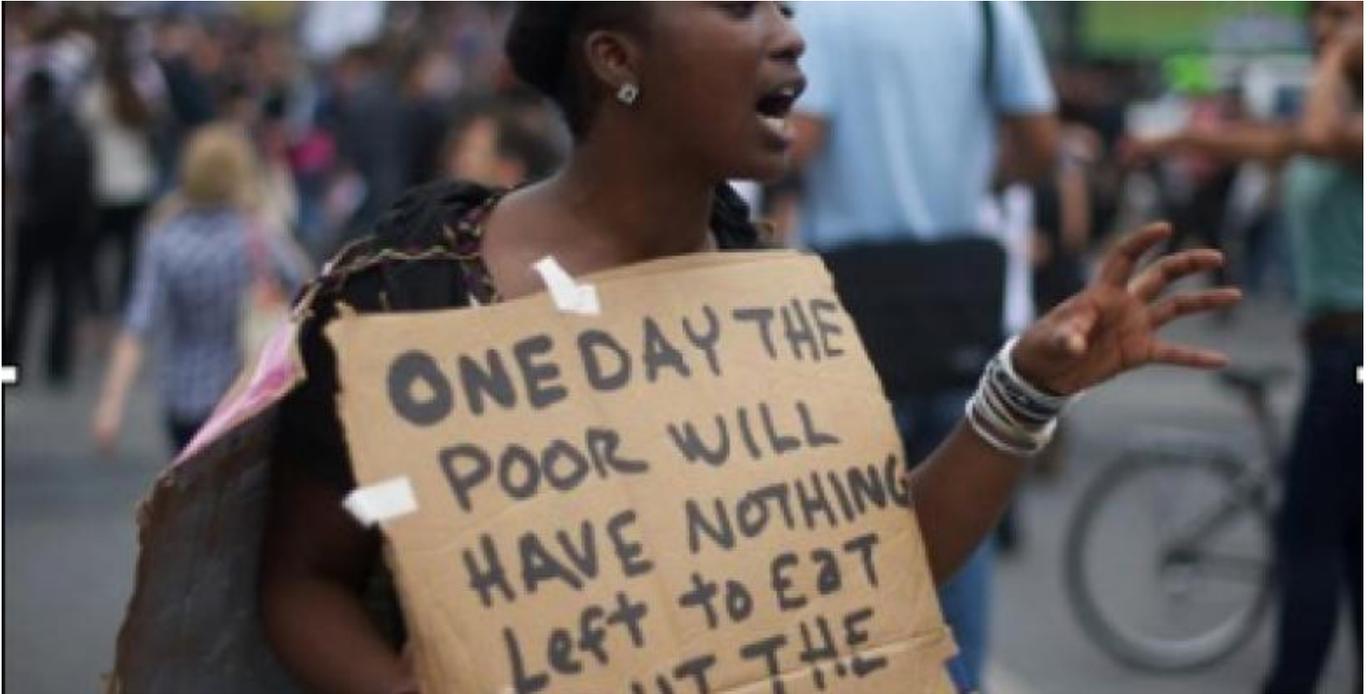


Great Britain: from bad to worse

By: Arnaldo Musa / Cubasi  
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British and other Europeans are very worried with the delayed, but impending exit of Great Britain from the European Union (Brexit). Both parties are doing their best to not get hurt, as they are still being hit hard by the new coronavirus, and no cure is seen on the horizon —there has been flaws in the vaccine they are supplying, lack of discipline in self-isolation and the rise of death and infected individuals resulting in the subsequent economic meltdown.

Although this is not of a great concern for the dominant class, it is certainly a bad omen to have an increasingly decimated population of workers, despite the resources these industrialized nations have, all of them followers — and some may deny it— of Donald Trump's empowerment in the United States, even though he is living his final days in the White House.

Despite the much-vaunted bonds of equity among all races and common denominations, inequities are still on the rise and Great Britain is the perfect example of it.

Those days where workers were taken into account are long gone, especially after Margaret Thatcher, The Iron Lady, who ignored workers represented a class by themselves, made them believe all belonged to the middle class, without existing big inequities.

And so it was demonized the working class in the United Kingdom and it is seen everywhere, although it has some special characteristics in the British soil: when the left wing claims more taxes for the wealthy people, the media reject such idea, encouraging jealousy, and the same occurs with immigration.

The cases of immigrants who got houses through social assistance to foster a racist discourse were given more relevance. The workers' pensions in the public sector are detailed —doctors, nurses, professors— to encourage jealousy in workers of the private sector. Thus, the mass media magnify cases to manipulate the public opinion. A 0,7% of the social spending is handled wrongly, but the people's perception is that this figure is actually 27%. This story is badly told.

In the opinion of young essayist Owen Jones, the concentration of power of the United Kingdom has returned to Victorians level. His book **Chavs, the demonization of the working class** was an ill, surgical mirror on the representation of the British working class nowadays.

“The demonization is inevitable everywhere due to inequities. Inequity is insane: the power and wealth should not be in the hands of a few. Inequity is rationalized and justified with the idea that the members of the elite deserve to be where they are because they are smarter and work more while those belonging to lower class also deserve to be where they are because they are fools and lazy. The more unequal is the society, the more demonization is needed to justify it.”

Actually, the case of the UK is key because it has been much more pressing especially after Thatcherism, with a change in the mindset where poverty and inequity were not regarded as social problems, but individuals' failures.

There is a very famous phrase stated by one follower of Margaret Thatcher: “In the 1930s, when my father lost his job, he decided to ride his bicycle and went to get a job.” So, go and “ride your bicycle” became a national cliché. The huge inequities and the fluctuation in the need to get a collective answer to the governmental individualism occur in other places, but it stands out in the United Kingdom, where the media back such discourse.

## **HATE-MONGERING**

The thing is they incite hatred in a very subtle way. Migrants are targeted as the group of people that the government waste money on. And that is enough. The subtle message is there.

With the boom of UKIP, the right-wing populist party, which focuses its debates on migration, the air in UK is getting dirtier. Nigel Farage, its leader, said he understood that people may be worried if a Romanian moved to their neighborhood. It brings to our memory to the 1960s campaign of the Conservative Party, which played on words: “If you want a black man as your neighbor, vote for the Labor Party.” The public opinion was horrified with it, but now those words are legit.

The left-wing has not successfully channeled the people's rage, which the right-wing —by means of populism— has targeted bankers, tax evaders or mortgage exploiters against their own neighbors, migrants, and workers of the public sector. They put all the blame on the basis and harm the public, like in France, where a powerful working class, which used to vote for the Communist Party, now supports the extreme right-winger National Front Party amid a devastating economic crisis.

Back to Jones' thought, the destruction of the idea that there is no a working class and all belong to a middle class is key. This idea, promoted by middle class politicians and journalists crush the debate on inequities because if there are no social classes, there is nothing to debate.

This is combined with the notion that those left out from the dominant middle class are lazy people unwilling to work. If we merge it with the fact that poverty and inequity have risen up, to which is added a change in the discourse that puts all the blame on workers, well, the die is cast.

The ghettoization of the working class in social low-cost houses caused those in need were separated from the rest of the population. It made easier the demonization of a whole sector. All the impoverished class are gathered in one place, and the rest of people just hear about them according to what it is being said on the news.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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