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Gorbachev: How to Wreck Everything and Be Loved by Your Country's Enemies

by Gwydion M Williams

A man takes over a sluggish old multinational company. He announces dynamic changes, but nothing much comes of it. He is ousted in a boardroom coup, caught between two rival factions. Parts of the company are sold off, and the assessed value of the rest drops. In the following years, employees have to endure wage cuts and lose their pension rights. And some slick twisters become rich amidst the ruins. The man was a fool unable to turn good intentions into reality, right?

Wrong in the case of Gorbachev, and Yeltsin after him. Or so say the Western media, which just coincidentally are mostly owned by a narrow more-than-millionaire class that did very nicely out of the wreck of the Soviet Union. Did even better in the wider world, when the Soviet collapse of 1989-91 demoralised left-wingers.

The drastic crisis in the West in 1987 was forgotten. The evaporation of their main for boosted the confidence and popularity of the New Right. Made their rivals uncertain.

The shift has been so gigantic that apparent critics like Piketty assure everyone that it is a *complete coincidence* that a vast gain in income by the richest 1% coincided with a big shift rightwards in economic thinking.

Note also that this rightward shift happened only on economic matters. Socially, ideas once confined to the radical left have now become mainstream. Thatcher almost certainly believed that 'economic liberty' would cause a restoration of the old-fashioned values that she fondly supposed to be normal. John Major apparently believed the same, but was ready to be moderate on economic matters. Sadly, he also failed on economic matters, burdened by Tory factions who blamed the European Union for all of their ills. But Tony Blair clearly took the Soviet collapse to mean a failure of socialism. He applied New Right economics to new areas, most notably the National Health Service, which Thatcher had feared to touch.

Blair failed to notice that the promised improvements had not happened. He overlooked that the world's most successful economies had hung onto the corporatist and interventionist systems that the New Right hated and New Labour no longer defended.

This brief consensus of New Right and 'New Labour' managed to tap into the confused feelings of both the Baby Boomers and the generation that had grown up since. Freedom was good and the state was at best an unavoidable evil. The informal 'social contract' that the rich now accepted could be summarised as:

'You do as you please, while we grab more and more of the economy. We bias thinking in our direction by media that needs vast investments and is then often given away free. But we will give you the same freedom in private life that the ruling class has always enjoyed covertly. This is not so generous: we no longer have to hide whatever some of us are.'

For a while, New Labour seemed to work. The Tories had a run of bald-headed, offensive, and unpopular leaders: William Hague till 2001; Iain Duncan Smith till 2003; Michael Howard till 2005. And then they got David Cameron. Cameron made the Tories electable by conceding that they were not a party of old-fashioned values. Radical changes like Gay Marriage were made Tory policy, along with the absurd claim that this was actually conservative. But New Right economics, though substandard for the society as a

whole, had been a grand feast for a more-than-millionaire class that dominated the Tory Party. And the ignominious collapse of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev was still seen as a big argument in favour.

This is a review of a review. Specifically, of **Big Man Walking, by Neal Ascherson**.[1] My take of his review of *Gorbachev: His Life and Times* by William Taubman.[2] The review is mostly what one would expect from a mainstream Western writer: but bits of reality do break through.

> "The Congress of People's Deputies, the new parliament of the Soviet Union, was in session and we were hearing its elected members voting freely, unpredictably, without fear. The voice – strong, lively – belonged to the man in the chair, Mikhail Gorbachev."

And produced an outcome flatly against what any voter would have wished for. A result very different from the promises made by the candidates. But a result that should have been the expected outcome of their foolish policies.

Open elections give the public a chance to vote in fools and liars, and they very often take it. Autocratic parties have a much better record of delivering what they promise. It helps that autocrats cannot easily blame anyone else, in the way elected politicians tend to do. The main attempt to do so ended badly:

> "In 1956, Khrushchev launched serious 'de-Stalinisation' with his famous denunciation of Stalin's crimes at the 20th Party Congress. The speech electrified the outside world, but went down badly in places like Stavropol. The local party accepted the new line, as they had to, but were unable to understand it. A district secretary told Gorbachev: 'I'll be frank with you … the people just refuse to accept the condemnation of the personality cult.' Many peasants were dismayed by the condemnation of the rural Terror; for them, the purge had 'liquidated' the hated collective farm bosses who had seized their land in the first place. When men came to remove the statue of Stalin in Stavropol, a crowd tried to stop them."

Khrushchev claimed the right to rewrite history, without any public debate. Very different from China, where there was a limited relaxation in attitudes to Mao after his death.

Both Mao and Stalin remain popular – Stalin's popularity has risen steadily as Russia continues to lose ground. This confuses Western writers, who usually get slippery when 'the people's choice' is something they don't approve of.

> "Andropov was well aware that the Soviet system was seizing up: he and Gorbachev could agree on that. But he suffered from a 'Hungarian complex': the conviction that reform from below would inevitably burst out of control, as – in his view – it had done in Czechoslovakia. Asked about human rights, as defined in the Helsinki Accords which he had somehow persuaded Brezhnev to sign, Andropov remarked that 'in 15 to 20 years, we will be able to allow ourselves what the West allows itself now, freedom of opinion and information, diversity in society and in art. But only in 15 to 20 years, after we're able to raise the population's living standards.'
>
> "Every so often Taubman's book halts, and unleashes a jostling, barking pack of questions. Most have real bite. Why did Gorbachev do this, why didn't he do that, when a different decision might have avoided a defeat or hastened progress? But the question raised by Andropov is one of the biggest, and now overshadows all reflections on Gorbachev's six years in power. Deng Xiaoping in China was to share broadly the same priorities as Andropov: let us first build an economy that works, enriching both state and people – and only then turn towards political transformation (some day, if we feel it's safe). So why did Gorbachev do the opposite after he reached the leadership in 1985? No perestroika without glasnost: he was convinced that free, uncensored discussion was the precondition for breaking down massive resistance to economic reform, not the outcome. And China was not Russia: the Chinese Communist Party could call on traditions of obedience and discipline that were already disintegrating in the USSR after Stalin."

He leaves out that there was still a strong popular will for some form of socialism in Czechoslovakia. It is likely that had the late-1960s reform succeeded,

[1] https://www.lrb.co.uk/v39/n24/neal-ascherson/big-man-walking (subscribers only)

[2] Simon and Schuster, 880 pp, £25.00

Libertarian ideas would have remained a marginal creed of the Hard Right.

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"Why didn't he [Gorbachev] launch a crash programme for consumer goods, why didn't he go straight into economic reform, why didn't he privatise agriculture? Instead, he went back to reading Lenin to discover where the Soviet system had gone wrong (revisionist communists all over Europe were doing the same), and decreed an anti-alcohol campaign that ended in painful failure. His grand plan for 'accelerating' industry, rather than introducing market forces, slowly fizzled out in a welter of shortages and official lies. Gorbachev hurled himself about the land, urging managers to adjust their minds to new thoughts. 'Can't you see that socialism itself is in danger?'"

The reviewer is another victim of the delusion that there was some strong difference between Lenin's creation of the system and Stalin's successful continuation. I'd assume the book would not mention that Lenin decided to ignore the Constituent Assembly, in which socialists had a 9-to-1 majority, but only 1 in 4 had Bolshevik coherence and determination. And that Lenin later banned all possible opposition.

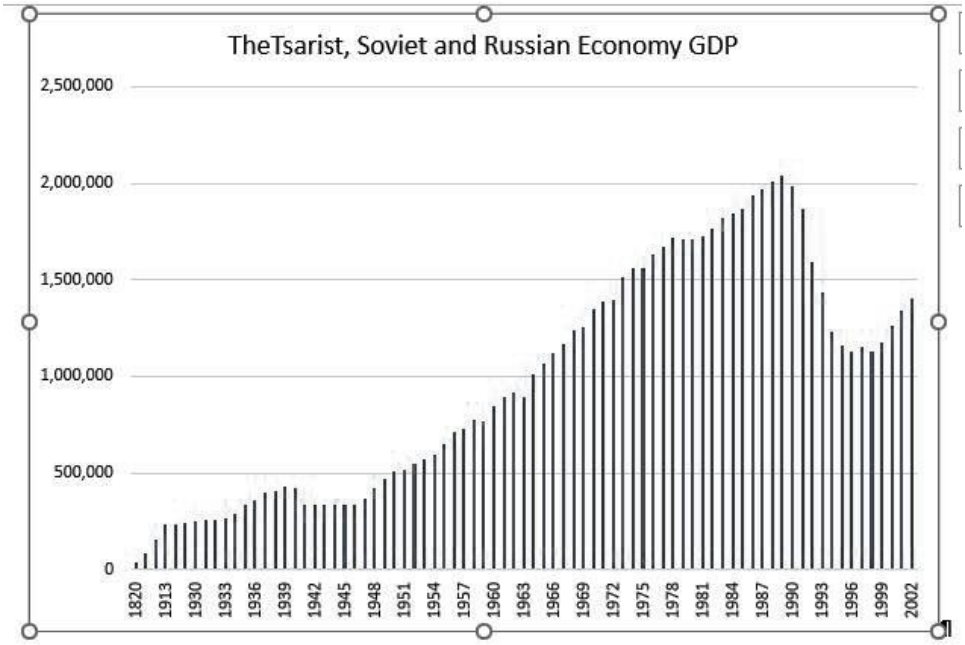
"The media used their freedom under glasnost to attack Gorbachev on both fronts: either for throwing away all that had been won by the sacrifices of the Soviet people, or for hesitating to smash down the bastions of the Soviet system itself. For a silent but increasingly hate-filled majority in the party's guiding bodies, the familiar world was ending. For the Russian people, especially, chaos and shortages were becoming reasons to turn against Gorbachev, whose popularity rapidly shrank in the course of 1990."

Gorbachev had released political forces that pulled in different directions. This made real change impossible while he tried to keep a balance. One of several alternatives had to dominate, to get anything done.

"When Gorbachev backed away from the ambitious '500 Days' plan for conversion to a market economy, drawn up by his brightest advisers, Yeltsin said that he had missed his 'last chance for a civilised transition to a new order'."

I'd suppose this was similar to what Yeltsin later did. A formula for shrinking the economy and turning over much of it to tricksters and gangsters, which is what Yeltsin later delivered. Which Putin got under control, but the same process continues in Ukraine. This potentially rich country has been ruined by lousy politics, with its weaknesses only encouraged by the two Orange Revolutions sponsored by Western governments.

The West could have helped the former Soviet Union, but preferred to inflict New Right foolishness on them. They may have genuinely believed their Free Market rules would do good. But can hardly have failed to realise that Russia was being cheated and betrayed when it came to Power-Politics:



"Gorbachev was also coping with the enormous new question of Germany's future. The West, including Chancellor Kohl, assumed that he would oppose German reunification, but he accepted it. Then they thought that he would probably refuse to allow a united Germany to remain in Nato, and would certainly veto the extension of Nato into what had been East Germany. But in May he came to Washington and suddenly agreed with Bush that 'united Germany … would decide on its own which alliance she would be a member of.' The Americans couldn't believe what they were hearing. Gorbachev's own staff were thunderstruck…

"Though Taubman doesn't put it like this, the West took Gorbachev's co-operation for weakness. He expected an economic and financial reward for his concessions: it didn't come. Crucially, in February 1990, James Baker, the US secretary of state, and Chancellor Kohl assured Gorbachev that Nato wouldn't expand eastwards, certainly not towards the Soviet frontiers. But Gorbachev failed to make them

write it down and Bush later told Kohl that he and Baker had gone too far. 'To hell with that! We prevailed. They didn't. We can't let the Soviets clutch victory from the jaws of defeat.' A few years later, by 2004, all the ex-Warsaw Pact nations, including the Baltic republics and Poland, had been brought into Nato. After their triumphant experience with Gorbachev, Western leaders reckoned that they could get away with it. But the 'broken promise' grievance smoulders under Putin's European policy to this day. Most Russians, whatever their view of Putin's autocracy, still look on Nato's surge up to their borders as the treacherous breach of an international agreement."

It was indeed unbelievably foolish, and Russians resent it still.[3] Gorbachev seems to have taken Western propaganda at face value and think it was 'all sweetness and light'.

On the specific issue of NATO, the West in 1989 would have been delighted with an agreement that Poland etc. should become officially neutral, as Austria was when the Soviets withdrew. That could have been made a binding. Something written clearly and simply enough that even the lawyers who dominate US politics could not have wriggled round it.

How Gorbachev missed it is hard to see. I'd suppose the Soviet system encouraged a lot of mutual trust, and some people switched that trust to the West.

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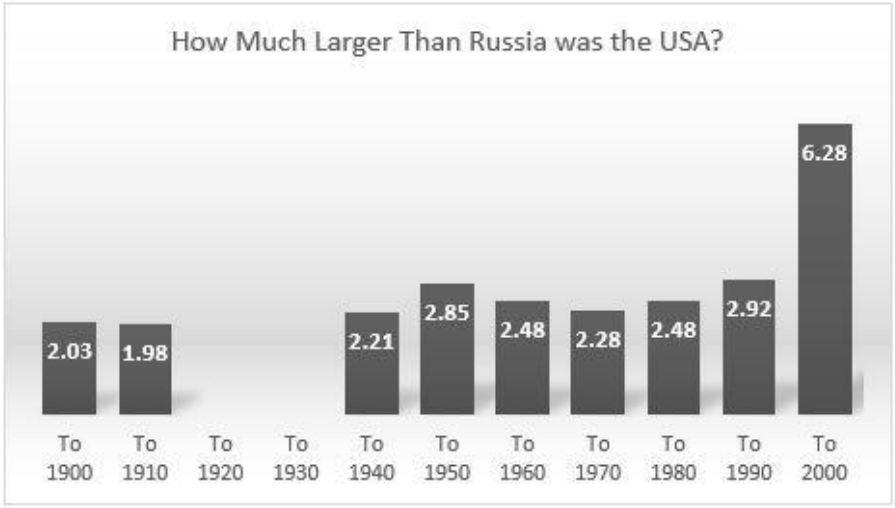
"The coup took place on 18 August 1991. Gorbachev, Raisa and their family were in their Crimean villa when it was surrounded by armed men. Announcing that the president had been taken ill, the plotters proclaimed that they had taken control of the Soviet Union as a State Committee on Emergency Rule…

"Why did the coup fail? Taubman's account confirms the incredible bungling of the plotters, who almost from the outset seemed terrified by their own audacity. But they had a chance. I was there, and saw how – outside Moscow and Leningrad – ordinary people and local apparatchiks instantly accepted that the perestroika holiday was over: it was back to censorship, silence and the 'normal' post-Stalinist grind. A friend of mine said afterwards: 'A handful of good, brave people saved Russia.' I like to believe that she was right. The plotters' worst and ultimately suicidal error was failing to arrest Yeltsin. But before he even arrived at the National Parliament building, mounted a tank and famously roared defiance, 'good, brave people' were already barricading the building. A line of women linked hands across the Kalinin Bridge, proposing to stop the tanks of the Taman armoured division. 'We are mothers!'...

"There was a moment – perhaps 36 hours – when the conspiracy controlled the army and murderous 'special forces' and could easily have drowned opposition in blood before it had time to spread. They faltered while the 'handful' became a human sea, then they collapsed. Several plotters flew to Crimea to whine for Gorbachev's pardon, but Yeltsin's men were soon on their way in their own plane to free Gorbachev and arrest them."

I don't suppose the book mentions the contrast between what the Chinese did in June 1989. Western experts don't trust the readers to remain 'good-thinkers' if it were made clear that the Tiananmen Square crack-down was a Leninist system fighting for simple survival.[4]



Figures from '*The World Economy: Historical Statistics*' by Angus Maddison.

They might also not remain 'good-thinkers' if the contemplated the way Russia sank rapidly until Putin took over, while China continues to rise.

"From the moment of the coup's failure, Yeltsin and his team were effectively running not only Russia but all that was left of the Soviet Union. It took Gorbachev a long time to realise it…

"Gorbachev was jeered as he addressed the Russian supreme court. And when he claimed that the Soviet cabinet had resisted the coup, Yeltsin thrust in his face a paper showing that almost all of his ministers had gone along with it…

[3] https://www.rt.com/news/413029-nato-gorbachev-expansion-promises/

[4] https://gwydionwilliams.com/42-china/communist-chinas-survival-after-the-tiananmen-crackdown/

"He spent the next months negotiating towards a new 'union treaty', granting the Soviet republics wide autonomy. But Ukraine refused to take part, heading for full independence, and in November Yeltsin suddenly vetoed any Russian participation in the treaty. A few weeks later, he went behind Gorbachev's back and – at a secret meeting in a Belorussian forest – set up the Commonwealth of Independent States with the leaders of Belarus and Ukraine. The Soviet Union was over. So was Gorbachev's power. He made his televised resignation speech in the Kremlin on 25 December 1991. Yeltsin switched off his own screen halfway through, and sent two colonels to take the 'nuclear briefcase' from Gorbachev and bring it to his own office."

Yeltsin was the worst individual failure in Russian history: a man whose active policies did damage that no foreign foe would have dared try. Other bad rulers merely failed to keep control or make necessary changes – most notably that ignorant little anti-Semite, Tsar Nicholas the Second. A man whose inaction authorised pogroms and also massacres of ethnic-Russian protestors who were initially very loyal. A man who favoured a jumble of mad mystical ideas collected under his rule as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. And now made a Saint by the Orthodox Church: that is how absurd post-Leninist Russia has become.

It was also tragic for Ukraine that it became sovereign, rather than being locked into some better Federal structure than the meaningless 'Commonwealth of Independent States'. It was always likely from 1991 onwards that it would tear itself apart, dividing between those friendly to Russia and those hostile. It is now dominated by politicians who increasingly cherish the memory of Ukrainian fascists who worked with Hitler whenever Hitler would allow it.

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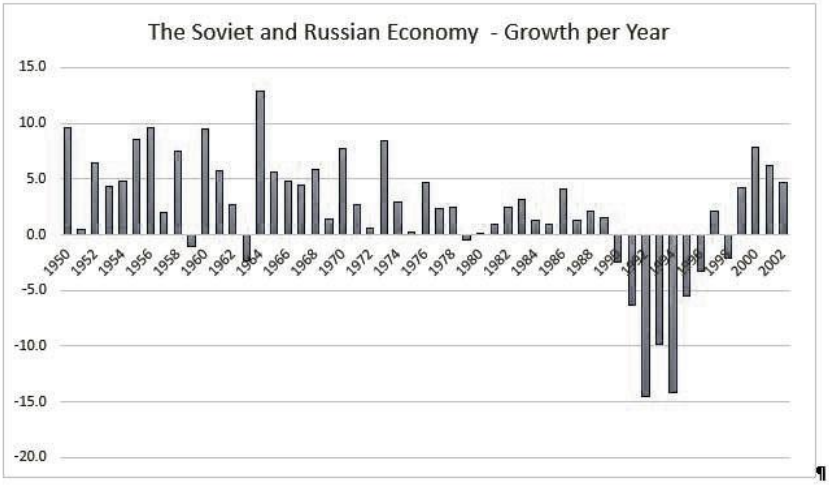
The book's conclusion is:

"According to a friend of his, Gorbachev now grants that it may take a hundred years for democracy to take hold in his country. But he is proud that he was the one who opened the way. The great Russian intellectual Dmitry Furman called him 'the only politician in Russian history who, having full power in his hands, voluntarily opted to limit it, and even risk losing it, in the name of principled moral values'."

What's so grand about a political system that does not work?

Systems with open multi-party elections generally rely on a body of experienced politicians whose deepest commitment is to keep the state and society in being. And who have a fair idea of how to do this: a process that involves *unlearning* many things that are valid for personal life. Making rules for communities of millions is a complex and confusing business.

Sadly, it is not the case that people given a free choice of elected representatives will always get what they want. They can force the champions of the ruling class to cloth themselves in the language of populism. Britain's current Tory government does this all the time. So do the US Republicans, assuring everyone that tax 'reform' that will be an enormous new feast for a more-than-millionaire class will actually be good for ordinary people. And the nonsense often works, as it did in Russia. Putin's poor politics are the best thing that can actually work in a messed-up society.



A review of the book itself will follow soon.

Notes on Asocialism

by Gwydion M Williams

Freedom and the Sinatra Principle

"I'll do it my way, you too will do it my way". Frank Sinatra didn't quite sing that, but he switched easily from Hollywood Liberal to Reagan-fan when he saw that Freedom was extending well beyond what he thought proper. Undermining the male dominance and white-male advantages that he saw as natural.

Sinatra on his own could have been ignored as someone whose excellent songs should outweigh his inability to change with the times. But he fitted very much with a malignant New Right that emerged from 1960s radicalism. That claims to champion Freedom, but whose core values are asocial.

Asocial? You might not know the word. Or you might know it from an embarrassing Nazi connection. Having gained power, the Nazis decided to remould the entire society and lock up, drive out or reform anyone who did not fit. They created harsh Labour Camps, though not utterly different from the 'prison with hard labour' that had existed in Britain and other places long before. And they borrowed the term 'Concentration Camp' from the British Empire's breaking of South Africa's Boer Republic, who had offended by making their independent farming life on top of rocks that contained gigantic quantities of gold. That they had also taken the land from its original inhabitants bothered neither side: the British Empire at that time was expecting to exterminate the inconvenient native populations of Australia and New Zealand. I've written at length about this in previous issues of *Problems*, most recently ***Britain's Exterminating Sea Empire***.[5]

To understand a word; always consult the full *Oxford English Dictionary*, which I have as software. This defines Asocial as:

> "Not social; antagonistic to society or social order; (colloq.) inconsiderate of or hostile to other people."

The dictionary also gives it a respectable pedigree. It dates back to 1883, and was also used by Arthur Koestler, noted anti-Totalitarian. In *The Yogi and the Commissar,* published in 1945, he says:

> "Most asocials have some such sort of jealously-guarded private philosophy."

In using the term, the Nazis took over an existing concept to dehumanise people who would normally be left along unless they committed some specific crime. They liked neat categories for all those who did not fit their vision of a new Germany. Homosexuality, already illegal but widely tolerated and nearly decriminalised in 1929,[6] was another reason to send people to hard labour and later to extermination. As racists, they assumed that Jews and Gypsies were inherently unacceptable, whatever they might seem to believe. For the racially acceptable, they sought to correct the views of socialists, communist and those faiths like the Jehovah's Witnesses that would not fit in. They would have liked to do the same to 'reactionaries', but had to work with them. But they also recognised a separate category of 'Asocial' – people who were indifferent to their values and who broke the rules, but who either had no concern or some sort of private philosophy.

> "Individuals deemed 'asocial' had to wear the black triangle. Many black triangle prisoners were either mentally disabled or mentally ill. The homeless were also included, as were alcoholics, the habitually 'work-shy', Roma and Sinti, prostitutes, and others (including draft dodgers and pacifists)."[7]

There had also long been philosophers of asocial values, though not all of them applied this to their own lives. It was modernised and included many values from 1960s radicalism as Libertarianism, the core of the New Right. And it also hampers socialists and the liberal-left, since it was a contaminant in the general cultural shift that the West implemented in the light of 1960s left-wing protests.

Identifying it as Asocialism is a way to counter it. A way to re-assert the merits of socialism, now that religion has become a mess of small creeds that mostly let people do whatever they feel like doing.

[5] https://gwydionwilliams.com/99-problems-magazine/jews-suffering-in-the-fall-of-the-british-empire/, and see also https://gwydionwilliams.com/44-fascism-and-world-war-2/british-and-us-genocide/

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paragraph_175#Historical_overview

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_triangle_(badge)

I've been developing this viewpoint for years in my *Newsnotes*, appearing regularly in the magazine *Labour Affairs.*[8] For May 2018, the totality of things I wanted to say came to far too many words, so I decided to post the rest as a blog. But as I wrote, they seemed to make a unity. Suitable to be published here, along with a long article on Gorbachev I'd done earlier and also lacked a place for.

If You Want Freedom, Pay For It!

"Information wants to be free. This decades-old slogan is the philosophical heart of the internet, putting nearly all human knowledge at our fingertips, free to anyone with a connection.

> "Here is another old slogan: if you're not paying, you're the product. We might not hand over cash for many of the services we get from the internet giants, but we do pay in cold, hard data. On the whole, we have been happy to make that pact. But as the row over Facebook data gathered by Cambridge Analytica shows, many are starting to realise the true price of 'free'. Perhaps it is time to re-evaluate how much we value our own data – and make tough choices about what we will pay to wrest back control
>
> "It wasn't meant to be this way. The free internet championed by those who determined the first online norms had little to do with monetary cost. 'Free as in free speech, not as in free beer,' was their slogan.
>
> "But we were soon led to expect free beer, too. The huge growth of companies like Facebook was supercharged by venture capitalists, happy to fund loss-making start-ups in the hopes of hitting it big. To grow, companies needed scale. To achieve scale, they had to be free."[9]

So far, so good. Sadly, this article in the magazine *New Scientists* then wanders off into fantasies about little groups of good-hearted activists defeating the big bad giants. And on no account let it be public:

> "He's not calling for social media to be run by the government or for Facebook to be nationalised, he says – the potential for surveillance is too high. The Chinese government plans to use personal data to rate individual citizens, for example. Instead, the taxpayer could fund online services, which are kept at arm's length from the state."

I said back in 2000 that the Internet was never going to be independent. The issue was whether it could be used by the USA to undermine all of its rivals:

> "Just you, your trusted friends and a whole gaggle of police spies. That's how 'libertarian' the new technology of the Internet actually is.
>
> "The entire computer industry is a spin-off from the USA's Military-Industrial Complex. A continuation of the methods that won the Cold War for the West. In the Anglo-American view of things, 'production for use' is normally seen as a burden on productive profit-making industries. But when the aim is warfare, it is accepted as a necessary. So technologies like microprocessors and memory chips were developed first for the military, long before there was any market demand."[10]

That China got control did not surprise me. They had built their own H-bombs and launched satellites back in Mao's day. And while the dominant ideology of the Internet is Libertarian, authentic brave idealists are a minority. Most let their principles get bent in the drive for fame and fortune. And there are a significant minority of expert hackers who would sell anyone to anyone else, if the price was right.

For Facebook, I see the *main* solution as being for users to start paying for it. Also throw out the adverts. Have subsidies for the poor, certainly. But if it's not to be state-run, make sure we are *customers* and not the product. And after what's been done to the BBC, I do not want more state control of information in Britain.

But I would also go much further with overall controls. No one claims a right to travel to foreign countries without a passport. So why not an 'Internet Passport'? Hidden from other users, but with an anonymous ID that would stop you faking for those sites that want you to register. You'd still be able to post anonymously, or under a false name, perhaps to avoid being discriminated against in your job. But you could not pose as multiple persons praising each other's work. Nor falsely claim to be younger or older than you were, for whatever reason.

An Internet Passport would also inhibit trolls: malignant individuals (mostly male) who irritate many. Who can badly hurt the vulnerable, including members of minorities who already face prejudice. A forum could ban them *permanently*. And their real ID could be revealed to the police, if their posts were bad enough to be criminal. I'd also have some

[8] https://gwydionwilliams.com/newsnotes-historic/ and https://wordpress.com/view/labouraffairsmagazine.com

[9] https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg23731720-200-our-obsession-with-a-free-internet-led-to-facebook-data-row/

[10] https://gwydionwilliams.com/46-globalisation/the-web-is-always-insecure/

protection here: for the police to know anyone's real identity from their Internet ID should need permission for a judge, as for phone tapping.

In the same spirit, any commercial outfit should have to have a basic registration. Enough to prove it is not a fraud, nor making grand promises it probably cannot meet.

Yes, state controls has its dangers. But a cash-driven free-for-all would be worse, if it were possible, and I don't believe it ever will be possible. What we have is states controlling the things that matter to them, and the rest runs wild. Plenty of good people get hurt. And it blights the internet's useful functions.

The Global Conspiracy Against Poor Little Me

"A woman shot and wounded three people at YouTube's headquarters in Northern California before killing herself, police say.

"Police have named the suspect as Nasim Aghdam, 39, and say they are still investigating a motive.

"They say there is no evidence yet that she knew the victims, a 36-year-old man said to be in a critical condition, and two women aged 32 and 27.

"Aghdam had in the past posted material venting anger at YouTube.

"Such 'active shooter' incidents are overwhelmingly carried out by men - an FBI report found that out of 160 incidents between 2000-2013 only six of the people who opened fire were women."[11]

It turned out to be one instance of the flip-side of the asocial radicalism that YouTube itself is a product of. A view that everything should be possible, without making room for those who hope for much but get little:

"The story of Nasim Aghdam, who used social media to fight for justice on a planet 'full of diseases', seems to reveal profound alienation

"Nasim Aghdam sought to build a mass following online but seemed to shun connections in the real world, a world she saw as dark, diseased and unjust.

"She chased eyeballs on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube with homemade videos that attracted hundreds of thousands of views, yielding not just an income source but an identity.

"On social media she was more than an Iranian immigrant who lived with her grandmother in southern California –she was an athlete, a fitness guru, a model, a poet, a vegan advocate, an animal rights warrior and a film-maker. She was glamorous and fought inequity. She was a star.

"'I think I am doing a great job,' Aghdam wrote in a Farsi post on Instagram. 'I have never fallen in love and have never got married. I have no physical and psychological diseases. But I live on a planet that is full of injustice and diseases.'

"When YouTube changed its rules, Aghdam's video views and income, like those of many other small creators, slumped – an act she apparently interpreted as censorship, betrayal and demanding retribution."[12]

Nasim Aghdam was a foreigner converted to many aspects of the American way of life. Including violence and maybe murder if you don't get what you want, and which you believe that the system should *naturally* deliver. YouTube frustrates you so much you want to die, so why not then bring a few people with you before crossing the Styx? Should they be allowed to live when YouTube won't give you the money and attention you think you merit?

The system encourages unrealistic expectations. A *'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?'* attitudes that the New Right has carefully fostered. That New Labour and the Clinton Democrats went along with, with Blair himself becoming a real-world millionaire.

Vultures coming home to roost.

If everyone wants to be a millionaire, but very few really can be, is it so surprising that a tiny proportion of the frustrated then turn to murder?

The USA is failing to cope with people who become more dangerous when they adjust to US values. The YouTube shooter was one example, an immigrant woman who was almost part of the system. At the other extreme, many Islamist terrorists were and are people strongly influenced by US culture. People who took a good look at what was on offer to them as asocial individuals. Who decided that it was worth dying and worth killing rather than accept it.

Islamists can be seen as strange outsiders. But what about those, both immigrant and home-grown, who seem to have found a place in the system and then do something terrible?

"Aghdam's precise motivation for opening fire on innocent people will likely never be known. Information about her life and background is still scant beyond her social media presence.

"But a website that appears to have been

[11] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-43635864

[12] https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/apr/04/youtube-shooting-suspect-nasim-aghdam-profile

maintained by Aghdam presents a portrait of a frustrated YouTube creator. She apparently maintained multiple YouTube channels, and screenshots of analytics suggest that her viewership had decreased over the course of 2016. One screenshot published on the site shows that one of Aghdam's channels had been deemed ineligible for 'monetization' – the practice whereby YouTube runs ads on user-generated content and shares a portion with creators.

"'There is no equal growth opportunity on YOUTUBE or any other video sharing site, your channel will grow if they want to!!!!!' the site reads, in a section that includes a quote from Adolf Hitler. 'There is no free speech in real world & you will be suppressed for telling the truth that is not supported by the system.'"[13]

We do indeed have an End of History. Just not the one Mr Fukuyama was expecting.

School Shooters

Other outbreaks of lunacy have overshadowed the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in the USA. A massacre which got a grand reaction from young people, taking on the National Rifle Association and the USA's absurdly lax gun laws.

Also a rejection of phoney arguments as to why the young man did it. Let's hear from someone who lived through it:

"I Tried to Befriend Nikolas Cruz. He Still Killed My Friends. By Isabelle Robinson, March 27, 2018…

"My first interaction with Nikolas Cruz happened when I was in seventh grade. I was eating lunch with my friends, most likely discussing One Direction or Ed Sheeran, when I felt a sudden pain in my lower back. The force of the blow knocked the wind out of my 90-pound body; tears stung my eyes. I turned around and saw him, smirking. I had never seen this boy before, but I would never forget his face. His eyes were lit up with a sick, twisted joy as he watched me cry.

"The apple that he had thrown at my back rolled slowly along the tiled floor. A cafeteria aide rushed over to ask me if I was O.K. I don't remember if Mr. Cruz was confronted over his actions, but in my 12-year-old naïveté, I trusted that the adults around me would take care of the situation.

"Five years later, hiding in a dark closet inside Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, I would discover just how wrong I was.

"I am not writing this piece to malign Nikolas Cruz any more than he already has been. I have faith that history will condemn him for his crimes. I am writing this because of the disturbing number of comments I've read that go something like this: Maybe if Mr. Cruz's classmates and peers had been a little nicer to him, the shooting at Stoneman Douglas would never have occurred.

"This deeply dangerous sentiment, expressed under the #WalkUpNotOut hashtag, implies that acts of school violence can be prevented if students befriend disturbed and potentially dangerous classmates. The idea that we are to blame, even implicitly, for the murders of our friends and teachers is a slap in the face to all Stoneman Douglas victims and survivors.

"A year after I was assaulted by Mr. Cruz, I was assigned to tutor him through my school's peer counseling program. Being a peer counselor was the first real responsibility I had ever had, my first glimpse of adulthood, and I took it very seriously.

"Despite my discomfort, I sat down with him, alone. I was forced to endure his cursing me out and ogling my chest until the hourlong session ended. When I was done, I felt a surge of pride for having organized his binder and helped him with his homework.

"Looking back, I am horrified. I now understand that I was left, unassisted, with a student who had a known history of rage and brutality…

"This is not to say that children should reject their more socially awkward or isolated peers — not at all. As a former peer counselor and current teacher's assistant, I strongly believe in and have seen the benefits of reaching out to those who need kindness most.

"But students should not be expected to cure the ills of our genuinely troubled classmates, or even our friends, because we first and foremost go to school to learn. The implication that Mr. Cruz's mental health problems could have been solved if only he had been loved more by his fellow students is both a gross misunderstanding of how these diseases work and a dangerous suggestion that puts children on the front line.

"It is not the obligation of children to befriend classmates who have demonstrated aggressive, unpredictable or violent tendencies. It is the responsibility of the school administration and guidance department to seek out those students and get them the help that they need, even if it is extremely specialized attention that cannot be provided at the same institution."[14]

But care costs money, and mostly it also needs enforcement. The habit since the 1980s has been against this. Leave it to individuals and it will all work out OK, surely?

[13] https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/apr/04/youtube-shooting-suspect-content-creator-censorship

[14] https://mobile.nytimes.com/2018/03/27/opinion/nikolas-cruz-shooting-florida.html

There is also a glorification of violence in the USA. And in other cultures, but the USA is the one that has global influence.

Hollywood broadly feeds this feeling. Has made it non-sexist and mutli-racial in recent years. It remains seductive nonsense.

How Dare The World Disappoint Me!

I'd written '*The Global Conspiracy Against Poor Little Me'*, and considered saying more on School Shooters, before the Toronto Van Killings. But these now seem to be another head of the same hydra. Part of a subculture at the opposite extreme from the ideas of Nasim Aghdam. But with two crucial similarities: unreasonable hostility to the world as it is, and a willingness to get violent and murderous about it:

The Guardian described it thus:

"Who are the 'incels' and how do they relate to Toronto van attack?

"Suspect appears to have links to misogynistic online community for the 'involuntarily celibate'

"Hours before the Toronto van attack, a post on the Facebook profile of the chief suspect declared that 'the incel rebellion has already begun, we will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys'.

"The message has brought new-found attention to the so-called incel movement, one of the stranger offshoots of the 'alt right', and led to calls for the attack to be recognised as an act of far-right terrorism.

"Incel is short for 'involuntarily celibate'. The term rose to prominence because of its adoption by a subsection of the 'manosphere', a loose collection of movements united by misogyny that also includes some men's rights activists, pick-up artists, and Mgtow/volcel – heterosexual men who refuse to have sex with women for political reasons.

"Men who identify as incel tend to congregate on a few forums, including the message board 4chan, the forum SlutHate and, until the community was banned from the site, the incel page on Reddit.

"They are united by the fact that women will not have sex with them, usually attributed to shallow obsessions with looks or superficial personality, and by their hatred of 'Chads' and 'Stacys', the men and women who have sex."[15]

The BBC confirmed this:

"A van driver accused of killing 10 people in Toronto posted to Facebook minutes before the attack to praise killer Elliot Rodger and refer to the misogynistic 'incel' Reddit group.

"Alek Minassian, 25, was charged on Tuesday with 10 counts of murder and 13 counts of attempted murder.

"Police say he appeared to intentionally strike pedestrians after mounting a busy pavement in a rental van.

"He was arrested several blocks away after a tense standoff with police.

"Mr Minassian's Facebook post, which the social network has confirmed as real, praised Elliott Rodger, a 22 year old from California who killed six people in a shooting rampage through Isla Vista, California in 2014 before turning the gun on himself.

"It read: 'The Incel Rebellion has already begun! We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys! All hail the Supreme Gentleman Elliot Rodger!'

"The term 'incel' refers to a now-banned group on the message site Reddit, used by Rodger, where young men discussed their lack of sexual activity and attractiveness to women - often blaming women for the problem.

"'Chads and Stacys' refers to attractive men and women who are perceived as better than or unavailable to 'incels', which is short for 'involuntary celibate'…

"The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) confirmed that Mr Minassian was a member for two months in late 2017. He requested to be voluntarily released.

"Mr Minassian had previously attended a school for students with special needs in north Toronto, former classmates said.

"He would be seen walking around Thornlea Secondary School with his head down and hands clasped tightly together making meowing noises, Shereen Chami told Reuters.

"But she said Mr Minassian had not been violent. 'He wasn't a social person, but from what I remember he was absolutely harmless,' she told Reuters."[16]

The BBC did not mention the Alt-Right connection.

The next day, *The Guardian* told more:

"There is a reluctance to ascribe to the 'incel' movement anything so lofty as an 'ideology' or credit it with any developed, connected thinking, partly because it is so bizarre in conception.

"Standing for 'involuntarily celibate', the term was originally invented 20 years ago by a woman known only as Alana, who coined the term as a name for an online support forum for singles, basically a lonely hearts club. 'It feels like being the scientist who figured out nuclear fission and then discovers it's being used as a weapon for war,' she says, describing

[15] https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/apr/25/what-is-incel-movement-toronto-van-attack-suspect

[16] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-43883052

the feeling of watching it mutate into a Reddit muster point for violent misogyny.

"It is part of the 'manosphere', but is distinguished from men's rights activism by what Wendling – who is also the editor of BBC Trending, the broadcaster's social media investigation unit – calls its 'raw hatred. It is vile. It is just incredibly unhinged and separate from reality and completely raw.' It has some crossover with white supremacism, in the sense that its adherents hang out in the same online spaces and share some of the same terminology, but it is quite distinctive in its hate figures: Stacys (attractive women); Chads (attractive men); and Normies (people who aren't incels, ie can find partners but aren't necessarily attractive). Basically, incels cannot get laid and they violently loathe anyone who can…

"Their landscape is strewn with completely unsquarable contradiction: 'They'll say how terrible it is that the left has won the culture wars and we should return to traditional hierarchies, but then they'll use terms like 'banging sluts', which doesn't make any sense, right?' Nagle continues. 'Because you have to pick one. They want sexual availability and yet, at the same time, they express this disgust at promiscuity.'

"Incels obsess over their own unattractiveness – dividing the world into alphas and betas, with betas just your average, frustrated idiot dude, and omegas, as the incels often call themselves, the lowest of the low, scorned by everyone – they then use that self-acceptance as an insulation. They feel this makes them untouchable in their quest for supremacy over sluts."[17]

'Traditional hierarchies' of the sort the Incels supposedly yearn for did have a place for more people. Kept most of them content. 1960s radicals attacked those hierarchies, assuming that without them, all would be well.

It should by now be obvious that all is *not* well.

There were excellent reasons to undermine the Anglo 'respectability' of the 1950s. It included a silly guilt-ridden view of sex, which needed to be scrapped. Sadly, the tricky task of defining an entire new social morality that accepts homosexuality and sex outside of marriage has been slow and messy. Most people chose the quick-and-dirty option of saying that all morality was false, or at least should not be imposed against individual whims or wishes. This was a bad error. It left society way open to Thatcher's ignorant attack on British basics that she imagined she was rescuing. Britain's seaside towns were among those that slipped, particularly since most of the Working Mainstream can afford foreign holidays.

What resulted was a mess. Sex is dirty, but dirt is OK. So maybe lying is also OK. Maybe theft and murder are not so bad. This last extended even to a song by The Beatles:

"Bang, bang, Maxwell's silver hammer came down upon her head

"Clang, clang, Maxwell's silver hammer made sure that she was dead"[18]

The image projected by *The Beatles* was mostly 'nice', but overall they reflected the incoherence of the 1960s. Unlike most entertainers, they refused to do charity work. Only John Lennon showed intermittent interest in wider social issues. And back then, they felt no need to take any particular stand in a song inspired by a real-life killer called Maxwell.[19]

In this one song they show what other pop stars took much further, both before and after: an admiration for criminals. Confuse power and danger. The top criminals are both dangerous and vulnerable, mostly ending up murdered or jailed for life..

In both social life and economics, 'let things drift' is fine for well-adjusted people with good jobs. It fails to take account of the unlucky, the badly adjusted and those with no marketable talent. Those who get hurt.

Auden said of the Nazis, *'those to whom evil's done, do evil in return'*. Nazis, and fascism in general, were extinguished by a post-war world that believed in looking after people.

From the 1980s, the line was pushed that evil people were probably just bad. That there was no need to spend money when it would make no difference. And if evil unexpectedly multiplies or takes new forms when you don't spend the money that would make no difference, the cause must be something quite different. Something that would make no demands on the previous case that you valued a lot more than the lives of strangers. But to avoid an uneasy conscience – which most but not all of them possess – they are also reassured that the suffering either deserve it or would not be helped by more money.

There are always a gross of experts asserting that the austerity that *appears* just to serve the selfish interests of a more-than-

[17] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/25/raw-hatred-why-incel-movement-targets-terrorises-women

[18] http://www.metrolyrics.com/maxwells-silver-hammer-lyrics-beatles.html

[19] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell%27s_Silver_Hammer

millionaire class is actually best for everyone. The rich dominate the mass media. They reward those who give them this welcome Good News, without wondering if it might be untrue.

Stuff like the Incels is an unintended but predictable outcome of more than four decades of feeding individualistic resentment. This got the New Right elected, but most people find the core New Right beliefs repellent. Most of their own voters find the core New Right beliefs repellent. Are only reliably attached if they personally are doing well. The rest must be kept irrational resentful. Fed lies all the time. Persuaded that the small minority who cheat on welfare are typical of welfare as a whole.

It's not even as if 'get tough' changes are honestly applied. Genuine cheats are mostly good at not being caught, or at vanishing and restarting if they are caught. Mostly the 'tough' attitude misses the 'artful dodgers', who need a lot of work to catch them. Mostly quotas are met by going for soft targets: people who are basically honest but might be in breach of some technicality. Like the elderly black people (and a few whites) who got hit in the Windrush Scandal. Like the real-life equivalents of the hero in the film '*I, Daniel Blake*'. And back in the 1990s, there was a scandal over the Child Support Agency, which hurt many innocents in a drive that was justified by the rare instances of outright cheats.[20]

Outright cheats probably have it easier since the 1980s than before.

The culture also generates unhappiness. Advertising repeatedly suggests a lot of attractive available women, which is obvious nonsense. It also clamps down on what was the traditional outlet for frustrated males. Prostitution remains mostly criminalised and dangerous, because the privileged women who dominate Feminism dislike its existence. Not that most of them would do anything to ease the lives of those women who find it a necessity: they just want not to be upset.

The whole social order is failing, in a world that *should* be able to meet everyone's basic needs. The particular lunacy of incels was new to me, but fits the pattern.

[20] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4020399.stm

Lead Us Not Into Temptation. Or Frustration.

Back in December 2017, without having any notion that there might be mass killers motivated by sexual frustration, I put an argument for banning sexy adverts. I also said there should be discrete Sex Malls where women could prostitute themselves in safe surroundings.

(Men also, of course. But it is mostly heterosexual males who have frustrations over sex as such, rather than the quest for a good and meaningful relationship.)

Back then, I said:

> "Legalised brothels can become places of exploitation. Maybe something much larger should be promoted instead: Sex malls, which rent rooms and provide openly priced support services, leaving it to the women to control their own business. (And pay taxes, and have an independently appointed Welfare Officer in place to prevent exploitation.)
>
> "As for advertising such places, I would favour something that does not intrude on the public, unless they click a link or get a magazine and see much more. It could be as simple as a sign saying [♀£] along with a link or address. Or [♂£], [♀♂£], [♀♂?£] etc. Whatever some people would want, and not intruding rudely on the majority.
>
> "All of this would establish sanity, safety and decency to commercial sex, which is going to exist anyway.
>
> "It would also undermine an important part of the New Right political package. It is no coincidence that you often find the same people pushing mostly-feeble commercial sex and making complaints about modern morals."[21]

Low-intensity pornography has been part of the New Right package. Rupert Murdoch took over *The Sun*, originally intended as a modernised successor to the left-wing *Daily Herald*. Boosted circulation with topless 'Page 3 Girls'. Carried on a long tradition of having little sexual lures for right-wing politics, while also wishing to keep authentic commercial sex illegal.

Short of castrating them, you are not going to stop men wanted sex without the complex social relationships that they may see as needless. Or may be unable to handle competently, even if they try. Prostitution was the normal solution. Prostitutes were and are mostly women very much in control of their own lives.

[21] https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/recent-issues/2017-12-magazine/2017-12-newsnotes/#_Toc511383764

I would add one extra – prostitutes must be at least 21. The young are much too easy to exploit, at a time when they are unlikely to earn much from anything other than sex.

I'm not hopeful about it actually happening. The Feminist movement prefers to moan about the wickedness of the world. Strongly opposed solutions that might upset their delicate little feelings.

Turks Undemocratically Vote for a Successful Illiberal

Ronald Reagan resumed the West's quest to impose its own values on the wider world. President Carter had considered abandoning it, but didn't get the support he needed. Too many on the left were nihilistic, or had the notion that if they prevented moderate reform they might triumph. They lost to the New Right. Both the Clinton Democrats and Tony Blair with New Labour reacted to the loss by accepting New Right ideas as unpleasant truths that they could merely moderate.

Only it wasn't true. And Turkey is reacting to US failures:

> "Mr. Erdogan's abrupt move seemed intended to seize a ripe moment — he remains the country's most popular politician, with some 40 percent support — to consolidate his powers at a time when domestic politics in Turkey and international trends seem to favor leaders in his autocratic style.
>
> "The elections, both presidential and parliamentary, will bring forward Turkey's transition to a presidential system under which the president will gain still more authority, the prime minister's office will be abolished and the powers of Parliament reduced."[22]

The USA successfully undermined the strong Secular Socialism that Turkey once had. And then were amazed when something much more alien took its place.

They also went to war to remove Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Did not see that he was playing the same role as the Enlightened Despots who made Europe's original Enlightenment possible.

If you think comparing Saddam to 18th century Enlightened Despots is unfair, you have a very false idea of what those Enlightened Despots were like. If anything, the comparison is unfair to Saddam. He allowed a twisted version of the democratic politics that the Enlightened Despots wanted to suppress.

The New Right built itself on an utterly false set of beliefs. It decided we were all rational little economic cogs who would stay in the place that money found us fit for. But it had very few True Believers – far too few to win elections. So it stirred up envy, hatred, and resentment, mostly among people being hurt by New Right policies. People not clever enough to see the true cause of their suffering. But after two or three decades, they did finally wise up enough to vote for genuine Illiberals, rather than nihilistic New Rightists posting as Illiberals.

None of this would seem surprising to people not locked into the fashionable asocial world view. It is not Rocket Science. Rather, it is vastly more complex than Newtonian Dynamics, but human minds are built to get something like the right answer without being able to explain why. Just as we learn how to catch thrown balls etc. without having any idea of how we do it.

The centre-left swallowed a lot of asocialism. It is mostly as confused by this as the New Right is. For instance, *The Guardian* complains:

> "A dictator in all but name seeks complete control".[23]

A popular authoritarian is not a dictator if they leave in place an electoral system that would allow a more popular challenger to replace them. The real complaint is that awkward foreign populations refuse to accept the West's notion of what should be good for them. Do this for no better reason than that it has not in practice been good for them.

Turkey is reacting intelligently to the West's bungles in the Arab and Muslim world. Smashing the existing state in Iraq and Libya, and earlier Somalia. Trying to do the same in Syria has helped revive a Kurdish independence movement that no Turk could agree to live with. They seek new friends.

In the longer run, the new Turkey might become a serious danger to Israel, which the older secular Turkey was quietly friendly to.

New Europe, Illiberal Europe

An 'End of History' enshrining Western values was possible in the 1990s. But was made impossible by the ignorant arrogance of the New Right. And by the foolish capitulation to New Right economic dogmas by the Clinton

[22] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/18/world/europe/turkey-erdogan-elections.html

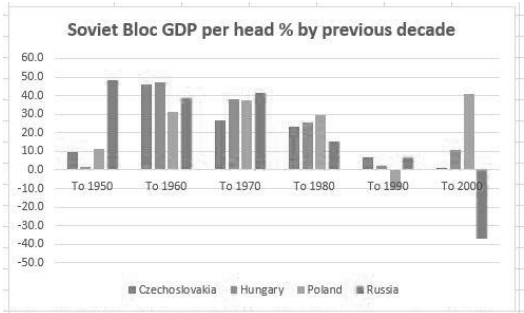
[23] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/19/recep-tayyip-erdogan-turkey-president-election-dictator-seeks-total-control

Democrats, Britain's New Labour, and similar movements elsewhere in Western Europe.

I've explained elsewhere how it was the semi-capitalist Mixed Economy system that won the Cold War for the West.[24] Thatcherism dreamt of restoring the Classical Capitalism that fell apart in the 1930s. Even of advancing to the Imaginary Capitalism of Adam Smith and later theorists. But it was never the reality. The reality was a continuing Mixed Economy, but twisted to deliver most of its benefits to a tiny more-than-millionaire class.

> "Belief in globalisation has been shattered by the events of the past decade. Voters, not just in the US but across the developed world, have been turning to politicians who say that the answer to flatlining living standards is for the nation state to take back powers from remote international bureaucracies.
>
> "Christine Lagarde, the IMF's managing director, is right when she says the lesson of the 1930s is that trade wars are unwinnable, but Trump is not listening. Winter is coming."[25]

The Globalisers mostly failed, because the lessons of the 1940s had been wholly forgotten by the 1980s. Remove all of those needless regulation. Oops, we have a global crash, but pump in subsidies to the rich under the gibberish-name Quantitative Easing. Since no one *important* has been hurt, surely things can carry on as before. Oops, real Illiberals are getting elected. But surely the wonderful truths of our economic knowledge will win out in the long run?



Figures from '*The World Economy: Historical Statistics*' by Angus Maddison.

None of the economic theories had much basis in reality. It is as if there were vast numbers of books about the game of golf, but the game actually being played was football. There are *some* points of similarity, including the central role of a ball. But such guides would be worse than useless.

The economic theories of the New Right were worse than useless. Eastern Europe trusted them after the Soviet collapse, and they suffered vast setbacks. Missed the chance to follow the highly successful Chinese Road. In China, Leninist controls are kept in place and the past is not bad-mouthed, but a relaxation has been allowed.

The reform movement in Czechoslovakia might have gone that way, but it was crushed in 1968. Gorbachev was working with a heavily rotted system. He was up against deep anti-Russian nationalism in the wider Soviet empire. He was also foolish enough to talk about Freedom when he was not ready for people taking Freedom well beyond what he considered proper limits.

It was also wrong to write off the Soviet past as a simple failure. It opposed the evils of imperialism and inequality by race and gender. It demanded a better deal for the workers by abolishing the rich: Moderate Socialism and Moderate Conservatism neutralised the challenge by a better deal for the workers while keeping the rich with lesser privileges. Privileges that they have taken back on the economic front from the 1980s, after people came to believe that state curbs on the selfishness of the rich were not necessary.

The tragedy is that the Soviet system failed to compromise with the West's Mixed Economy in the 1960s and 1970s, when a convergence of the two systems was widely expected.

Polish Alternatives.

"A new book on Poland's success, *Europe's Growth Champion*, by Marcin Piatkowski, highlights a paradox. What outsiders saw, and Poles bemoaned, in 1989 was indeed dreadful, a destitute country with dire infrastructure, pitiful wages, clapped-out industry and bankrupt public finances. But the deeper legacy of communism, the book argues, was a positive one.

> "A distinguished World Bank economist, he states explicitly that communism was murderous, repressive and ended in economic disaster. But he also argues that it was the damage done by communism that made the post-1989 boom possible. The post-1945 demolition job created an 'egalitarian, socially mobile and well-educated society'. Its potential was wasted under communism, but unleashed by the possibilities of capitalism and freedom.
>
> "Many will flinch at this. Was pre-war Poland really that bad? Mr Piatkowski portrays a bleak picture of a weak, class-ridden country. He traces the roots of the problem to the population crunch that followed the Black Death, which forced countries in western

[24] https://gwydionwilliams.com/99-problems-magazine/the-mixed-economy-worked-quite-well/

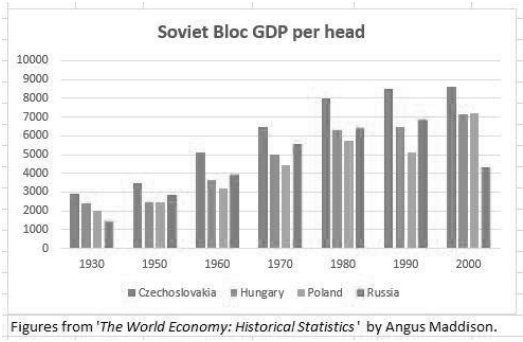
[25] https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/mar/18/trump-on-path-full-scale-trade-war-first-china-then-europe

Europe to make the most of their human and other resources. Places such as Poland, untouched by the plague, remained stuck in the feudal mire. The restoration of independence in 1918 failed to bring changes. The ruling szlachta (nobility) maintained its historic contempt for business, technology and education. A fifth of Poles were illiterate.

"The result, he argues, was an 'extractive' Latin American economy, in which a small number of people reap the benefits and broader development stagnates. Without the catastrophes of war and communism, he argues, Poland would have remained stuck in this model: weak, marginalised and stagnant. Any post-war democratic government would have been skewed towards the interests of the countryside, where the majority of the Polish population then lived. It would not have mustered the resources necessary for industrialisation and urbanisation."[26]

The book costs just over £58, perhaps to avoid too many people reading it. If it really says that the Poland created by Pilsudski was a flop, that is political dynamite.

Pilsudski had tried to create a Western type of society, but with Polish values strongly re-asserted. But its first elected President, who had been supported by Pilsudski, was assassinated by a Polish right-winger in 1922.[27] Poland's first modern effort to be a Western-style democracy worked badly. So in 1926, Pilsudski launched a coup and became a popular autocrat for the rest of his life.



Figures from '*The World Economy: Historical Statistics*' by Angus Maddison.

Pilsudski's mediocre successors led Poland into World War Two. They rejected an offer from Hitler that was the most moderate offer he ever made.

The British Empire helped start the war, by giving Poland an unconditional guarantee, rather than a guarantee conditional on giving Hitler the overwhelmingly Germany city of Danzig. A baffling error? A. J. P. Taylor in *The Origins of the Second World War* finds it so. Or was it intentional, intended to get rid of Hitler before he became an even worse menace? On paper, Germany was no match for the Allies at the start of the World War.

Regardless, Poland collapsed. The Soviet Union remade it. And Communist Poland early on was by no means the flop that people now present it as. Things only started falling apart in the 1970s, perhaps because everyone was demoralised by the outrageous invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

"How Dare You Say We've Failed, Just Because We've Failed!"

The disappointed Enlightened Globalisers do not quite say that, but they come close. I'd also see their real attitude as being '*It's Not a Democracy, if The Most Votes Go To People We Find Unsuitable*'. That's the baffled liberal-left reaction to the failure of their efforts to make a kindlier version of the anti-human Thatcher-Reagan politics and economics.

Hungary is fondly remembered as victim of a brutal Soviet invasion in 1956. Those who remembered its home-grown authoritarianism and fascism from the 1930s managed to avoid thinking about it. Likewise banished as an off-message truth was the awkward fact that they willingly became allies of Hitler, without the coercion that some of their neighbours suffered.

And now many of them go back to their roots, after the West failed to deliver what it had promised in the 1990s. The remaining believers in those failed policies can think of nothing better than the *Sinatra Principle*: "**I'll do it my way, you too will do it my way**".

But their protests are pointless, being up against both the state machine and the clearly expressed wishes of a majority of voters:

"Thousands of Hungarians took to the streets on Saturday, calling for Prime Minister Viktor Orban to step down just days after he was elected to a third term consecutive term in office.

"The protests, held in Budapest and several other cities, are unlikely to prompt the newly elected government to change course, but they reflect the deep divisions in this Central European country that has been at the forefront of a regional drift away from liberal Western values.

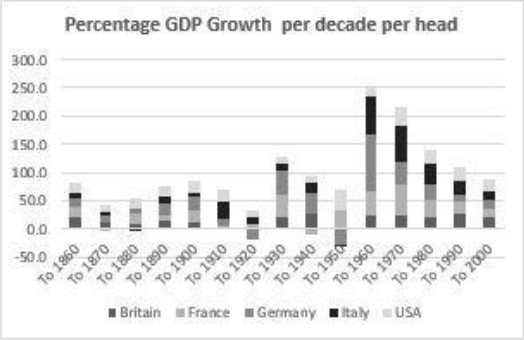
"'Democracy is just inconceivable without the rule of law and free media,' said one protester... 'We'll march as long as needed.'"[28]

[26] https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/shock-of-communism-can-be-spur-for-growth-0c0x8mnpc

[27] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel_Narutowicz

[28] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/14/world/europe/hungary-protest-orban.html

They and their Western friend expect people to give up little things like jobs, food, housing, health care and education in return for the bright liberal promise of Freedom. A 'free media' that just happens to be dominated by some very rich men (and the occasional women) pushing policies that mostly benefit some very rich men (and the occasional women).



Myself, I'm quite happy to say that I often dislike the outcome of actual democratic processes. But that's just me, and it is best the majority decide. To suppose that they should bend to my will is neither just nor realistic.

In Hungary, the centre-left had all the wrong ideas. They deservedly failed:

> "In the late 1990s many in Europe, including MSZP, tried to follow the guidance of Tony Blair and Gerhard Schroder to reshape social democracy. In Hungary, the shine of Blairism was lost, especially after the turbulent events (fiscal stabilisation and street riots) of 2006. Party leaders after 2010 in various ways tried to distance themselves from a neoliberal version of social democracy. Since 2017, MSZP started to take inspiration from the examples of Jeremy Corbyn, the UK Labour leader, and Antonio Costa, the Portuguese socialist leader.
>
> "[The leader] of the Alliance for Change, framed his program in a new way. He rejected Orban's 'fake democracy", but without suggesting a return to the 1990—2010 'liberal democracy'. He pointed to a third model: 'social democracy' that would introduce tripartism at the world of work and reinforce public health and education. He also spoke about the need for more dynamic wage increases. The lack of a breakthrough did not mean that [his] program was wrong, but that the fragmented opposition, hampered by a limited chance to reach out to its natural base outside the cities, has been too weak to match Orban's concentrated power and unlimited resources."[29]

But that's much too mild about Blairism. It swallowed the New Right agenda of allowing the rich to get much richer without doing anything useful for it. It became ashamed of its own past, instead of reminding everyone of all the good things that past Labour governments had done. Reminding everyone of all the good things that Tories had opposed at the time. That 20th century Liberals when in power somehow failed to do despite supposedly approving of them.

And what will the outcome be? Even hostile reports make me think the Hungarians showed sound judgement when the originally threw out a centre-left that imposed Blairite rubbish on them. Under the title "*An Economic Miracle in Hungary, or Just a Mirage?*", the *New York Times* says:

> "In seeking re-election, Hungary's far-right prime minister, Viktor Orban, claims to have conjured an economic miracle since taking office eight years ago. One village shows he is right — and wrong.
>
> "After winning power in 2010, Mr. Orban implemented a vast workfare program in which menial tasks have been given to hundreds of thousands of jobseekers — including 73 of the 472 residents of Siklosnagyfalu, a village near the southern border.
>
> "As a result, there are roughly half as many jobseekers in the village as there were before Mr. Orban took office. (Over the same period, the national unemployment rate has fallen to 3.8 percent from 11.4 percent.)
>
> "But the woolly nature of the jobs program in Siklosnagyfalu and hundreds of similar towns has left critics asking whether all is really as it seems — and whether workfare participants are really working…
>
> "Mr. Orban has relentlessly transformed Hungary's political system and remade the country's institutions and society — efforts that have been roundly condemned by democracy advocates. But the prime minister's allies say that Hungarians really care about his successful stewardship of the economy and that 'Orbanomics' will most likely decide the election on Sunday.
>
> "'People feel that they have a much better life in terms of the economy,' said Istvan Lovas, a radio host and one of Mr. Orban's most prominent supporters. 'Whatever figures you look at, they are clearly improving.'
>
> "In many cases, that is true. Government debt, as a proportion of Hungary's gross domestic product, has fallen more than 6 percentage points since 2010. The country's credit ratings have improved. The budget deficit has roughly halved. Growth has almost quadrupled. Wages have risen by more than 10 percent. Though still high, deprivation has fallen by nearly half — not least in places like Siklosnagyfalu,

[29] https://www.socialeurope.eu/hungary-and-the-purgatory-of-socialists

where villagers benefit from their workfare wages. Officially, unemployment has dropped by nearly two-thirds.

"'Hungary has been on the right track,' Mihaly Varga, the economy minister, said in an email that cited most of these positive developments. 'Now everyone who is capable of work and wants to work can find a job.'

"Until Mr. Orban and his far-right party, Fidesz, came to power, Hungarians could hold 25 percent of their retirement savings in a private fund; the rest went into a public pot. To cut state debt, the government announced that Hungarians who did not transfer private pension assets into the public system would not receive a state pension. By the time the order was ruled unconstitutional, most people had already complied."[30]

Jobs are jobs. They give people dignity and a sense of purpose, even if well-paid outsiders decide that those jobs are not really necessary.

Private pension schemes in Britain have often been havens for fraud and speculation.

Hungary is also told off by the *New York Times* for daring to have normal relations with Russia, rather than letting Russia be demonised to cover up New Right and Blairite failures. I've explained elsewhere how Putin was simply hanging on to what he had when he took Crimea, with its Russia-orientated majority. And he did it against a new Ukrainian government created by violent riots that included open fascists.[31] That was recognised by the West despite having violated the Ukrainian constitution.[32]

People who are under threat will usually rally round an authoritarian leader. And will generally choose someone who promises not to change those parts of their way of life that the voters favour. And mostly it works for the non-radical majority who simply want the chance to live a decent life.

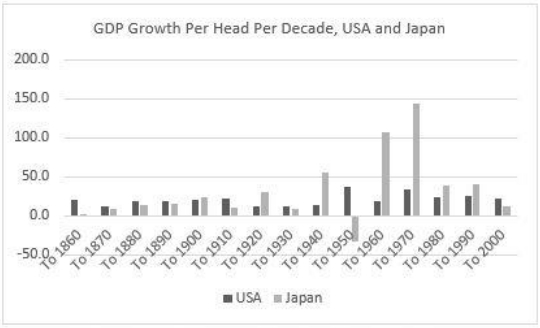
Hitler was of course the grand exception. The man always pointed to when you dare suggest that authoritarianism can work. But if he'd had the good sense to rest on his laurels after the Munich Crisis – or if he had been assassinated back then – a very different world would have resulted. Hitler and Nazism might have as many admirers as Pinochet.

Disasters for the world – and in the long run the ruin of fascism – happened because Hitler was far more of a Radical Rightists than most Germans knew. Someone who remained convinced that the world as it was could not be allowed to endure, even in the unfair optimum he had for Germany after facing down the British Empire over Germans in Czechoslovakia.

In many ways Hitler was as unbalanced as the slew of mass murderers in the USA that I mentioned earlier. Tragically, he had the use of the entire German war-machine rather than just a few firearms.

It used to be remembered that Hitler's power grew because he did get Germany back to work. The New Right managed to get this forgotten – it was re-imagined as an Outbreak of Evil occurring for no reason, or perhaps because the Sacredness of Free Trade had been interfered with. And the left, dominated by the same asocial attitudes that stemmed from 1960s radicalism, for the most part went along with it.

People abused by Liberal Economics often turn against liberalism in general. This was known and successfully allowed for from the 1940s to 1970s. Disregarded from the 1980s. And still not understood by today's 'Thoroughly Modern Liberals'. People who went back to older failed beliefs in reaction to the apparent success of Thatcher and Reagan.



Figures from '*The World Economy: Historical Statistics*' by Angus Maddison.

New Right success was only a success of Public Relations, helped by 'free' media dominated by a rich stratum that flourished in the new order. The 1980s saw no overall improvement in economic growth from the disorderly 1970s. Not in Britain or the USA, though rich people who were suddenly getting much larger slices of a very average cake were keen to claim otherwise. Were happy to pay huge subsidies to those economists willing to say things they wanted to hear.

If you look just at the money, it can seem as

[30] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/world/europe/viktor-orban-hungary-economy-election.html

[31] https://gwydionwilliams.com/46-globalisation/ukraine-kievs-five-day-war-machine/

[32] https://labouraffairsmagazine.com/past-issues/2015-magazine/2015-07-magazine/2015-07-ukraine-illegally-removed-its-elected-president/

if rich people create wealth and poor people consume it. But there is the awkward fact of growth statistics that show that more money going to the rich has little connection with the society as a whole getting richer.

I am not surprised that people who ignore conventional economics do better than those who think it a Law of Nature. It is largely fiction. It does not accurately describe even the most commercial and privatised economy.

As I said earlier, it is as if one read a detailed description of the game of golf, but then found that the actual game was football. Both involve a ball and grass and targets: you can always fudge the data. But you are not speaking truth.

As Few Britons as Possible?

The 'Windrush' scandal over Afro-Caribbeans long settled in Britain is part of a wider pattern. A lot of it has been about denying them welfare – strict Libertarianism would like to deny welfare to *everyone*. And part of it is a desire to deny British citizenship wherever possible:

> "A former British high commissioner whose baby son was initially denied a British passport after being born abroad, said it demonstrated a Home Office that defaults to refusal wherever possible.
>
> "Arthur Snell, who served as high commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago for four years, was left feeling 'powerless and nervous in spite of my privileged position' after his newborn was refused citizenship in 2011.
>
> "He said he was forced to reapply, and for two months his son was in effect stateless as he was ineligible for Trinidadian citizenship.
>
> "Snell, now a foreign policy consultant, told the *Guardian*: 'I want to stress, the inconvenience that I went through was nothing compared to what the *Guardian* has uncovered in terms of what happened to the Windrush generation, and I wouldn't want anyone to think I am trying to equate my own experience to that.'
>
> "But, he said, it illustrated that the Home Office defaults to refusal wherever possible. 'The process by which you demonstrate you may or may not have a right to be British is not at all straightforward, and – I suspect – part of that is designed to make it difficult for people.
>
> "'The Home Office appears to have a policy that says you, the applicant, must prove in the face of a very, very sceptical and negative institution, that you have this right. And, you can expect the Home Office to effectively answer in the negative wherever they can.'
>
> "As a diplomat, Snell said he was relatively well resourced with connections and able to re-apply and provide the documentation required, though the process took a couple of months and was expensive.
>
> "'But there are lots of people faced with these kinds of obstacles who don't have nearly the resources or the networks that allow them to keep fighting, pressing their claim,' he said. 'That seems to me how these injustices come about.
>
> "'Any individual could have looked at my case in about 30 seconds and have concluded what needed to be done. But, instead, it is almost as if the computer says no. And you are sent to the back of the queue. A system that does that falls hardest on the people with fewer resources, fewer networks, fewer connections.'
>
> "Many people would be forced to give up, Snell said. While he had not suffered in any significant way, 'there are lots of people who have suffered, lots of families who have been broken up'. He said: 'There is an issue about injustices that have been perpetrated.' It needed a blanket approach, he said, 'and as much as Theresa May will hate that, because she seems a bit obsessed with immigration, I think they have to accept that a large number of people have been wronged and they just have to swallow the pill and make a blanket change'."[33]

Snell is a white man who appears to have lots of black friends.

Theresa May and her kind are nasty little people. Having damaged Britishness, they have to find other people to blame.

I saw one very plausible explanation of how she thinks:

> "Theresa May hates change, while governing in an age of upheaval. It is an unfortunate combination: inflexible temperament meets volatile circumstance…
>
> "A Tory MP once told me that May had chosen the most poisonous chalice for Rudd to sip at the cabinet table in order to break her spirit. Her energy would be harnessed to the consolidation of the prime minister's Home Office legacy, while any ambitions she might have to copy May's route to No 10, perhaps as the champion of a liberal Tory faction, would be burned up in the process.
>
> "That struck me as paranoid at the time (although if there was such a plan, it appears to have worked). A former Downing Street aide reports a similar calculation behind the placement of Boris Johnson in the Foreign Office. In that case, May was exploiting not diligence but its opposite. Johnson's ambitions to be leader would be hobbled by the demands of a serious job, which would expose his congenital

[33] https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/apr/25/arthur-snell-high-commissioner-baby-denied-uk-passport-2011

unseriousness. (That, too, appears to be working)…

"The explicit fixation that led the prime minister into this moral quagmire is not race, but borders and their control. That is how the targets and crackdowns began. The view that frontiers should be policed is uncontroversial. But that is different from the cult of numerical precision and the fantasy of counting everyone in and out. That notion is fused with white-majority nostalgia, inseparable from the myth of the overcrowded island nation whose hospitality has been abused. And that often comes as a set with a gut feeling that national decline and racial diversity are somehow correlated. Those are common prejudices and I suspect they inform May's conservatism more than she admits, even to herself."[34]

Her other limit - perhaps shared with the author of the article - is not seeing that cash-driven business is the greatest subversive force of all. Business people also mostly hate change. But never let this feeling stand in the way of their quest for bigger profits. That was the grand insight made by Marx and Engels and first expressed by them in the *Communist Manifesto*. A fundamental truth that continues to operate even when it has become unfashionable to believe in it.

Knowing how to work a system is very different from knowing how that system works. Someone who understood real wealth-creation would be ashamed to make money by the legal but broadly unnecessary games that most of the rich Tories use to become rich.

Phony Economics

"Keynes pointed out that certain preconditions had to be in place for the butcher, the baker and brewer to be able to trade for mutual advantage. Unlike in the mechanical world of the neoclassicals, time and sequencing mattered. One of our trio of craftsmen would have to make the first move to buy from the others, and he would need to be confident that he would be able to finance his purchase by selling his own wares, which couldn't be assumed if he could see that the others had fallen on hard times.

"Keynes's commonsensical argument eventually overcame the resistance. Politicians and central bankers came to understand that it was part of their job to sustain enough 'effective' demand in the system. Right up to our own recent age of austerity, there would be intermittent attempts—by free market ideologues and political interests that gain from 'sound money'—to turn back the clock to a pre-Keynesian age.

"But these didn't stick. Margaret Thatcher was eventually forced to dilute her monetarism, and George Osborne's plan to eliminate the deficit in just five years had to be quietly stretched out into a 15-year effort. In politics, at least, reality has a way of tripping up ideologues.

"Academic economics, by contrast, never faced a comprehensive reckoning. Instead, general equilibrium was installed at the core of the textbooks. The great Keynesian insight about the big picture economy was simply attached to the side of the main structure—a sort of quirky outbuilding to the neoclassical temple…

"The ultra-individualistic attitudes and behaviours held up as normal by neoclassicism would, in other contexts, be regarded as psychopathic. Once right-wing think tanks realised they could deploy it to provide a convenient cover story for the maxim 'greed is good,' while hiding the dubious ethics behind a well-established wall of theory, they began to succeed where the more explicit moral exhortations of cheerleaders for ultra-capitalism like Ayn Rand had initially failed—in enabling the realisation of the 'neoliberal' agenda.

"Not all mainstream economics is right-wing, but its textbook is one which the right has found exceptionally useful. By working within it, the likes of Milton Friedman's 'Chicago School' have been vastly influential over 40 years. Their triumphs include the weakening of trade unions, the privatisation and marketisation of public services and utilities, restrictions in social security, and the individualisation of investment risk, via the replacement of final salary pensions with schemes that offer nothing more than a punt on the markets. The effects include increased inequality and an atomised social fabric."[35]

Friedman and the other built on the world view of Adam Smith, who believed in 'natural harmony'. In his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, he takes the conventional view that you need a government, as well as individual good feeling. But in *The Wealth of Nations*, he pioneered the idea that the government should stay out of economic matters as much as possible. Underwrite property rights, but do nothing about how property was used.

Scholars speak of an 'Adam Smith Problem'.[36] The oddity that he could praise moral concern in his first major work, and praise selfish greed in the second. My own view is that Smith thought they reconciled. Believed this because he supposed they had

[34] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/30/theresa-may-point-leader-stay-still-political-upheaval

[35] https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/the-case-for-a-new-economics

[36] http://cafehayek.com/2014/12/the-adam-smith-problem.html

the same outcome. That he had achieved a genuine unification of political thinking, in the same way that Newton had achieved a genuine unification of Galileo's mechanics of things on Earth and Kepler's unexplained laws of how planets actually moved round the sun. In the same way that Maxwell was later to discover that light was electromagnetic radiation when he discovered the true equations for electricity and magnetism, already understood to be two aspects of a single force. And in Smith's case, his two big books were grand expansions of things he had said in a series of public lectures that he gave when he was a discontented youth just back from Oxford. A man too honest to become a Christian minister when he no longer believed the creed.

Smith probably felt sincerely that the various things he'd said all added up to a single world-view. He may have been working on a third book that would have properly unified his earlier work. Perhaps knew that he had not yet found a good solution. All we know for certain is that he ordered that all of his notes and unpublished writings should be destroyed, apart from an interesting but unimportant essay on astronomy. And we only know details of his original lectures, because at least one person took notes and these were later published. Available today under the title *Lectures on Jurisprudence*.

Adam Smith *asserted* in *The Wealth of Nations* that an 'invisible hand' would guide selfish impulses to the same outcomes that he had seen as emerging unselfishly from 'Moral Sentiments'. But the core argument in this is missing. Rather, Smith uses two phony arguments:

1. People naturally want the best outcome, so let them find it.
2. Productive labour and profitable work are exactly the same thing.

On the first point, most people are biased in their own interests. A majority can be tempted to cheat. Mostly one is better off with a neutral umpire or referee – which is the norm in sports when they are played seriously.

On the second, he slips it in without explanation. He also admits that some of the 'unproductive' work is necessary. I expose this in a book called *Adam Smith: Wealth Without Nations,* published in the year 2000 but largely ignored. I have also put the main arguments on-line, as *Adam Smith and the New Right*.[37]

There is also observable reality. Either there are non-capitalist systems that work well, or there are a vast number of viable capitalist systems that we could choose instead of the Thatcher-Reagan line. The New Right trick is to slither between these two alternative meanings. Successful Mixed Economies are called 'capitalist' to prove the superiority of capitalism. But then redefined as non-capitalist, and so urgently in need of 'reform'.

[37] https://gwydionwilliams.com/48-economics/2434-2/

No society has ever allowed unlimited capitalism. Most have viewed it as something that needed regulation. The most successful economies are those that have heavy regulation of an intelligent sort.

Socialists reduced the social gap between the working class, middle class and upper class. The upper class took advantage to make ordinary people forget the need to defend their own interests. This disrupted what had briefly been a fair system:

> "Economists will tell you that wages generally increase with productivity – that you're paid in line with the value of what you do. This was credible from the end of the second world war to the 1970s, when productivity and hourly wages rose almost perfectly in sync. But according to research by the Economic Policy Institute, from the early 1970s to 2016 productivity went up 73.7%, and wages only 12.3%."[38]

And British lives are mostly at risk from our own government. A government that is determined to cut everything not needed by the more-than-millionaire class they represent. The 1980s saw the triumph of Tory backwoods ignorance.

(You knew nothing, Mrs Thatcher. You know nothing, Theresa May.)

Their calculations are hopelessly bad when you consider the long term outcome, which most of them do not. It's not 'what can the rich get away with grabbing?' The fools believe their own nonsense. They are baffled when others see it differently. They are baffled when it fails to work.

The views of the wider public are more confused. There have been many excellent changes since the 1970s, but also some regressions. You hear a lot about the pay gap between men and women, which is indeed unfair. But much less about the much vaster gap between the mainstream and the privileged.

What are people after? Attitudes are muddled. The government must stop bad things happening, but must not interfere with MY freedom. Or with anything I think I might like to do, even though I cannot.

95% of us have too little economic power to influence the lives of others. The rest potentially dominate, and have dominated since the 1980s.

A democracy would not agree to the sort of inequality we have had since the 1980s. It needed a lot of trickery.

Big Brother Can See Everything You Do In Public

The latest automated systems are now good enough to spot the faces of wanted people in a large crowd.

[38] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/13/american-economy-wage-suppression-how-it-works

People thinking in the Asocial mode of thought that emerged from 1960s radicalism find this a cause for panic. Not noticing that it has always happened. Was done by lurkers even before CCTY became common.

But it has certainly become more powerful:

"World's Most Valuable AI Startup Also Happens To Be Part of 'the World's Biggest System of Surveillance'

"Here's a group of people that just made more money than you've ever seen: Chinese company SenseTime recently announced that it raised $600 million in a recent fundraising round, doubling the company's valuation, Bloomberg reports. It's probably not a coincidence that the company also makes a tool that will help the government spy on its citizens.

"Yes, SenseTime specializes in facial recognition software, the kind that catches (then fines) citizens for jaywalking. In just three years, the company has apparently become extremely successful: 'If you've ever been photographed with a Chinese-made phone or walked the streets of a Chinese city, chances are your face has been digitally crunched by SenseTime software built into more than 100 million mobile devices,' Bloomberg writes…

"That almost certainly means SenseTime's software will become more sophisticated and ubiquitous. Facial recognition is quickly becoming so advanced that it evades attempts to outsmart it, leaving privacy-concerned citizens with fewer ways to avoid surveillance. That may already be true for people in China, a nation that seems to be trying to earn the title of Most Dystopian Nation on Earth."

The writer is worried that people can be prosecuted for Jaywalking. Which is a crime in China. It is also a crime in most US states, though often not enforced. (The US system was originally decentralised and many things, including murder, are crimes only at a state level and not the business of the Federal Government.) And jaywalking is not a crime in Britain. I think the British position is best, though it also depends on the British habit of not going too far. But if it should be a crime, it is silly to complain about efficient enforcement.

CCTV – Closed-circuit television – caused a panic when it first became widespread in Britain. The panickers ignored the fact that surveillance has always been a part of city life, and can be even more intensive in the countryside. I used to occasionally see people sitting in cars for no obvious reason, spying on someone. Probably a lot more I never noticed. But since I was doing nothing secret, nor anything private in public, why should I care?

When CCTV was a big deal, the Home Secretary was David Blunkett, notable for having made a political career despite being born poor and born blind. I did think of doing a 1984-style poster saying **David Blunkett Is Watching You**, complete with dark glasses and guide-dog. But I never got round to it.

US Republicans fall apart?

Paul Ryan as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives was briefly one of the most powerful men in the USA. Also an unsuccessful candidate for Vice-President in 2012. But now he is quitting at age 48, very young for US politics.

What's gone wrong for him? Someone in the *New York Times* claims to know:

"Mr. Ryan may be oblivious to the ultimate cause of his entirely free and unforced decision to spend more time with his kids, but it is, in a nutshell, Paul Ryan. He is truly the author of his own destiny…

"A governing Republican philosophy that sees it as a moral imperative to slash the budgets of social programs that benefit mainly older and working-class white people is bound, sooner or later, to drive a party of mainly older and working-class white people off a cliff. The slow-motion disaster now unfolding in Washington results in no small measure from Mr. Ryan's puzzling success in persuading Republican elites that they could flourish as the party of free-market, anti-redistributive convictions…

"Mr. Ryan's ideas have always resonated with the corporate Republican donor class. But they are indifferent, at best, to the challenges faced by the mass of ordinary Republican voters. For decades, American innovation and growth has been concentrating in a handful of big liberal cities. When the recovery finally came, it came to the Democratic metropolis. Most of the sparse Republican outlands never bounced back.

"Jobs were scarce, opioid addiction was rife, and life felt insecure. Indeed, life expectancy for many rural whites fell. A few red states graced with booming metro areas, like Texas, flourished under Republican regimes of low taxes and light regulation. But in more rural Republican states, like Kansas under Mr. Ryan's mentor and former boss, Gov. Sam Brownback, taxes had been cut to the bone, and the promised boom never materialized to make up for the loss and degradation of public services.

"Meanwhile, many tens of millions of loyal Republicans in struggling regions came to rely on Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, unemployment insurance and disability benefits just to scrape by. By 2016, the last thing grass-roots Republicans wanted was yet another bloodless, ideologically rigid iteration of the stale Reagan formula. But thanks to the intellectual leadership of dogmatically small-government conservatives like Paul Ryan, Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, that's mostly what they got. Except from Donald Trump.

"Mr. Trump spotted opportunity in the injured dignity of the Republican base and the feckless irrelevance of the establishment's agenda. He told Republicans shaken by the reality and risk of downward mobility that they were the only Americans who counted, and that they had been cheated and betrayed.

"He promised never to cut their Social Security or Medicare, and expressed admiration for single-payer health care. He took their side against immigrant rapists, murderous jihadis, plundering trade deals, dangerous city people and disloyal, condescending elites of all parties and persuasions. He promised to use his billionaire superpowers to rig the economy to their advantage. It didn't

matter that he is a transparently corrupt, bigoted, sexually abusive, compulsive liar. He offered the dignity of recognition, promised to fight, and won…

"The Republican majority was crippled from the start by the fundamental conflict between a government-shrinking agenda and the immediate material interests of Republican voters. Thus, the only thing Mr. Ryan has to show for his meekness in the face of Mr. Trump's corruption and bigotry is an enormous tax cut that leaves the level of government spending basically untouched, except for interest payments on the debt, which the Congressional Budget Office now estimates will outstrip annual military spending in five years."[39]

Politics In Command in the USA

"Trump lashes out at Amazon and sends stocks tumbling

"The president escalated his attack on Amazon, alleging the company shortchanges taxpayers and puts traditional retailers out of business

"President Trump escalated his attack on Amazon on Thursday, alleging the retail and cloud-hosting behemoth shortchanges taxpayers and attacking its use of the US Postal Service and its impact on traditional retailers.

"'I have stated my concerns with Amazon long before the election,' he wrote on Twitter. 'Unlike others, they pay little or no taxes to state & local governments, use our postal system as their delivery boy (causing tremendous loss to the US), and are putting many thousands of retailers out of business!'

"Trump's attack a day after Axios quoted a White House source claiming Trump is 'obsessed with Amazon' and had questioned 'if there may be any way to go after Amazon with antitrust or competition law'.

"At the White House press briefing on Wednesday, the press secretary, Sarah Sanders, said Trump wanted a 'a level playing field for all businesses' but noted 'there aren't any specific policies on the table at this time'.

"Shares of Amazon.com dropped slightly on Thursday after ending the previous trading session down 4.4% following Axios's news. The fall came as other tech titans have also seen sharp drops in their share price. Facebook has lost $80bn in value since February after the Observer's revelations about its involvement with political consultancy Cambridge Analytica stoked fears of tighter regulation in the US.

"Trump has previously taken aim at Amazon. In December, he called on the postal service to charge Amazon more to deliver its packages."[40]

What Trump says is similar to left-wing criticisms. The service is useful, but it is getting unfair advantages. But Trump hasn't applied a more social view to most businesses. His main political achievement has been yet more tax-cuts for a rich Overclass that already pay far too little tax. The worst possibly solution for a society that needs more state spending to flourish.

It's been claimed that his main reason is that Jeff Bezos, the founder and chief executive of Amazon, bought up and boosted the *Washington Post*, which destroyed Nixon. Which is undoubtedly after Trump.[41]

Korea – the USA's Forgotten War Crimes

"U.S. Dropped Plague-infected Fleas on North Korea in March 1952

"There is a great deal of misunderstanding between the people of the United States and North Korea. This is largely due to the lack of information the average U.S. citizen has about the suffering endured by Koreans during the Korean War, including war crimes committed by U.S. forces.

"While U.S. forces carpet bombed North Korea, bombed irrigation dams, and threatened nuclear attack, their most controversial action was the use of bacteriological or biological weapons during the war.

"For decades, the U.S. has strenuously denied the use of such weapons. At the same time, evidence of such use was kept from the American people. Even today, very few are aware of what really happened. Only in February 2018 was a full documentary report on germ warfare, prepared and written by mostly West European scientists, released online in easy-to-read format.

"Some former Cold War researchers have maintained that China, the Soviet Union, and North Korea perpetuated a fraud in their claims of germ warfare. They rely on a dozen or so documents supposedly found by a rightwing Japanese journalist in Soviet archives. But these researchers never counted on the fact that someday the public could read documentary accounts of the biowar campaign for themselves…

"In a controversial decision [made after World War Two] by the chief prosecutor for the IMTFE, Frank Tavenner, no evidence on biological warfare charges was allowed in the postwar war crimes trials. Supposedly this was because prosecutors could not link the germ warfare crimes to anyone who was specifically on trial. But in actuality, the U.S. had made a secret agreement with Japan's biological warfare experts not to prosecute them if they gave all their data and expertise to U.S. biological warfare and intelligence departments."

I remember reading somewhere an attempt to smear noted scholar Joseph Needham, who had said the allegations probably were true. This was supposedly bad because the stories were fake, according to a Soviet defector supposedly involved in faking it. Spooks who sell out to the other side couldn't possibly be doing something as wicked as feeding a false story they know they will be paid well for?

In any case, the story was certainly believed by the Chinese, who took precautions.[42] If it was a

[39] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/13/opinion/paul-ryan-donald-trump-republicans.html

[40] https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/mar/29/trump-amazon-attack-stocks-tumble-presidents-twitter

[41] https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/02/business/media/to-trump-its-the-amazon-washington-post-to-its-editor-thats-baloney.html

[42] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations_of_biological_warfare_in_the_Korean_War#Disease_prevention_measures

false story, it was a convincing one.

Germ Warfare In Confirmed History

It is an undisputed fact that the USA gave a free pardon to Japanese war criminals involved in a project called 'Unit 731'. And that this was denied and kept secret for many years, coming to light only when Chinese victims tried to get compensation from the government of Japan. Japan never denied what had been done, but tried to hush up the dirty deal the USA had done:

> "Unit 731 … was a covert biological and chemical warfare research and development unit of the Imperial Japanese Army that undertook lethal human experimentation during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) of World War II. It was responsible for some of the most notorious war crimes carried out by Imperial Japan…
>
> "It was officially known as the Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department of the Kwantung Army…
>
> "Unit 731 participants of Japan attest that most of the victims they experimented on were Chinese while a lesser percentage were Soviet, Mongolian, Korean, and other Allied POWs…
>
> "Instead of being tried for war crimes after the war, the researchers involved in Unit 731 were secretly given immunity by the U.S. in exchange for the data they gathered through human experimentation. Other researchers that the Soviet forces managed to arrest first were tried at the Khabarovsk War Crime Trials in 1949. The Americans did not try the researchers so that the information and experience gained in bio-weapons could be co-opted into the U.S. biological warfare program, as had happened with Nazi researchers in Operation Paperclip. On 6 May 1947, Douglas MacArthur, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, wrote to Washington that 'additional data, possibly some statements from Ishii probably can be obtained by informing Japanese involved that information will be retained in intelligence channels and will not be employed as 'War Crimes' evidence.' Victim accounts were then largely ignored or dismissed in the West as communist propaganda.
>
> "Japanese researchers performed tests on prisoners with bubonic plague, cholera, smallpox, botulism, and other diseases. This research led to the development of the defoliation bacilli bomb and the flea bomb used to spread bubonic plague. Some of these bombs were designed with porcelain shells, an idea proposed by Ishii in 1938.
>
> "These bombs enabled Japanese soldiers to launch biological attacks, infecting agriculture, reservoirs, wells, and other areas with anthrax, plague-carrier fleas, typhoid, dysentery, cholera, and other deadly pathogens. During biological bomb experiments, researchers dressed in protective suits would examine the dying victims. Infected food supplies and clothing were dropped by airplane into areas of China not occupied by Japanese forces. In addition, poisoned food and candies were given to unsuspecting victims, and the results examined.
>
> "In 2002, Changde, China, site of the flea spraying attack, held an 'International Symposium on the Crimes of Bacteriological Warfare' which estimated that at least 580,000 people died as a result of the attack. The historian Sheldon Harris claims that 200,000 died. In addition to Chinese casualties, 1,700 Japanese in Chekiang were killed by their own biological weapons while attempting to unleash the biological agent, indicating serious issues with distribution.
>
> "During the final months of World War II, Japan planned to use plague as a biological weapon against San Diego, California. The plan was scheduled to launch on September 22, 1945, but Japan surrendered five weeks earlier."[43]

When the story broke, the excuse given was that the USA had only been seeking to learn how to defend themselves against Germ Warfare attacks. Possible. But germ war is an old idea, and not foreign to US thinking. There is a long-standing Native American belief that traders intentionally sold them blankets from smallpox victims, though this is also disputed:

> "The sole documented instance of smallpox in the blankets was approved by an Englishman and instigated by a brace of Swiss mercenaries. White American settlers and soldiers had murdered large groups of Indians, including women and children, from the 17th century to the end of the 19th century with guns, poison and clubs—but they didn't use smallpox."[44]

But remarkably, there is solid evidence that before US Independence, the British Army fighting hostile Native Americans considered it and even left behind written evidence:

> "During the French and Indian War, Jeffery Amherst, 1st Baron Amherst, Britain's commander in chief in North America discussed the use of smallpox to wipe out their Native American enemy. In his writings to Colonel Henry Bouquet about the situation in western Pennsylvania, Amherst suggested that the spread of disease would be beneficial in achieving their aims. Colonel Bouquet confirmed his intentions to do so…
>
> "This event is well known for the documented instances of biological warfare. British officers,

[43] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unit_731

[44] http://www.historynet.com/smallpox-in-the-blankets.htm

including the top British commanding generals, ordered, sanctioned, paid for and conducted the use of smallpox against the Native Americans. As described by one historian, 'there is no doubt that British military authorities approved of attempts to spread smallpox among the enemy', and 'it was deliberate British policy to infect the Indians with smallpox'."[45]

The main problem was that plagues starting among Native American tended to spread back to the soldiers and the settlers.

Also existing as an embarrassing off-message fact is a short story called *The Unparalleled Invasion* by Jack London. This contemplates the extermination of the entire population of China after they dare to challenge the hegemony of the White Race. The Wiki summarises it thus:

"The United States and the other Western powers launch a biological warfare campaign against China, resulting in the destruction of China's population, the few survivors of the plague being killed out of hand by European and American troops. China is then colonized by the Western powers. This opens the way to a joyous epoch of 'splendid mechanical, intellectual, and art output'."[46]

I've read the story, which you can find via the Wiki entry. It is indeed just what the Wiki says. It parallels his essay *The Yellow Peril*, written while London was covering the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05. He expresses contempt for the native Koreans

"War is to-day the final arbiter in the affairs of men, and it is as yet the final test of the worthwhile-ness of peoples. Tested thus, the Korean fails. He lacks the nerve to remain when a strange army crosses his land."[47]

The Koreans had long been nominal vassals of both China and Japan, an irrationality ignored before Europe broke the long isolation and control of trade by both countries. No ruler of Japan would accept the Chinese Emperor as a superior, and no Chinese Emperor before the Opium Wars would allow trade without at least the pretence of Chinese overlordship. So Korea was functionally independent, but nominally served two superiors who each ignored the other.

An even weirder situation existed with the Ryukyu Islands, of which Okinawa is the largest land-mass. It united as a kingdom nominally subject to the Emperor of China. But in 1609 it was conquered by the Satsuma Clan, a powerful element in the fragmented government of Imperial Japan.[48] To maintain trade, the Ryukyu Kingdom acted as if it were still an independent entity paying tribute to China. I'd be surprised if the Chinese Imperial Government were really fooled, as some books on the matter assume. More probably it was convenient *not* to know. Profitable to collect bribes for *not* knowing.

Forced to modernise, Japan annexed the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1879, and started a real power struggle in Korea. The Koreans made an admirable attempt to modernise independently, even after the formal link to China was broken after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5. The peace treaty also awarded to Japan the island of Taiwan, long on the fringes of the Chinese Empire, but in the last few centuries heavily settled by Chinese from the nearby mainland.

The Russo-Japanese war was caused by rivalry over Korea, and also in Manchuria. To the astonishment of most of the world, it ended the long pattern of traditional governments in Africa and Asia losing quickly whenever they dared fight a European power. Japan won decisively, gained dominance in Korea, and annexed it after briefly trying to rule through puppet rulers.

From a modern viewpoint, Jack London's writings are a puzzling mix of works expressing gross racism and works showing real sympathy for oppressed non-whites. I now believe I have the answer: his thinking was a mix that is distant enough from our own that we find it hard to understand. Like Rudyard Kipling, he could show sympathy for what he saw as inferior peoples. He could even enjoy individual members of this inferior race getting the better of a conflict with unsympathetic whites. Even have one of his white heroes be guilty of unintended injustice, as with *The Hanging of Cultus George*. In short, he was '*the better sort of White Racist'*, insightful and disposed to be friendly towards individual non-whites in conflicts with whites. Just as modern writers might be on the side of a horse, a dog or a rabbit in conflict with humans, without being in doubt that these are inferiors.

Letting inferiors have small victories over unpleasant members of the Master Race was

[45] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_American_disease_and_epidemics#Disease_as_a_weapon_against_Native_Americans

[46] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Unparalleled_Invasion

[47] http://london.sonoma.edu/writings/Revolution/yellow.html

[48] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_Ryukyu

one thing. When the inferiors started asserting themselves as a group, it was another matter. Or at least Jack London saw it so:

> "We have had Africa for the Africander, and at no distant day we shall hear "Asia for the Asiatic!" Four hundred million indefatigable workers (deft, intelligent, and unafraid to die), aroused and rejuvenescent, managed and guided by forty-five million additional human beings who are splendid fighting animals, scientific and modern, constitute that menace to the Western world which has been well named the 'Yellow Peril.' The possibility of race adventure has not passed away. We are in the midst of our own. The Slav is just girding himself up to begin. Why may not the yellow and the brown start out on an adventure as tremendous as our own and more strikingly unique?
>
> "The ultimate success of such an adventure the Western mind refuses to consider. It is not the nature of life to believe itself weak. There is such a thing as race egotism as well as creature egotism, and a very good thing it is. In the first place, the Western world will not permit the rise of the yellow peril. It is firmly convinced that it will not permit the yellow and the brown to wax strong and menace its peace and comfort. It advances this idea with persistency, and delivers itself of long arguments showing how and why this menace will not be permitted to arise. To-day, far more voices are engaged in denying the yellow peril than in prophesying it. The Western world is warned, if not armed, against the possibility of it.
>
> "In the second place, there is a weakness inherent in the brown man which will bring his adventure to naught. From the West he has borrowed all our material achievement and passed our ethical achievement by. Our engines of production and destruction he has made his. What was once solely ours he now duplicates, rivalling our merchants in the commerce of the East, thrashing the Russian on sea and land. A marvellous imitator truly, but imitating us only in things material. Things spiritual cannot be imitated; they must be felt and lived, woven into the very fabric of life, and here the Japanese fails.
>
> "It required no revolution of his nature to learn to calculate the range and fire a field-gun or to march the goose-step. It was a mere matter of training. Our material achievement is the product of our intellect. It is knowledge, and knowledge, like coin, is interchangeable. It is not wrapped up in the heredity of the new-born child, but is something to be acquired afterward. Not so with our soul stuff, which is the product of an evolution which goes back to the raw beginnings of the race. Our soul stuff is not a coin to be pocketed by the first chance comer. The Japanese cannot pocket it any more than he can thrill to short Saxon words or we can thrill to Chinese hieroglyphics. The leopard cannot change its spots, nor can the Japanese, nor can we. We are thumbed by the ages into what we are, and by no conscious inward effort can we in a day rethumb ourselves. Nor can the Japanese in a day, or a generation, rethumb himself in our image.
>
> "Back of our own great race adventure, back of our robberies by sea and land, our lusts and violences and all the evil things we have done, there is a certain integrity, a sternness of conscience, a melancholy responsibility of life, a sympathy and comradeship and warm human feel, which is ours, indubitably ours, and which we cannot teach to the Oriental as we would teach logarithms or the trajectory of projectiles. That we have groped for the way of right conduct and agonized over the soul betokens our spiritual endowment. Though we have strayed often and far from righteousness, the voices of the seers have always been raised, and we have harked back to the bidding of conscience. The colossal fact of our history is that we have made the religion of Jesus Christ our religion. No matter how dark in error and deed, ours has been a history of spiritual struggle and endeavor. We are preeminently a religious race, which is another way of saying that we are a right-seeking race."[49]

Japan had been content to live within its own borders, until Europe made this impossible. Imperial China also tended to stabilise with land where the population could be wholly assimilate, plus some border territories that they needed to be safe from invasion. It was Europeans who went right round the world grabbing whatever they could. And they did it using a questionable version of Christianity to justify this. Roman Catholicism in its Spanish version began this, though there were also always protestors. Protestantism continued this, often carving up South Sea Islanders between the various denominations.

It was odd that Jack London, a confirmed atheist, should have started invoking Christ. Probably a way of asserting the supposed advantages of White Racist culture.

He also had a muddled idea of East Asian culture:

> "Here we have the Chinese, four hundred millions of him, occupying a vast land of immense natural resources — resources of a twentieth century age, of a machine age; resources of coal and iron, which are the backbone of commercial civilization. He is an indefatigable worker. He is not dead to new ideas, new methods, new systems. Under a capable management he can be made to do anything. Truly would he of himself constitute the much-heralded Yellow Peril were it not for his present management. This management, his government, is set, crystallized.

[49] http://london.sonoma.edu/writings/Revolution/yellow.html

It is what binds him down to building as his fathers built. The governing class, entrenched by the precedent and power of centuries and by the stamp it has put upon his mind, will never free him. It would be the suicide of the governing class, and the governing class knows it.

"Comes now the Japanese… One dips his forefinger in the dust and writes strange, monstrous characters. The other nods understanding, sweeps the dust slate level with his hand, and with his forefinger inscribes similar characters. They are talking. They cannot speak to each other, but they can write. Long ago one borrowed the other's written language, and long before that, untold generations ago, they diverged from a common root, the ancient Mongol stock.

"There have been changes, differentiations brought about by diverse conditions and infusions of other blood; but down at the bottom of their being, twisted into the fibres of them, is a heritage in common — a sameness in kind which time has not obliterated. The infusion of other blood, Malay, perhaps, has made the Japanese a race of mastery and power, a fighting race through all its history, a race which has always despised commerce and exalted fighting.

"They were brothers. Long ago one had borrowed the other's written language, and, untold generations before that, they had diverged from the common Mongol stock. There had been changes, differentiations brought about by diverse conditions and infusions of other blood; but down at the bottom of their beings, twisted into the fibres of them, was a heritage in common, a sameness in kind that time had not obliterated."

Chinese (all dialects) is very different from both Korean and Japanese. (Which were once thought related, but are now mostly viewed as a pair of Isolates.) In Korea, at least, it was common for the three peoples to hold written 'conversations' based on their shared use of the ideograms invented in China long before anyone devised an alphabet. The Japanese also evolved alphabets using the shapes of the ideograms to write the sounds of their own language, but all educated Japanese knew the Chinese original. London was sharp to pick up this little detail, which most outsiders miss. But on larger matters, he lets prejudices run away with him.

Japan copied various European models, according to what seemed to work. Many wanted liberalism: but at the Versailles Peace Conference after World War One they were refused an official Declaration of Racial Equality of the sort that the United Nations offered after World War Two. This pushed them towards aggressive imperialism, strengthened by the failure of Classical Capitalism in the 1930s.

Attitudes to the rise of China lead me to believe that specimens the better sort of White Racist are still around. They would never make the sort of crude White Racist remarks that London was guilty of – and he also said nasty things about Jews while also having close Jewish friends. But what's changed is more what's said rather than what's thought. Note that everyone accepts that China has no interest in extending its power beyond what it sees as its proper borders. They get told off for this by most Western liberals: they are expected to join in Western efforts to pressurise authoritarian regimes, futile though this has proved.

It's not clear if London knew that Japan's written language was of Chinese origin, though any Japanese could have advised him of that. It is unlikely he knew how many inventions vital to the rise of Europe had come from China originally: that needed the later work of Joseph Needham. But he had got from his mother a crude biological understanding of cultural differences: something that was widespread at the time among the educated as well. And London, though he posed as a common working man raised by personal genius, had an educated mother. An early example of the educated drop-out, and London became one himself after managing one year at the he University of California, Berkeley. His racism was mainstream, and the West's conversion to solid multi-racialism happened at the same time as Leninism or sympathy for Leninism was making vast progress among the world's non-white populations. Pure coincidence, the New Right assert, just as they do on dozens of other matters where the raw facts of history are full of off-message truths.

Modern left-winders find it hard to classify Jack London, precisely because he did not fit the categories they are familiar with. He belonged to the original mix of socialist politics found in the Second International, which sharply divided under the stress of World War One. Back in the 1970s, I wrote briefly about this, describing Bolshevism, Fascism and Moderate Socialism as the three main daughter products. Noting how George Sorel had links with all three.

Both Mussolini and Pilsudski began as men of the left, and there were many others. There are also some marginal survivals outside of the main three-way split. That included several brands of non-Leninist Marxist, one of

which survives in Britain as the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

It is best to think of London as an uncle to both Nazism and Bolshevism. Had he not died in 1916, from an accidental overdose or suicided in despair at socialist failure in the World War, it is anyone's guess how he'd have jumped. He would certainly have approved of Lenin, but most likely rejected Leninist discipline. (Just as Trotsky did, though the two of them are not otherwise very similar.)

Familiar forms are often the result of historic accidents. Had the famous dinosaur extinction gone otherwise, one might have small feathered creatures that ran on two legs but also had proper arms instead of wings. They probably had feathers for insultation and display before they were adapted for flight. That none of them survived may be no more than blind chance. If alternate worlds existed and humans could visit them, these creatures would confuse us greatly. And likewise Jack London, with his writing cutting across the categories we know. It is not just White Racism, once widespread among socialists. One of his lesser novels, *The Mutiny of the Elsinore*, now reads as very right-wing.

London wasn't wrong about there being gigantic cultural differences between China, Japan and the West. But these things turned out to be down to diffusion of culture, not biology. Japan didn't just master external Western forms: they have made some of the main 20th century advances in both Physics and Pure Mathematics. Much of it would mean little to the general public, but Hideki Yukawa correctly predicted the most familiar of the particles we now call Mesons. In the same spirit, Hindus under British rule also shone. You could not tell the story of new physics in the 20th century without including Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, who correctly worked out the maximum mass of peculiar dead stars called White Dwarves, and implicitly predicted the collapse of larger bodies into Neutron Stars or Black Holes. Likewise Satyendra Nath Bose, best known for the particles called Bosons, as well as Bose–Einstein statistics and the theory of the Bose–Einstein condensate. And Ramanujan made some brilliant discoveries about pure numbers that have since proved very relevant to advances physics.

China has been slower to adapt to the highest levels of science, though it is also possible that the various Nobel Committees are biased. But the confusing but vital matter of Parity Breaking was worked out by Tsung Dao Lee and Chen Ning Yang, though both were working in the USA.

It also noticed that this was an interesting contrast to the pattern shown by Jews in Europe. Christian converts came first as contributors to the culture, with Miguel de Cervantes writing *Don Quixote*. This is often classed as the first true novel in the West, and many would still rate it the best. You then had Baruch Spinoza, freethinking philosopher of Jewish origin. *Then* the convert David Ricardo and Karl Marx from a converted Jewish family adding depths to the superficial schema of Adam Smith, with Marx also making a superior link between philosophy, history, economics and socialism. And at about the same time, many other Jews began making major contributions to science and maths, though most were secular, sceptical or converts.

Jews in Europe were surrounded by the culture of Christianity, and so had an advantage in understanding what was going on when it generated enormous changes from within itself. The abstractions of modern science, largely invented in Italy and South Germany, were at first as confusing to them as to most of humanity. They were slower to adapt than people who shared the common culture of Latin-Christian Europe. Russians, with a parallel Greek-Christian culture, adapted at about the same time as Jews in the West did, producing some remarkable novels and plays. Also some science, notably Dmitri Mendeleev producing a Periodic Table that insisted that the observed 'octaves' of chemical properties were correct and that gaps would be filled by newly discovered elements, as indeed they were.

The various cultures of Asia took longer to adapt, with Hindus having an advantage because they lived within a state system created by Britons. The Japanese managed it more independently: the Emperor, symbol of traditionalism, commanded that useful elements of Western culture be accepting. Things were tougher in China: Japan was mostly revising things that it had borrowed from China many centuries in the past. Japan kept what it saw as Essentially Japanese. This split did not exist in China, and the Manchu Dynasty made things worse by maintaining an inherited hierarchy with Manchus at the top to the bitter end, the Revolution of 1911-12.

(I've discussed this in more detail elsewhere, as well as mentioning the

accidental advantages of Latin-Christian Culture. See *Traditional China Resisted Modernisation*.[50])

The need to shift these basics was certainly understood by Mao, and explains why a man who had previously been moderate and pragmatic within the Chinese Communist tradition suddenly took bold gambles like the Great Leap Forwards and then the Cultural Revolution. In the end China did adapt, though not on the basis that Mao had been seeking. And there is indeed only one race, the Human Race.

Sadly, London in his last years showed no signs of moving in the right direction. Genocide in *The Unparalleled Invasion*, written in 1910, is based solidly on the politics of *The Yellow Peril*. He even repeated the phrase "one had borrowed the other's written language", still unconcerned which way round it was. The main difference is that he now supposes that China would not stay under Japanese control.

Jack London did not stand along in seeing mass extermination as necessary and perhaps virtuous. I did a study of this in 2004, *British and US Genocide*,[51] showing how normal it was. But I accidentally left out one of the most recent cases: *The Marching Morons* by Cyril Kornbluth.[52] Written in 1951 and set several hundred years in Earth's future, it follows a long tradition in approving of superior humans exterminating inferiors. An unscrupulous individual revived from suspended animation in our time copies Nazi tactics by persuading the 'morons' they will be resettled, in this case on Venus. What makes this particularly bizarre is that Kornbluth himself was of Polish-Jewish descent. But it was highly popular, winning an award in 1965.

With such a background, it seems overwhelmingly likely that the USA did try germ warfare in their Korean War. And found, like the Japanese before them, that it does not work well.

A History of Lying in the USA

The USA isn't the only state to use falsehoods, but it has a bad record. Made worse by its odd belief that whatever it does is virtuous. This is part of the common Anglo heritage:

> "Benjamin Disraeli … said that, while he did not mind the Old Man having the occasional ace up his sleeve, he wished he would stop pretending that God Almighty had put it there. He was referring to his Liberal opponent W E Gladstone… Some of us … would make the same observation of Mr Tony Blair."[53]

Blair terrified the public, by saying that Saddam could deploy 'weapons of mass destruction' in as little as 15 minutes. What he didn't say was that this was battlefield poison gas, of the sort that Saddam had been using for many years against the Kurds. That he also used against the Iranians, when he was a Western ally and was rescued by the West when he was losing that war. George Galloway tried repeatedly to get the British Parliament to take notice while the Cold War was still going on. Blair was one of many who at that time did not want to know.

In the USA, trickery and medical abuses are much worse than anything known to have been done in Britain in modern times. It started even before the Cold War; for instance:

> "The US Department of the Treasury, in its capacity to enforce the Volstead Act [Prohibition], added deadly chemicals to the industrial alcohol that was being used by bootleggers as a substitute for grain alcohol. They hoped to make a few scofflaws sick and discourage others from drinking cheap hooch.
>
> "Instead, over 1,000 people died, just in New York alone, before the practice was stopped."[54]

There was also the *Tuskegee syphilis experiment*, which coolly observed the natural progression of untreated syphilis in rural African-American men in Alabama under the guise of giving them free health care from the United States government.[55] It ran till 1972.

Then there was Project MKUltra:

> "Project MKUltra, also called the CIA mind control program, is the code name given to a program of experiments on human subjects that were designed and undertaken by the United States Central Intelligence Agency—and which were illegal at times. Experiments on humans were intended to identify and develop drugs and procedures to be used in interrogations in order to weaken the individual and force confessions through mind control. The project was organized through the Office of Scientific Intelligence of the CIA and coordinated with the U.S. Army Biological Warfare Laboratories.

[50] https://gwydionwilliams.com/99-problems-magazine/traditional-china-resisted-modernisation/

[51] https://gwydionwilliams.com/44-fascism-and-world-war-2/british-and-us-genocide/#_Toc61184876

[52] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Marching_Morons

[53] https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/alan-watkins/alan-watkins-the-holy-war-being-fought-by-reverend-blair-9266131.html

[54] https://www.ranker.com/list/conspiracy-theories-that-turned-out-to-be-true/mike-rothschild

[55] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuskegee_syphilis_experiment

"The operation was officially sanctioned in 1953, was reduced in scope in 1964, further curtailed in 1967, and officially halted in 1973. The program engaged in many illegal activities, including the use of U.S. and Canadian citizens as its unwitting test subjects, which led to controversy regarding its legitimacy. MKUltra used numerous methods to manipulate people's mental states and alter brain functions, including the surreptitious administration of drugs (especially LSD) and other chemicals, hypnosis, sensory deprivation, isolation, verbal and sexual abuse (including the sexual abuse of children), and other forms of torture.

"The scope of Project MKUltra was broad with research undertaken at 80 institutions, including colleges and universities, hospitals, prisons, and pharmaceutical companies. The CIA operated through these institutions using front organizations, although sometimes top officials at these institutions were aware of the CIA's involvement."[56]

Also COINTELPRO

"COINTELPRO (acronym for COunter INTELligence PROgram) (1956-1971) was a series of covert, and at times illegal, projects conducted by the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) aimed at surveilling, infiltrating, discrediting, and disrupting domestic political organizations. FBI records show that COINTELPRO resources targeted groups and individuals that the FBI deemed subversive, including the Communist Party USA, anti-Vietnam War organizers, activists of the civil rights movement or Black Power movement (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Panther Party), feminist organizations, independence movements (such as Puerto Rican independence groups like the Young Lords), Black-owned bookstores, and a variety of organizations that were part of the broader New Left.

"The FBI has used covert operations against domestic political groups since its inception; however, covert operations under the official COINTELPRO label took place between 1956 and 1971. COINTELPRO tactics are still used to this day, and have been alleged to include discrediting targets through psychological warfare; smearing individuals and groups using forged documents and by planting false reports in the media; harassment; wrongful imprisonment; and illegal violence, including assassination. The FBI's stated motivation was 'protecting national security, preventing violence, and maintaining the existing social and political order'."[57]

More recently, the Nayirah testimony, used to start the First Gulf War and avoid the risk of a peaceful Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait:

"In her emotional testimony, Nayirah stated that after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait she had witnessed Iraqi soldiers take babies out of incubators in a Kuwaiti hospital, take the incubators, and leave the babies to die.

"Her story was initially corroborated by Amnesty International and testimony from evacuees. Following the liberation of Kuwait, reporters were given access to the country. An ABC report found that 'patients, including premature babies, did die, when many of Kuwait's nurses and doctors... fled' but Iraqi troops 'almost certainly had not stolen hospital incubators and left hundreds of Kuwaiti babies to die.' Amnesty International reacted by issuing a correction, with executive director John Healey subsequently accusing the Bush administration of 'opportunistic manipulation of the international human rights movement'."[58]

With all that, why not a little germ warfare? And if it stopped then, it was maybe because it was found ineffective.

An Englishman's Home is Now Unobtainable

The government has mostly been in the hands of the rich. Public spending for militarism and other tools of power get gigantic funding. But since the 1980s, they have followed the New Right view that there is no need to control markets. Things will work out OK.

Except they don't.

"One in three of Britain's millennial generation will never own their own home, with many forced to live and raise families in insecure privately rented accommodation throughout their lives, according to a report by the Resolution Foundation.

"In a gloomy assessment of the housing outlook for approximately 14 million 20- to 35-year-olds, the thinktank's intergenerational commission said half would be renting in their 40s and that a third could still be doing so by the time they claimed their pensions.

"It predicted an explosion in the housing benefits bill once the millennial generation reaches retirement."[59]

I'm sure Thatcher believed her promise of a 'property-owning democracy'. But she would have needed to put strong curbs on the housing market to get this. Instead she believed babbling fools who assured her that Market Forces would fix it.

But it is not really a Free Market. It is rigged to suit the rich.

[56] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_MKUltra

[57] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COINTELPRO

[58] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nayirah_testimony

[59] https://www.theguardian.com/money/2018/apr/17/one-in-three-uk-millennials-will-never-own-a-home-report

"The UK is at the centre of global corruption: shell companies that launder dirty money can be set up with ease. But when a whistleblower showed just how easy it is, he faced the full force of the law"[60]

The Tory Party is now dominated by people who flourish with the decay of the economy. Mostly not doing anything specifically illegal, but knowing that they do well within 'Upper London', a haven for the globalised rich, with many crooks among them.

Suicide By Trade

"The postwar global trading system risks being torn apart, the International Monetary Fund has warned, amid concern over the tariff showdown between the US and China."[61]

But Trump is reacting to the pain his voters feel. Reacting foolishly, but showing an awareness of the failure of the Establishment consensus.

If things fall apart, it will be the long-term result of 1980s deregulation. With money allowed to roam free, lots of people were hurt. People who had been looked after in the 1950s and 1960s. And hurt people often act foolishly and blame the wrong people. The only real fix is to end the pain, which I don't supposed Trump can do. But in 2020, Bernie Saunders just might.

Martin Luther King's Other Lost Dream

The *Guardian* recently published an abridged version of the civil rights leader's 1968 essay *We need an economic bill of rights*, published in *Look* magazine shortly after his assassination:

> "'We need an economic bill of rights. This would guarantee a job to all people who want to work and are able to work. It would also guarantee an income for all who are not able to work. Some people are too young, some are too old, some are physically disabled, and yet in order to live, they need income."[62]

The West could and should have moved in a much more socialist direction in the 1970s. In part it was spoiled by kids fantasising about a revolution that was never going to happen. I began the 1970s as one such, but learned better and later on supported feasible reforms like Incomes Policy and Workers Control. Reforms blocked by a Centre-Left that wanted 'business as usual' and a Hard Left that thought it would get in the way of Socialist Revolution.

In the USA, things were worse, with the probable leaders of such a reform variously assassinated. Bobby Kennedy was also moving left before being gunned down, seemingly by a loan crank.

I got an e-mail comment on how the less acceptable part of King's message was supressed:

> "I recall Coretta Scott King saying this on Beeb television some years after the assassination - she never appeared on Brit telly ever again. Her role was harmless 'grieving widow' – not 'thinking-Black-woman'."

The Right had their time of triumph with the Reagan-Thatcher line. Are now finding that it delivered them lots of money, but also trashed the social values that they claimed to be defending.

Informal segregation in the USA has got worse, with many black people seduced into blaming ordinary whites rather than trying to build a better world.

Democracy Failing

"A slim majority of Americans now believe that middle-income people pay 'their fair share' of federal taxes, up significantly from last year's reading. A large majority of Americans think corporations pay too little in taxes, although the view that corporations pay their fair share has edged upward. Americans' views about the taxes of upper- and lower-income people haven't changed much from last year, with more than six in 10 saying upper-income Americans pay too little, while about half say lower-income people pay too much."[63]

From 1962 to 2002, US citizens felt 2-to-1 that their taxes were too high, rather than 'about right'.[64] Hardly anyone thought they paid too little. From 2002 they have been much more evenly split. And now they mostly accept that the rich and corporations should pay more.

Fine as far as it goes. But will their Truly Wonderful System of Representative Democracy translate this into real politics? Lots of poor people voted for Trump, and he got together with a Republican-dominated Congress to put through yet another tax cut that mostly benefits the very rich.

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[60] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/22/the-sunday-essay-britain-headquarters-of-fraud

[61] https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/apr/17/world-trade-system-imf-trump-tariff-china-us-world-economic-outlook

[62] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/04/martin-luther-king-jr--economic-bill-of-rights

[63] http://news.gallup.com/poll/232484/slim-majority-says-middle-class-pays-fair-tax-share.aspx

[64] http://news.gallup.com/poll/232361/less-half-say-taxes-high.aspx

Cherish the Rich and Let the Ordinary Die

This seems to be the actual belief of the elites who have a grip on both big parties in the USA, and had it also in Britain before Corbyn.

Health care in the USA has many more gaps than the British system, despite the best efforts of politicians from Tony Blair down to Jeremy Hunt to privatise the NHS. Thatcher was always scared of touching the NHS: it was Blair who decided that it should get some silly reorganisations rather than the extra cash it needed.

In the USA, medical skills are mostly very high. But care often fails to get to poor people who need it. And middling or moderately-rich people can be reduced to poverty if a family member needs expensive treatment. Joseph Wambaugh has this as a plot-element in his novel *The Black Marble*: an upper-middle-class woman reduced to poverty by her mother's long illness. It is not just a matter of lacking health insurance. Health Insurance being commercial, it writes its guarantees so as to dump anyone whose needs become too great for corporate profit margins.

The magazine *Scientific American* recently explained what was happening:

> "These surging infections in the USA are not what the medical world expected…
>
> "There are many causes for these rising infectious tides, but researchers agree that a major driver is the country's ever-worsening income inequality. The disparity between America's highest and lowest earners exceeds that of virtually every other developed country, and it is still widening. The number of households earning less than $15,000 a year grew by 37 per cent between 2000 and 2016. Households earning 150,000 or more increased by exactly the same amount… People on these bottom rungs of society's ladder live in crowded, often unclean conditions, have limited health care, must work when sick, have poor nutrition, experience debilitating stress, and are more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol – all known infection risk factors.
>
> "What makes for large outbreaks, however, is that when illness starts spreading through America's urban poor, they do not stay there… More city-dwelling Americans take public transport and travel now than ever before, too, turning the nation into the equivalent of a crowded, germ-trading global market." (American Epidemic. Scientific America, May 2018.)

Not only do good people die needlessly. They also become pools of infectious diseases. But the rich like to save money by keeping workers in Service Industries as poor as possible. So the new epidemics can spread to anyone, though of course the poor are hardest hit.

All this is part of the Long Result of Reaganism. The man's intentions were genuinely conservative. The actual outcome was nihilistic.

In as far as the New Right thought about Long Results, they were wildly wrong. But stay afloat thanks to a rich business class that has been doing very nicely while the world worsens around them. Goes on generously supporting those infected with Asocialism.

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