



Back to Basics! There is No Left Case for the European Union

The announcement this week of the creation by Corbyn sympathisers of 'Left Against Brexit' is a salutary reminder of the dark places we come to inhabit when we are invited to lunch at the table of power

There is nothing new in the arguments of so called left defenders of the European Union. The world inhabited by reformers is framed for them by the narratives of the powerful

'Left' globalists believe the Brexit debate is what the capitalist media says it is: a struggle between a 'progressive' internationalist left and a 'nationalist' hard right. Having long since abandoned the class struggle, they are frightened too by any open expression of working class identity which they've placed in the 'bad' box marked 'xenophobia'

When you stop seeing in the 'consensus' the interests of the privileged class or group, you absorb its ideas as if they were your own. Once we accept the controlling narrative, that all meaningful political discourse revolves around a conflict between the conservative and liberal wings of capitalism, then rather than being 'relevant' we are no longer engaged at all

There was a time when people of the left understood that under capitalism nationalism is the tool of a ruling elite whose interests are always and only economic; never did the 'outmoded' old left view any section of the ruling class as driven by a national interest. Equally, empire was understood as code for the exploitation of foreign markets

As the party of the small business class UKIP is not 'nationalist'. Speaking for the 'old' commerce against a new liberal 'cultural' elite lured by the possibilities of multinational agency, UKIPs cause is not national identity; it is a supranational NATO lead in the old style by the USA

Equally, Donald Trump does not view the US as a nation state. In common with his liberal rivals he views it as a financial empire for which reason his foreign policy follows theirs, threatening wars against Syria, Iran, Korea even China and Russia

Whether coming from 'left' or 'right', none of the 'official' arguments heard during the EU referendum campaign was founded on the defence of any greater good, whether national or international: all were marshalled in support of a privileged minority by people sharing a common set of values

In its borderless market, the EU is the dream of the strong, bonded through NATO to the multi theatre warfare, both economic and military, that is necessary to protect and expand its access to the resources of national communities; no formula exists whereby it can be directed politically to act contrary to its economic imperative

Obsessed with fighting the rightist 'conspiracy' to use Brexit to turn back the clock, the Corbyn movement has chosen the battleground of the rich over the cause of the people. 'Left Against Brexit' is the 'Empire Socialism' of today, recalling the early twentieth century Fabian idea that the 'left' could 'turn' the British Empire to the common economic good. In practice it meant Labour support for the suppression of 'backward', native liberation movements

The belief on the pro Labour left that 'we' must 'unite' against 'chauvinism' is today's manifestation of what Marx called false consciousness; the politics conditioned by money which leads us to view our enemies as our friends. So long as the GNP of nations is tied to corporate financial power, globalism, not patriotism, will be the refuge of today's scoundrels

They will tell us that economic 'integration' will promote personal rights and opportunity: in fact, where he is a consumer rather than a producer, the individual has no identity beyond his usefulness as an accumulator of goods that have no collective worth

They will tell us it will extend political rights: when, ultimately, all national life is ruled by money interests, it won't matter whether 'progressives' win elections or whether they rule from Brussels or Washington; all avenues to real political change will be closed

Since the de-regulation of banking says philosopher Peter Wilberg 'the class struggle has become an essentially national struggle of all peoples against ... the dominance of international finance capital and its puppet politicians'. Indeed, the potential of nations, representing communal living spaces, to override the control of the commodity market was noted in the programme of the Russian Social Democrats as long ago as 1903

The struggle between old 'nationalism' and new 'multiculturalism' is fake; no matter who 'wins', we end up in the same place, entrenched in the idea that capitalism is the only possibility. The tired politics of left 'progressivism', the taking of sides with one enemy of the people against another is the real dead end; the 'left' it has spawned sneers at the working class and feels entitled to brand as 'reactionary' oppressed nations or their leaders

Yes, we need a re-aligned left, not resting comfortably in the echo chamber of the new 'liberal' elite but pitted firmly against its fraudulent, self serving rhetoric. As an active agency of 'business without borders', the EU cannot become an instrument of 'social change' except in the minds of those who do not regard the exceptionalism it represents as 'real'

Socialist Labour rejects the world 'order' built by finance capital. There is no 'nationalism' for the left to fight, only models of empire

We call upon anti imperialist groups and those concerned with peace and social justice to join us in building a new, honest narrative on the EU and globalization. The territory of the left, and only the left, this great cause must begin as it did in the struggles against slavery and colonialism, with a vigorous defence of national self determination

Kim Bryan

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