

Fighting Newspeak (1)

Even the Green Party's literature is crowded with phrases such as "...far more jobs would be created...", "...60 per cent more work would be created...", "Hundreds of thousands of new jobs could be created...", "Huge new areas of work will open up...", etc., etc.

These examples illustrate the Newspeak cynically introduced into the English language (and others) long before George Orwell wrote *1984* (in 1948), which has been allowed to distort the thought processes of the vast majority of "homo sapiens" (- a misnomer?) ever since.

Stop and think! *Yes*, there *is* a great deal of work which needs to be done to put right all the faults of the way our "economy" (another misnomer) operates, to make it meet the needs of people and planet; but *no*, this is *not* in itself something to be welcomed, as all these phrases imply. Organic farming, for instance, will produce healthier food and preserve and even enhance soil fertility, *but at the cost of* greater human effort.

Over the millennia people have applied their ingenuity to the task of making their burden of work lighter, to free themselves and their fellows for a better life. The toiling classes have envied the rich, not just their luxuries, but their leisure.

The height of civilisation is said to have been reached in ancient Greece among the leisured, free citizens - on the backs of their slaves. Now we have the chance to emulate them, on the backs, instead, of our machines - yet we shy away from the prospect in horror, and seek instead to "create jobs"!

The "jobs" sought, of course, are all examples of wage-slavery, and Newspeak is blinding us (nearly all of us) to this fact. Challenging it involves calling into question the basic tenets of finance-capitalism - something the Socialists and Communists have attempted and failed, by their acceptance of this Newspeak.

Let us start by noting the distinction: *Capitalism* is the domination and exploitation of the economy by the owners of the means of production. This has long since been superseded by *Finance-Capitalism*: the domin-

ation and exploitation of the economy by the owners of the means of creation of the money supply, and its manipulators. All others are in their power, by virtue of the crushing burden of debt they have piled onto the rest of us, and conflict of interests between other groups conveniently diverts attention, and even awareness, from this overriding fact.

The challenge to it started in the years between the two World Wars, when the idea of Basic Incomes, or Citizens' Incomes (then called National Dividends) was first put forward as a means of equitable distribution of "the wages of the machine" to allow everyone to benefit from "the common cultural inheritance" of the knowledge, skills, machines and inventions from the past and to end the conflict between the masses and the rich and powerful elite.

Debate was also widespread on the now-taboo subject of how our money-supply was and should be created and controlled.

By the time of that first World War mechanisation had already progressed, despite fierce opposition to the introduction of labour-saving machinery, to the point where it was estimated that all needed goods could be produced and distributed with a 4-hour day, and both wars were fought over "the struggle for markets" *to offload surpluses*.

Basic Incomes - "universal benefits" paid unconditionally to citizens of all ages, at a rate dependent only on age, and at a level sufficient to meet *basic needs* of housing, food, clothing and heating - would have allowed industry to meet the needs of the population efficiently without the drastic reduction of working hours being seen as a "problem", provided only that the false debts to the money-creators (the banks) were eliminated, and money supply was thereafter matched to social needs.

Introduced now, they would:

- 1) remove the need for (nearly) all conditional welfare payments (which are often unclaimed despite need, because of ignorance, confusion, bureaucracy and the stigma involved);

2) benefit the unemployed, removing all the poverty traps and government harassment to find a non-existent "job";

3) by supplementing wages, allow the gap between "minimum wages" and unpaid "voluntary" work to be closed without loss of income;

4) in that way, make many more socially needed jobs "affordable" by society;

5) end wage slavery. People with independent incomes don't need to accept the unacceptable in pay, working conditions or type or purpose of the employment. The rich have never been expected to be wage-slaves! People will not need to prostitute themselves to the arms industry, advertising, or any of the con tricks now so prevalent in industry and commerce;

6) make the distinction between "full-time" and "part-time" meaningless - most "full-timers" would opt for shorter hours, and voluntary breaks in employment, could become common for both sexes, for instance for child rearing; and many more could choose not to work for an employer; co-operatives and self-employment would be much more likely to succeed;

7) give "wages for housework/childcare", and so economic independence for the "housewife" (male or female) from the "breadwinner";

8) allow the economy to shift from dependence on "growth" in the vain attempt to "maintain jobs" (in reality, to maintain profits for the rich controllers) to production-for-need, by removing the need to seek "full employment".

Other changes, too, would be needed to achieve this; but Basic Incomes are a necessary step; and this is an obvious reason for the Establishment to resist their introduction - but equally, for the rest of us to demand them!

The big problem with Finance-Capitalism is that it depends on continued scarcity to keep it going, and when markets become saturated, it collapses under the burden of debt. Goods have widely been destroyed to avoid this - including vast stores of food, while people without money starve.

To avoid this "catastrophe" of abundance, after the second World War "planned obsolescence" was dreamed-up, along with the cynical promotion of the arms industry and the promotion of Third World conflicts to provide markets for it, and for the next couple of decades it was very successful, from a Finance-Capitalist perspective.

From then on, however, the problems started to build up: the accelerating rate of destruction and pollution of natural resources, as well as the success of invention of new ways of saving labour.

In the '60s there was widespread discussion of the rosy prospects for a future of leisure through automation. The physical possibilities were clear. Where we have failed, however, is in demanding the changes needed to make proper use of these advances to *free people from wage-slavery*, and so allow them to tackle the restructuring needed to achieve sustainable wellbeing.

Many advocates of "job creation" argue that all we need is a change of heart among the bosses: swords into ploughshares; organic agriculture instead of agribusiness; &c. But the manipulators are well-aware that any such extension of wage-slavery would be only short-lived, given the power of modern technology. They cannot afford to let their Newspeak be called into question as a result.

It is up to all of us, working for change through a multitude of pressure groups, to re-educate ourselves, re-capture our language(s) and spread enlightenment to challenge this fundamental common cause of all our problems. ***Demand the distribution of the wages of the machine!***

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