

Socialist Equality Party's Joseph Kishore and Tom Scripps speak at Marx's grave in London

Our reporters
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Joseph Kishore and Thomas Scripps visited the grave of Karl Marx in Highgate Cemetery, London this week.

Kishore is the national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party in the United States and the SEP's candidate for president in the US elections this year. He visited the UK to speak at the British SEP's election rally on Sunday June 30.

Scripps is the SEP's general election candidate for the constituency of Holborn and St Pancras, standing against leader of the Labour Party Sir Keir Starmer.

The pair recorded a short video explaining the significance of Marx's ideas today.

I'm Tom Scripps, the Socialist Equality Party candidate for Holborn and St Pancras in Britain's general election.

And I'm Joseph Kishore, the Socialist Equality Party candidate for president in the United States.

We are here at the grave of the great socialist and working class leader Karl Marx, in Highgate cemetery, London. Marx died on March 14, 1883, 141 years ago. The relevance of his life and work, however, is more clear and urgent today than ever before.

Marx's lifelong collaborator, Engels, in his speech at the grave of Marx, delivered on March 17, 1883, explained that Marx had uncovered the basic laws of human development and the specific laws of capitalist society. This included the theory of surplus value, which explains the origins of profit in the exploitation of the working class.

Marx was a scientist and a materialist philosopher,

but he was, Engels explained, "before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation."

Marx, the man, died 141 years ago. *Marxism*, however, has continued to evolve in the struggle within the international working class to develop the programme, perspective and practice of world socialist revolution. The continuity of Marxism lies in the history of the Trotskyist movement and the Fourth International, established by Trotsky in 1938, in opposition to the Stalinist bureaucracy, whose betrayals had led to catastrophic defeats. Trotskyism is the Marxism of the 20th and the 21st century.

Marx wrote at the early stages of capitalism. We are at the end of it. He lived at a time when he could send greetings to Lincoln as the representative of rising bourgeois democracy. Today, the United States is the cockpit of global imperialist war and the centre of a global descent into barbarism. Global war threatens nuclear annihilation, and genocide has once again entered the political vocabulary. The ruling class is turning to fascism and dictatorship. The levels of social inequality and capitalist exploitation are unfathomable.

As Marx understood, however, capitalism produces its own gravediggers. The international working class is not only an oppressed class, it is a revolutionary class. United and conscious of its interests, the working class is the most powerful force on the planet.

The central task is, as Engels explained, to make the

working class “conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation.”

This means building a socialist and revolutionary leadership, grounded in Marxism and the immense experiences of the international working class since his death. It means the rebuilding of a worldwide socialist movement, which can only take place under the leadership of the Fourth International.

The Socialist Equality Party in the US and the UK, and the International Committee of the Fourth International throughout the world, have immense confidence that workers will succeed in throwing off the shackles of capitalist oppression and establishing the basis for a society based on equality.

In the coming years, the words of the Communist Manifesto will once again be inscribed upon the banner of great struggles throughout the world: “Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.”

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