there for 6 years in awful conditions). She died aged 96 in total misery. We salute her memory here and all the women who fought in the Paris Commune, we also salute all the women who are fighting back today in 2014 against all sorts of patriarchal nasty sexist practices... (5)

**Please send in feedback, info.**

#### FOOTNOTES:

\*The relationship between dogs and their owners is similar to that of their owners and their employers. Neither run away and are happy, much of the time, to jump through hoops to 'earn' their keep. Both the employees and owners like having their charges - as they bring both of them rewards. However the autonomous actions of capital intervene and the employees can't afford to feed their workers and the workers can't feed their dogs. The difference is people

feel sorry for the dogs and would never tell a dog that it's lazy and that there are more than enough potential owners, despite there being plenty of strays on the street.

\*Further, in modern capitalism, alienation is such that we want to treat dogs humanely while letting our fellow humans go to the dogs.

#### (1) *The Prof Alan Sked Blues aka The Ukippers' Blues*

Alan Sked a few years ago.  
Put a monster on the road  
It has the unlikely name of UKIP  
Today Sked is against it  
Because it has gone too much to the right  
He says it is run by morons  
He is right on that one  
He still has a lot of explaining to do  
Because it was he who put the monster on the road  
The only thing he can do is criticize the Ukippers  
without mercy  
Leaving no stone unturned  
In other words to destroy it completely  
Then he won't have the Prof Alan Sked blues  
Until then  
We will be watching the progress made  
Alan Sked needs to shed the load....

(2) In France, Marine Le Pen, the leader of that other kennel called *Front National*, on the 13th of May 2011 said: "Let's buy French". Nationalism at its worst...

(3) Note from a friend in Paris, 20th of January 2014.

(4) *Strategie Ouvriere et Neocapitalisme* [1964]. Paris.

(5) For more details on Nathalie Le Mel see Eugene Kerbaul's book *Nathalie Le Mel/Une Bretonne revolutionnaire et feministe. Le Temps des Cerises (1997, Pantin, France)*. Nathalie Le Mel [1826-1921]. She was an active member of the First international, set up by Marx, Engels and Bakunin in 1861...

(\*\*\*) A correspondent in France has pointed out, that Proudhon was not around at the time of the Paris Commune of 1871. He had died on the 19th of January 1865...But his ideas were still around in 1871. It is always good to be accurate. [Note added on the 22nd of January 2014].

**London, January 19th 2014...Please pass this document around to all your animal and human friends.**  
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#### Corrections from last issue:

Apologies for the spelling of Moishe Postone's name on the contents page; it appeared as Potstone in places instead of Postone. Secondly in the article Coal and Global heating we mentioned an incident at Lake Nyos, this is in Cameroon and not Nigeria as we stated. Should have checked up on our sources.

**Anti State, Non Market Sector Groups**

worldsocialistmovement/SPGB:

worldsocialism.org/spgb: Postal address: 52 Clapham High Street London SW4 7UN.

Email [spgb@worldsocialism.org](mailto:spgb@worldsocialism.org)

Promotional Material for the World Socialist Movement: See previous issues or contact

[veronica.clanchy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:veronica.clanchy@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01202 569826

*“Role Modelling Socialist Behaviour: The Life and Letters of Isaac Rab.* Further details can be obtained by contacting the address below.

World Socialist Party US (WSPUS) website: [www.wspus.org](http://www.wspus.org)  
Postal address: World Socialist Party, Box 440247, Boston, MA02144

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<http://stephenshenfield.net> contains all issues of The Libertarian Communist and a host of useful articles for the ASNM sector.

Andy Cox's website looks at how socialism might be developed: <http://socialistmatters.webs.com/>.

World In Common: [www.worldincommon.org](http://www.worldincommon.org)  
Email [worldincommon@yahoo.com](mailto:worldincommon@yahoo.com)

.....  
[www.libcom.org](http://www.libcom.org);  
.....

### The Commune

For workers' self management and communism from below.  
Website: [www.thecommune.co.uk](http://www.thecommune.co.uk)  
Postal address: The Commune, Freedom book shop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E17QX

Comrades may be interested in the following links:

For Libertarian Communists in Russia and Belarus:

<http://wiki.avtonom.org/index.php>

“Eretik” (Heretic) is a left communist journal in Russian and English that appears both on the net and in print. This is produced by a group in Moldova.

See: <http://eretik-samizdat.blogspot.com/2012/immunity-of-rich-and-powerful.html>

A couple of places to purchase Literature and help support the ASNM sector.

“There is an Alternative!”

STIMULANTS: A collection of material highlighting an opposition to the Mantra that “There Is No Alternative” to how we live today. Journals, Pamphlets, Books, DVDs and Cds etc available [www.radicalbooks.co.uk](http://www.radicalbooks.co.uk)

**Libertarian Communist Literature** has a selection of pamphlets and journals related to the anti state, non Market sector. Journals Include: **Black flag, Aufheben, Socialist Standard, Organise** and others. We have a variety of pamphlets and a few books.

If you are interested please contact the postal or email address on Page 2 with your details

The Libertarian Communist is now available from Housemans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX email [shop@housemans.com](mailto:shop@housemans.com)  
<http://www.housemans.com/>

And

News from Nowhere, 96 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4HY  
tel 0151 708 7270, email [nfn@newsfromnowhere.org.uk](mailto:nfn@newsfromnowhere.org.uk)  
<http://www.newsfromnowhere.org.uk/>

Chronos Publications  
BM Chronos, London WC1N 3XX

The Life and Death of Capitalism Series No.1

No Revolution Anywhere By Robert Kurz  
Available now

The Substance of Capital by Robert Kurz (forthcoming)

### Worth taking a look at

The Socialist Labour Party of America ([www.slp.org](http://www.slp.org)), and the Marxist Internet Archive Library and Marx Myths and Legends [www.marxmyths.org](http://www.marxmyths.org)

### Direct Action Industrial Unions

Industrial Workers of the World: [www.iww.org](http://www.iww.org) Or P/O Box 7593, Glasgow, G42 2EX Email: [rocsec@iww.org.uk](mailto:rocsec@iww.org.uk).

Workers International Industrial Union.  
[www.wiiu.org](http://www.wiiu.org) or [www.deleonism.org/wiiu.htm](http://www.deleonism.org/wiiu.htm) see the article on Industrial Unionism in issue 9

### See Also

International Libertarian Socialist Alliance: Formerly called the World Libertarian Socialist Network

[www.libertyandsocialism.org](http://www.libertyandsocialism.org)

**The following are additions to the directory and well worth taking a look at:**

[www.theoryandpractice.org.uk](http://www.theoryandpractice.org.uk)

[www.marxisthumanistinitiative.org](http://www.marxisthumanistinitiative.org)

For information on issues related to Global Heating See:

<http://thinkprogress.org/climateissue/>



