Jackie Walker expelled from Labour by kangaroo court: a failure of natural justice

Will it be Boris? Or will it be a national government?
Ahistorical

There are so many errors in Paul B Sidel’s “Labour Theory of Value: Is It Ahistorical?” it is difficult to know where to start (March 21). The first thing to point out is that he completely fails to comprehend what it means for something to be ahistorical. He can only conceive of value as it exists under capitalism, and then he tries to dehistoricize any historical nuance and process of development. Value, exchange-value, price, and market value, which becomes the basis of the determination of exchange-values. Value is not ahistorical, it is simultaneously concrete labour and abstract labour, because Concrete alone constitutes the basis for value’s production. For him, their individual concrete labour continues to result in an individual value of their separate labour, but their total production now has a different, average individual value, which is produced and exchanged in the process of cooperation in production, they become a collective labourer, whose output of use-values is based on a social mode of production where these values are produced separately, but whose total individual value remains the same. The total value of each product is the sum of their parts, and the value of each unit of production falls. It is that reality of the law of value that explains the commodity exchange and the division of labour, amongst members of the primitive commune. Directly contradicting Smith’s assertion about labour-time, Marx notes in Capital volume 1, chapter 1: “In all states of society, the labour-time that it costs to produce the means of subsistence must, therefore, be an objective fact, and independent of mankind, though not of equal interest in different stages of development.” Labour-time is the time that the labourer spends, the labour-time of the peasant household and household, and the time of the worker. An equality of proportions with different forms of concrete labour - the collective labour of the family depend on the means of production is the total output. Marx is here talking about the value in concrete use-values, not concrete labour-time and the need for products to precede commodities, just as value must precede the expression of value as exchange-value.

To refute this refutation of Smith’s claim not only that value is specific only to capitalism, but that labour-time is also ahistorical, one must first accept the original statement of Smith that is ahistorical. Marx in Capital volume 1, chapter 21, as I am tired of writing, states: “Labour-time, even if it is employed under capitalist conditions, remains the creative substance of worth or value, and the measure of the social value of production. It is self-evident that if labour-time is reduced to a normal length and rate, it will not be the same for the worker who is performing for someone else, but for myself, and, at the same time, the social conditions of his labour-time will be different. The worker, being abolished, it acquires a quite different character and, in that sense, a quite real social labour, and finally the basis of labour-time changes.”

Secondly, one must turn to the defence that Smith gives for his claim that value only springs fully into existence with the formation of social relations and with the commodification of labour-power: “The real social labour, and finally the basis of exchange value, is not the production of use-values, but that of exchange-values, and that of exchange values only is the production of value.”

If value is ahistorical then, said Smith, it is the case that commodity forms and social relations form an ahistorical production. He then explains that the one point of real social labour is the production of a commodity. He concludes “the one point of real social labour is the production of a commodity.”

It is therefore necessary that the commodity form is only a form of value, and the social relations of production are a new form of value. It is precisely for this reason that value has a dual nature, which is not only specific to capitalism, but that labour-time is also ahistorical.

The specific form of value, labour-time in the commodity, is the form in which value is expressed in the commodity. Labour-time is the basis of commodity exchange, and labour-time is the form in which value is expressed in the commodity. Labour-time is the basis of commodity exchange. Marx’s explanation of the law of value, and of the formation of exchange-values, is based on the idea that “the worker” or “the wage-earner” or of wage workers employed by capital is the commodity produced by individual peasant and handicraftsman! Marx in Capital volume 3, chapter 12, states in detail, this historical development of exchange-value under the commodity production undertaken by independent workers, who own their own means of production and exchange the transformation of exchange-values into prices of production under capitalism.

But value has proved this same point. Marx explains that under capitalism value assumes during a specific form of existence, the representative of a different kind of social relation. This value assumes during a specific form of existence, the representative of a different kind of social relation.

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remembered. What he clearly craved is a people’s vote. If Labour was not building up trust in Corbyn or its leadership. However, the offer of a ratification referendum is something which endangers trust, because it implies Labour trusts working people with important decisions.

We then have to fail the purpose and support the People’s March. One million people and not for a moment were not marching for a general election. They thought it was not ruled out by Labour’s own policy. It was not needed by its Brexit leaders - Johnson, Rees-Mogg, Davies, etc., who condemned May’s agreement, yet and support the People’s March.

The sense of betrayal by their own electorate. Because it is not beyond Labour’s reach to a second referendum with a choice between that and ‘remain’. Of course, this campaign is being led by Sanders. If not any serious engagement with the working class. By staying away, who all came up with their own number 00744310). Any offers? If Labour’s tactics were not building up trust in Corbyn or its leadership. However, the offer of a ratification referendum is something which endangers trust, because it implies Labour trusts working people with important decisions. It is not necessary to revoke article 50, but it might be for a man of principle was now “playing politics” with a national disaster. This was the wrong policy, because it led to a ‘reform’"
J ust over 100 comrades attended the March 25th London-wide solidarity meeting in central London, hosted by Labour Against the Witchhunt. Platform speakers Ken Livingstone, Graham Bash and Jackie Walker opened the meeting on the state of the Labour Party, the ongoing purge of left comrades and how we can fight back and defeat the ‘anti-Semitism’ provocation against us.

Tina Werkmann - who chaired the event - read messages from Chris Williamson and Ken Loach. She also observed that the left has never been in a better position … but the right is fighting back with every trick in the book. The most effective weapon of the right has proved to be the baseless accusations of anti-Semitism. That has covered large sections of the ‘official’ left into silence. Those who dare speak out are the exception. But that is exactly what must happen if we are going to win the prize. To be silent in the midst of a witch hunt is to be complicit.

Ken Livingstone kicked things off with a checklist of the various calumnies he has faced over the years. “Anti-Semitism” (obviously), but additionally a tax-dodger, a violent thug, corrupt, alcoholic, a Soviet spy, Gaddaffi ascendant and … a fan of gay group sex in various seamy clubs, where he was once sodomised by six men.

On the day that he became leader of the Greater London Council in 1981, he was branded by Thatcher as a man with well-made plans to impose on the UK a “communist tyranny” akin to eastern Europe. Nonsense, of course, but it did not stop the mainstream media from suddenly becoming very interested in the ideological implications of cutting tube and bus fares in the capital - “the Daily Mail brought its war correspondent back from the Middle East” to cover the revolution in County Hall and demanded that he fill three columns per day. “I’ve never seen a reporter under so much bloody pressure,” Ken quipped.

His key point was that there was nothing new about these provocations against leftwingers. In this country, it means lies and smears about anti-Semitism; in other parts of the world, it can mean assassinations. He reminded us of the role of the right in the Parliamentary Labour Party - specifically in the shape of that traitor, John Mann, who ambushed Livingstone with absurd charges of “Nazi apologist”, conveniently with a BBC news team in tow. Ken hit the nail on the head when he recounted his own experience with the Labour Party’s disciplinary unit - “a Labour machine controlled by all the old ghastly Blairites … and doing everything possible to get rid of” Corbyn. That is what has fuelled “all this stuff about anti-Semitism”, he correctly pointed out.

Listening to all this, I could not help feeling that a shame it was that Ken Livingstone had decided to ‘help out’ Jeremy Corbyn by resigning from Labour in May 2018, instead of continuing to fight the ridiculous accusation that he was an anti-Semite and saw him suspended from the party for two years.

Insurgency

Next up was Graham Bash - stalwart of the Labour Representation Campaign and a veteran of struggle for Labour, but speaking in a personal capacity. With Chris Williamson’s suspension from the Labour Party, we have reached a “pivotal moment”, the comrade declared. This is another coup attempt and the attack on us “will not stop” until the right has reasserted the “primacy of the parliamentary party over the membership”. Since the day that Corbyn was elected Labour leader, the key task has remained the same, the comrade emphasised. “The only possible way to fight the ‘powerful opposition forces’ was to create an ‘anti-establishment insurgency from below’, channelled through a ‘democratic, grassroots movement’, with the declared aim of transforming the party. That is the ‘nub of the problem we face’, he said; the tension between the PLP and membership – exacerbated by the political degeneration and incorporation of the leaders of Momentum – has now reached a critical moment.

Our dual task is to be “both supportive and independent of our leaders”, he told the meeting.

Clearly, Graham was articulating the frustration of many left comrades in the party and he highlighted some key tasks that Labour Party Marxists has consistently agitated for since Corbyn won the Labour leadership. Yes, that will require an organisational expression of the left that can coordinate, initiate and make a decisive impact in the inner-party battle. Momentum is the private property of Jon Lansman and - as comrade Bash correctly stated - its leaders have now crossed the line and, in my opinion, should all energetically support its immediate expulsion. The right – he has “fallen apart”, as one speaker from the floor put it later. Some comrades I spoke to after the meeting suggested that the absence of an organised rank and file had left Corbyn and McDonnell vulnerable and more pliable to pressures to compromise and back down. No doubt, the leaders of both these figures have been immense and must have cost them a great deal personally. We are where we are, however. The democratic autonomy of the Labour left that made comrade Bash call for must find one important expression in sharp criticism of Jeremy Corbyn and - yes - it was clear that some of the political positions John McDonnell has taken (a stance that comrade Bash explicitly discussed in the debate).

In a highly personal, very moving speech, Jackie Walker usefully highlighted an illusion that the vast majority of Labour lefts have historically entertained. That is, the Labour Party - as “a broad church” - was defined by “a deal with the other side of the Labour right”. Now, that we had won the leadership via democratic means”, after having “supported loyalty” that wing of the party in elections and campaigning, we therefore would now “do the same for us”. But “we were wrong,” she bluntly concluded. Quite right. The progressive, anti-war, anti-war-mongering reactionary right of the Labour Party should not be regarded as ‘comrades’ that we may have gentle disagreements with. Labour needs to be refounded on the basis of genuine working class politics and in the form of a permanent united front of all socialist and communist groups, leftwing think tanks and organisations.

As we fight for this, we should explicitly state that there would be no place in the ranks of a Labour Party transformed in this way for the likes of today’s PLP majority. We should neither speak as a left nor be complicit within any workers’ movement worthy of the name.

To underline this point, comrade Walker herself - having also been suspended for two years - was finally to face her hearing over further absurd ‘anti-Semitism’ allegations on the same day. She was, of course, expelled on March 27 - not actually for ‘anti-Semitism’, of course, but for a few ‘judicial’ comments that were “grossly detrimental” to the party (such as stating, “I still haven’t heard a definition of anti-Semitism that I can work with”).

It is clear that the majority of comrades were not simply exasperated by the softy-softeny approach that has characterised Corbyn’s attitude to his opponents in the PLP, but now appear to be willing to support the attacks on the left in the party as an independent group of workers united in the struggle for the heart and soul of Labour. This is long overdue and something that we should all energetically support.

Notes

1. In the general discussion following the speakers’ presentations, a comrade read comments from Lansman in the effect that “Jackie Walker is an anti-Semite and leads the anti-Stalinists of this country”.
Another victim of the witch hunt

Jackie Walker was expelled by a supposedly ‘leftwing’ panel, notes Carla Roberts

After Jackie walked out of her kangaroo court hearing

A
fter a suspension that has lasted over two and a half years, Jackie Walker was expelled by a supposedly ‘leftwing’ panel from the Labour Party for a series of accusations, now proven to be false, that she was anti-Semitic. Jackie has also been refused the opportunity to address a panel that has been directed to investigate these charges. The panel has been held for over a year, and while Jackie had hoped to address her accusers, she was informed that her request had been denied by the NEC.

The panel was convened by the NEC, which has rejected Jackie’s request for a public hearing, or even to make a brief statement to the panel. Jackie’s supporters have pointed out that this is in direct contradiction to the NEC’s own policy, which states that a member of the Labour Party has the right to challenge any decision made by the NEC.

The panel’s decision to deny Jackie her request for a public hearing is particularly disturbing in light of the fact that Jackie has been the target of a coordinated attack by the Zionist lobby, which has beenlobbing for her expulsion for several years. Jackie has been accused of being anti-Semitic, but these accusations have been proven to be false.

The Zionists have been successful in their campaign to have Jackie expelled from the Labour Party, and this is a clear victory for the Zionist lobby. However, the Labour Party must do better in the future to protect its members from such attacks.

Notes

1. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
2. daily.co.uk/labour-activist-jackie-walker-will-not-face-any-antisemitism-charges-1.482124
3. theguardian.com/labourpartynews/2019/may/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
4. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
5. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
6. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
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9. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
10. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
11. daily.co.uk/news/2019/03/28/antisemitism-charges-1.482124
People’s Vote claimed a million for its March 23 London demonstration. Amongst those who spoke were justine greening (tory), Nicola Sturgeon (Scottish National Party), David Lammy (Labour), Jo Swinson (Liberal Democrat) ... and tom Watson. It is, as such, a binary choice, as indeed the EU referendum, and the TV studios at 4 Millbank. There are said to be 150 affiliated local groups and 500,000 individual supporters. Together The Guardian and The Independent act as their collective organisers, aggregators and propagandists. George Soros’s Open door Foundation has donated more than £500,000 to anti-Brexit causes (including £400,000 to Unite for Britain, £182,000 to European Movement UK and £33,000 to Scientists for EU). Toppings that, though, julian Dunkerton - co-founder of the fashion brand Superdry - backed People’s Vote a cool £1 million in August 2018: he wanted and got a polling blitz. Clearly no one on the principled left should have anything to do with People’s Vote. Marching alongside the Lib Dems, the Labour hard right, TEG splitters, Tory rebels and Green naives is to march in the interests of big capital and a national government. Ditto, promoting subsidiary organisations - e.g. Labour for a People’s Vote - is to constitute oneself a junior partner. But, pathetically, that is exactly what clive Dunkerley, the leader (and registered chair) of the all-British on Leave campaign, has done. Launched in April 2018 by clive dunkerley, clive Dunkerley and caroline Lucas, People’s Vote demands another referendum. That, of course, is its intended effect. Yet, given the present fog of uncertainty, there is no longer a clear, simple, binary choice. Hence, People’s Vote maps out three strands of options: (1) a vote on the EU referendum; (2) a single two-way question - negotiated deal versus ‘remain’; negotiated deal versus no deal, no deal versus ‘remain’; (3) a two-question referendum - negotiated deal versus no deal, ‘remain’ versus no deal, ‘leave’ versus ‘remain’. Abject People’s Vote’s vote, of course, is the flagship of the all-British on Leave campaign. Movement, Labour for a People’s Vote, the Movement, Labour for a People’s Vote, the March for Europe, Heathier in the EU, Open Britain, the Future Our Choice, Scientists for EU and many others. That, together under the overall direction of the Grassroots Coordinating Group - which includes the website of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on European Union (APPG EU) and the Independent Group is the officially registered chair. tongue-in-cheek, this network of ‘grassroots’ organisations has been dubbed ‘project gchq’ by leading staff. However, the campaign boasts offices not in cheltenham, but on the first floor of Millbank Tower - just a floor away from the Common market and the TV studios at 4 Millbank. There are said to be 150 affiliated local groups and 500,000 individual supporters. Together The Guardian and The Independent act as their collective organisers, aggregators and propagandists. George Soros’s Open door Foundation has donated more than £500,000 to anti-Brexit causes (including £400,000 to Unite for Britain, £182,000 to European Movement UK and £33,000 to Scientists for EU). Toppings that, though, julian Dunkerton - co-founder of the fashion brand Superdry - backed People’s Vote a cool £1 million in August 2018: he wanted and got a polling blitz. Clearly no one on the principled left should have anything to do with People’s Vote. Marching alongside the Lib Dems, the Labour hard right, TEG splitters, Tory rebels and Green naives is to march in the interests of big capital and a national government. 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Ditto, promoting subsidiary organisations - e.g. Labour for a People’s Vote - is to constitute oneself a junior partner. But, pathetically, that is exactly what clive Dunkerley, the leader (and registered chair) of the all-British on Leave campaign, has done. Launched in April 2018 by clive dunkerley, clive Dunkerley and caroline Lucas, People’s Vote demands another referendum. That, of course, is its intended effect. Yet, given the present fog of uncertainty, there is no longer a clear, simple, binary choice. Hence, People’s Vote maps out three strands of options: (1) a vote on the EU referendum; (2) a single two-way question - negotiated deal versus ‘remain’; negotiated deal versus no deal, no deal versus ‘remain’; (3) a two-question referendum - negotiated deal versus no deal, ‘remain’ versus no deal, ‘leave’ versus ‘remain’. Abject
Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scorned, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt. Our fears are not entirely baseless. The far right will passionately argue that the ‘leave’ campaign won the June 2016 referendum. But if the votes of 17.4 million people have been scored, treated with contempt. The UK is now perceived by Europe as a “colony” because of a barren tradition, has been scorned, treated with contempt.
on the basis that there was something
hook. The investigation was set up
by dealing with the Russians) would
counterintelligence investigation” (ie,
appears in an article in
sustained.
against Trump which have not been
merely damage limitation. It will, no
is flat-out lying on the content of
false narrative,” and, ominously, “We
who have briefed against him of
accuses the senior security officials
story was, naturally enough, that he
amount to that, leaving it to Barr.
and other agents. It has not, and none
representatives of the metropolitan
succeed. For example, the court will
has got onto the supreme court two
appointed for war, both in the Middle East
be regarded as in some way
alleged ‘collusion’ from the Trump
states which the US itself chooses as
supporters as a guy who controls
the point is not that the Israel lobby
attorney general William P. Barr
released his short summary of the Mueller report about
Russian ‘interference’ in the 2016 US presidential election.1 The take-
how the United States did intervene in the election, but that
there was no evidence that Trump or
away. The investigation is too
that, while various of Trump’s
actions in the ensuing period
be characterised as ‘obstructing justice’, Mueller declined to make
a judgment about Trump’s culpability under the
strict) and proof (beyond reasonable
double, concludes that there are no
prosecutions for
Trump’s interpretation of this
story was, naturally enough, that he
has been thoroughly vindicated. He
accuses the senior security officials
with
n gets onto the supreme court two

Robert Mueller: Trump not criminal

indeed, the statutory authorisation of
article 50 under the result of the
litigation set up the present situation, where
the default position is a no-
direct Brexit and Theresa May
can run the clock down in the hope that
the Parliamentary Labour Party will
panic and allow Labour to be cast as
effectiveness of the
leadership and a modification of the
eral and thereby counter the grassroots
movement - or on the basis of the idea
of the people’s
vote was held in parliament, that
would block the invocation of article
50. This was a manoeuvre, rather
than a fight for principle. But the
principle that parliament, rather
than the executive, should decide about a
decision which will have a profound
impact on the law was fundamentally
important.” The Brexiteers’
strongmanisers that their
Bonapartist demagogy and the
principle that parliament, rather
than the method of
counterposed to an
effective political mobilisation.

Howe Cheatem considers the trap ‘mainstream’ liberals have got themselves into through attempting to
set up a prosecution of Donald Trump

O

inchurch

The Times

weekly

The Atlantic

Squirming on the hook

Principle

The Mueller investigation and the
Democrats’ agitation around it is
a worser case than either the Miller
Brexit litigation or the litigation
around the ‘Muslim travel ban’. The
reason is that both of these cases
were politically misguided attempts
to use litigation to fight for genuine
principles. Miller no doubt hoped that if a

10. Cf Machover, ‘End of a love affair?’

11. Mail Online

12. www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-

6. www.scotusblog.com/2019/03/


13. www.cfr.org/backgrounder/soft-power-

1. www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-

4. barrs-summary-omits-key-aspect-muellers-

5. www.cfr.org/backgrounder/soft-power-

1. www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-

2. weekly


6. barrs-summary-omits-key-aspect-muellers-

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1. www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-

2. weekly


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6. barrs-summary-omits-key-aspect-muellers-
In the Knesset election campaign, writees Tony Greenstein, the main parties are arguing about who will be more successful in getting rid of the Palestinians.

In most western countries, political parties compete in general elections over issues such as taxation, nationalisation/ privatisation, poverty, etc. Those in most Middle Eastern countries, in the exception of avowedly racist parties of the far right, are inclusive of ethnic minorities and supporters of different religions and faiths. It is unknown in Europe, with the exception of the fascists, for parties to frame their announcements in terms that maintain demographic majorities of one section of the population.

However, in Israel - the self-styled ‘only democracy in the Middle East’ - politics are entirely different. You have a choice of industrious right-wing parties, the left-axis party and the left-wing party. Only the Communist Party, the left coalition it heads, Heads, and to lesser extent the left-Zionist Meretz, have a mixed membership.

The other feature of Israeli politics is its political instability. Parties come and go at virtually every election and this is why Israel has had 13 elections to the Knesset (parliament). The Livni Hatnuah (now of Kadima, which in 2009 was the largest party in the Knesset, later in 2011 it led the Knesset) is set to disappear after the April 9 vote. There have been a plethora of ‘coalitions’ in the history of the Israeli context labels like ‘left’, ‘right’ and ‘centrist’ are largely meaningless, albeit from the old General Zionists, to Shunin, to Yesh Atid - each more right-wing than the last.

And now, springing up out of nowhere, we have the Blue and White party and the right-wing Yesh Atid and Resilience. The latter is a new party formed by former general Benny Gantz, together with two other former chiefs of staff, Moshe Ya’alon and Gati Ashkenazi. Not for nothing is it known as the Generals’ Party.

The editorial for the liberal-Zionist Forward observed, “Campaign ads seem to be competing over who can most outrage the most Palestinians.” This is what Labour politicians such as Emily Thornberry and Barry Gardiner are calling a ‘pathological’ campaign. They say, “only the extreme right can compete before voters over who can slaughter the most Arabs.”

Gabi Ashkenazi - a former director of Shin Bet, Israel’s equivalent of MI5 - put a video out which ended with “Ashkenazi and mothers of terrorists will cry and my mother will not stop a bullet fired at my child. Neither will the mothers of the neighbours. Every brave mother should follow their sons - nothing will be more just. They should show all enemy combatants, and their blood shall be on all their heads. Now this also in German and in Gaza in a (now deleted) Facebook post. 6

There is nothing more just, and probably more just, than suicide attacks. Every suicide attacker should know that he takes with him also his parents and his house and some of the neighbours. Every brave Um-Jhaid who sends his son to hell in such an attack, should feel proud about him, along with the house and everything inside it.

Despite this, no doubt if Cassif had been elected, he would have been suspended for ‘anti-Semitism’ - by pointing to the ‘similarities’ between Israel and Germany in the 1930s, and by accusing the justice minister of being a ‘fifth neo-Nazi’, he was surely comparing Israel to Nazi Germany! 9

Notes
3. See https://mondoweiss.net/2019/02/07/israel-congressmen-aim-to-make-sense-Mondoweiss-Lifetime/campaign=26d5d18a12-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_26d5d18a12-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_campaign=26d5d18a12-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN
4. https://mondoweiss.net/2019/02/07/israel-congressmen-aim-to-make-sense-Mondoweiss-Lifetime/campaign=26d5d18a12-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN
5. CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

"What's so horrifying about understanding that the Palestinian and Israeli populations are identical? Every war is between two peoples, and in every war the people who stand on the wrong side of that war are the enemy..."
March for a national government

Eddie Ford warns those on the left backing the People’s Vote campaign - be careful what you wish for

According to the organisers, around one million people attended the March 23 People’s Vote demonstration in London, the second referendum (or “final say”). Others think there were rather fewer - for example, “corporate analysis experts” estimate there were between 300,000 and 400,000.

However, whatever the exact figure, it was certainly impressively big - almost comparable to the famous march against the Iraq war in February 2003. The demonstration has to be put alongside the still ongoing online petition to revoke Article 50, which by March 27 had reached 5.8 million signatures. Of course, the government has said it will not be annulled by the petition (unless it reaches 17.4 million presumably), just as it will not be swayed by Saqib Boulton - unlike Donald Trump who, for his part, seems to think the EU cannot “betray” the “increasing majority” who want the UK to remain in the EU.

Size apart, the most significant thing about the PV march was the long list of speakers. From Labour there was Tom Watson, the party’s deputy leader, Sadiq Khan, the London mayor, David Lammy and Jess Phillips. As for the Tories, you had Michael Gove, Andrea Leadsom, Peter Oborne, Greg Fry, Dr Phillip Lee and perhaps most interestingly of all, former Tory cabinet minister Anna Soubry and Dominic Grieve. Then from the Liberal Democrats the man who came up with the referendum - the man who is persecuted - John Bercow, who has said he will step down after the May local elections, and Jo Swinson, who is running as the Liberal Democrat new party leader. Naturally, we also had Anna Soubry and Chuka Umunna from the Independent Group, Nicola Sturgeon from the Scottish National Party and Caroline Lucas for the Greens. One person noticeably absent was the Labour leader, leading to regular chaff about the need for a new Labour leader. Why? Perhaps this paper has commented many times, this extremely inclusive line-up looks less like a campaign for a referendum on the government - something that is deemed the left, which strangely refuses to even endorse such a campaign. The old one: ruling class only ever plays fair and square.

Sensible

At the weekend the Financial Times featured an article by regular columnist Camilla Cavendish, a former head of the Downing Street Policy Unit under David Cameron - that is before the cunning ruse of a referendum. (Cameron never actually expected to hold one. He announced - like most people - that after the 2015 general election he would still be in coalition with the Lib Dems, who would block such a move.) In hindsight, maybe no one yet has such a policy decision in history.

Anyway, Cavendish is worth reading as she argues that the sensible person of that a Tory prime minister would listen to, but also to get an immediate and urgent bounce of public view of the political establishment. Apparently, the different parties “have turned into sects drunk on their own righteousness”, in which “a snowball is rolling downhill” and the “lion lies persecuted” (March 22). Yes, we are used to take comfort from the fact that there are sensible people in all the parties “who care deeply about their country” - such as ‘remainers’ like Nick Boles from the Tories who is in a ‘leave’ seat and a ‘leaver’ like Kate Hoey from Labour who is in a ‘remain’ seat.

Looking at the current state of the Tories, torn apart by Brexit divisions, he feels he can no longer contribute to the party coffers. When asked by an eagle BBC journalist if he had told the prime minister about his decision, he said absolutely - while sitting next to him at a party fundraising event at the Dorchester hotel. It would be a wonderful moment if we could say that we are together as a country,” he commented - but “it won’t happen if we continue bickering, with the present politicians running the show”.

Commonwealth’s view of a national government seriously. It has been previously suggested on a number of occasions by Nicky Morgan and Sir Nicholas Soames - both former ministers - that Labour and the Conservatives has flattered with the notion. Of course, if we had national governments before - firstly in 1806 with the ministry of “all the talents” during the Napoleonic Wars. Then there was the one led by Labour’s Ramsay MacDonald in 1931 and the wartime coalition, which essentially saw Winston Churchill as prime minister, which is getting people back into the state - the new premier looking after the home front. Obviously, we are not quite in the equivalent of the Napoleonic Wars or World War II - but the Brexit crisis we are in is in a very serious way extremely serious and has the potential to escalate further.

Clearly, we are dealing with a fast-moving and rapidly evolving situation. A hard Brexit or even cancellation of the whole process could still happen, but at the moment the most likely outcome is some sort of Brino (‘Brexit in name only’ - like Common Market 2.0, or Norway Plus, as it is used to be known). This essentially means the UK is rendered outside from the EU, but remains inside the single market and customs union - keeps paying in the money, but does not have any MEPs, ministers or commissioners. According to the Express, civil servants are being briefed to produce legislation concerning rejoining the EU - say four or five years down the line, when Brexit has been a less than glorious success. If this story is true, it seems an eminently sensible idea from the establishment’s point of view. The fifth largest economy in the world risks ending up a pariah. Right-wing ideologists claim the EU cannot “betray” the “increasing majority” who want the UK to remain in the EU, fearing an orgy of reaction.

His speech at the PV march brazenly broke Labour discipline, given he declared he would vote for May's deal if there was a “confirmation” second referendum - which is not the party line. Labour’s position is to vote against Theresa May’s deal, whatever the circumstances, so the deputy Labour leader was making a show of his independence. He was also showing, as one of the major speakers at the London demonstration, that he is not for business - that is not the significance of the PV march. It was not really about a second referendum - or getting an alternative government - to both Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn.

Naive

That is why anyone one on the left who marched on Saturday is either a fool or hopelessly naive - the programme of the PV’s campaign is against the interest of the working class. In that sense, Socialist Worker was not wrong to worry about being a “racing call agenda” (March 28).

Of course, this does not mean that communists line up with Nigel Farage’s march on London. Then again, we do not mock it either - by the time it arrives in the capital on the symbolically significant date of March 29 it could be around the size as the PV event. It will be interesting to see who takes the lead - and that applies to both the working class and the ruling class. That is why those who have been promoting Common Market 2.0 could be in for a rude shock. Alternatively, after May’s departure we might get a different leader. But in the Commons without the need for a general election (under the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011), it would just be 14 days to cobble together a new government in the Commons for that, and the same probably goes for the Democratic Unionist Party. Arithmetically, the ERG and DUP have about 90 MPs, meaning that the numbers do not add up for any Tory-run administration trying to survive on a confidence and supply basis - so you have to look elsewhere. But then you are presented with an immediate problem, as Jeremy Corbyn and his supports represent a tiny minority in the Commons. But, on the other hand, you have Tom Watson, who speaks for the vast majority of the PLP and he has his own group ready to take over the reins.

In other words, be careful what you wish for. Staying in the EU is not some magic wand that takes you back five or 10 years to a better world - we have to go forwards. The idea that Nigel Farage or Boris Johnson will magically disappear is nonsense politics of the very worst - capitalist stagnation will continue as well. Indeed, if we look at this, there would pages of the paper be talking incessantly of is a political downturn somewhere. We do not know who or how exactly, or what the trigger will be, but the economy on a global level is slowing down. This is not just due to the current struggle between the US and China, but a general pattern throughout the world.

Will Brexit finally be over if MPs vote for Common Market 2.0? You must be joking. Brexit and Europe will not be removed as an issue for a generation to come, as David Cameron originally hoped: it will remain a live issue. And you can bet each line of the argument will be an explanation for Britain’s woes - economic decline, migration, globalisation, terrorism, rising inequality levels, etc. All because of the EU, fearing an orgy of reaction. They will point the finger at the cowardly political class and liberal establishment that brought us to our knees.

Notes


2. eddieford@weeklyworker.co.uk

March 28 2019 1244 worker
The government is missing

As the clock ticks down, nobody is meaningfully in charge, writes Paul Demarty

There is still, officially, an entity that bears the name of her majesty's government. It is a Conservative administration, with Theresa May as prime minister, notionally propped up by the Democratic Unionist Party in a 'confidence and supply agreement'. However, such a description is hardly convincing any longer. The DUP has no confidence in the Tories not to sacrifice its beloved union, that's for sure; so far as 'supply' goes, the DUP seems like a source only of malignries - and demands for Donegal to share up its Orange clentism in the Six Counties. It is hard to call this a Conservative government, when the major factions of the Tories in the cabinet take it in turns to resign in small squads. As for Theresa May, she is a dead duck, and the only question facing the world is when she will finally resign. Boris Johnson is already gearing up his leadership campaign. So is Michael Gove. So are at least a dozen others. To use a phrase flying around a lot lately, we have today a PM in name only, heading a government in name only, staffed by a party in name only, supported by a partner in name only. The only surprising thing about the Commons at large - forgive me - 'taking back control' of the Brexit process on March 25 was that it took them so bloody long.

Between my article last week and this one, much has happened, but as is typical of the Groundhog Day experience of Brexit - we do not seem to have gotten anywhere else. This continued to force her third 'meaningful' vote (meaningful, of course, in name only ... ), May’s declension of tone, her disastrous speech condemning MPs for standing in the way of the people’s will. Her already slender chance of winning her deal collapsed. In that context, she could hardly expect a rapturous reception in Europe, as she attended the European Council summit on March 22. The technical extension to article 50 - until the end of May (the month, not herself). She got a veritable Rivers of blood

This is quite a problem for May, who needs both the ERG and the DUP on board - or else half the parliamentary Labour Party - to limp over the line. Time will tell whether this ‘rivers of blood’ attitude prevails, or rather an arrangement can be reached if the price is right. Time is in short supply, however.

May’s behaviour is so apparently erratic because she is in a quite impossible position. Every so often, a particularly controversial issue defeats a government’s ability to whip its supporters into line; when this problem becomes clear, the solution is obvious. The premier goes on the offensive, calling fresh elections to get a mandate for her policy. It is also the case that sometimes a government’s strategy is flagging badly; the ‘solution’, in this case, is to delay the calling of elections, in order to get as much legislation through parliament as possible, and to hope that something comes up to ease electoral humiliation.

May is tumbling into the chasm between these two manageable problems. The viscissitudes of Brexit have shattered her parliamentary support, but she cannot call an election because she has promised not to fight another. The Tories can certainly win at the next time of asking; but they would be well advised to have someone else at the helm. Meanwhile, the issue that has gone on the offensive, calling fresh elections, is to delay the calling of elections, in order to get as much legislation through parliament as possible, and to hope that something comes up to ease electoral humiliation.

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The question of where all this leaves Brexit remains a matter of intense confusion across the board. Jacob Rees-Mogg, trying gently to nudge his ERG comrades back into the government fold provided, that the DUP (of course on board), declared that the two available outcomes were her deal or no Brexit. But for the moment at least the DUP is standing firm. Its Brexit spokesman, Sammy Wilson said he would prefer a long delay rather than be subject to the tyranny of the withdrawal agreement as it stands:

Even if we are forced into a one-year extension, we at least would have a say on the things which affect us during that time and would have the right to unilaterally decide to leave at the end of that one-year period through the simple decision of not applying for a further extension. Surely this is a better strategy than volunteering to be locked into the prison of the withdrawal deal with the cell door key in the pocket of Michel Barnier?

Rivers of blood

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his week, the US Federal Reserve Bank decided to stop raising its policy interest rate for the rest of 2019. The Fed started hiking rates from near zero back in late 2016 on the grounds that the ‘long depression’ in economic growth, investment and employment in the US and in other major economies was over.

As economies reached full employment and used up excess capacity in industry, it was argued, wages rose and price inflation would accelerate, so it would be necessary to curb any ‘overheating’ with higher interest rates to slow borrowing and spending. This policy of ‘normalisation’, as it is called, seemed to be justified after Donald Trump’s tax cuts were introduced in late 2017. Those measures led to a sharp rise in after-tax profits for US corporations and an apparent pick-up in US real GDP growth, reaching a 3% year-on-year rate at the end of 2018. All looked well.

However, as I argued back in spring 2018, the global economy had actually peaked. And now nearly one year later, forecasts for a continued ‘recovery’ have been reversed. A year ago, the Fed had raised its real GDP growth forecast for the whole of 2018 to 2.7% and 2.4% for 2019. But now, at its March 2019 meeting, it has lowered its forecast for 2019 to 2.1% and 1.9% for 2020, with a further slowdown to just 1.8% in 2021 – well below the boasted 3% projected by President Trump. His tax measures would achieve nothing.

Bonds that it had built up as part of its huge holdings of government bonds are now in decline, as the Federal Reserve Bank has to sell them in large quantities in order to buy back their own shares and issue bonds at low rates of interest fast globally, as major companies have opted to take on more debt in order to buy back their own shares and thus boost the company’s stock price and continue the party. The long depression has become a fantasy world of rising financial asset prices, low investment and productivity growth, and rising asset prices, low investment and productivity growth, and thus boost the company’s stock price and continue the party. The long depression has become a fantasy world of rising financial asset prices, low investment and productivity growth, and where nearly everybody can get a job (working part-time, temporary or self-employed), but not a living.


Notes