

**CASH AND CARRY** a video-script by Andrew James Paterson @ 1999

*Camera reveals two identical appearing gentlemen, Mr.A and Mr. B- both portrayed by myself the performer. Mr.A occupies the left half of the frame and Mr. B the right. (Note, A and B are not identically dressed.)*

A: Hello, B

B: Hello yourself, A. I presume you now want me to apologize for labeling you a capitalist

A: Well, I would appreciate it. But I certainly don't expect apologies from *you*

B: When I accused you of being a capitalist; I was merely referring to your propensity for analyzing all examples of human interaction in economic terms.

A: But.....then it makes just as much sense for you to accuse me of leftover Marxism. Or, at least, label me a dialectical materialist.

B: Listen, A, in a post-ideological and post-historical global world there is no such animal as a non-capitalist economy. There are only players and non-players.

A: That's too neat, B. As well as too cynical.

B: *You're* calling me a cynic? I'm merely a realist. Even die-hard Communist dictatorships discreetly encourage black-market economies in order to keep the folks happy. Besides, A, you might recall that dialectical materialism allows no room whatsoever for psychoanalysis and non-reproductive sexualities?

*Cut to a surveillance-flavoured shot of a waiter in a bar, being harassed by a customer. The male customer persistently commands the waiter to go get more water for him. This psycho-drama continues until the waiter visibly swears at the customer (There is no audio for this exchange. The audio from Mr.A and Mr. B's conversation continues under the footage of the waiter and his customer. Other cuts from the telephone conversation will also work in this manner with regards to audio.)*

A: And so on and so on. Look, B. One of our illustrious staff members is taking his job literally. And I say good for him!

B: Oh please.. It appears to me as if our long -term employee has forgotten that his job-description includes bantering.

A: Bantering, B. Not *bartering*. Banter indeed goes with the territory. But not barter.

B: Oh? And why not?

A Because the service industry worker, not unlike the squeegee kid and the grocer and the prostitute and many others, is a player in the immediate or direct economy rather than in the digital economy.

B Cash economies are direct and digital economies aren't?

*Cut back to Mr. A and Mr. B on the telephone to each other.*

A: Yes, damn it. The waiter provides a service requested by the customer. The waiter makes an investment that the customer must reimburse him for.

B: Well, Mr. A, those are the basic laws of investment. That principle applies to managements as well as to workers.

A: Yes, but the worker is employed by the management.

B: And....for more than just a few people in the global economy; unions have long become just another annoying management structure. Unions are irrelevant bureaucracies. They may have served a purpose back in the days of Emma Goldman but that was almost a century ago. Now they're just top heavy, which makes them the same as management.

A: Oh. So we've come back to the economy of desktop entrepreneurs as the radical third way alternative? Give me a break!

B: Well, socialism was dependent upon nationalization and nationalization is as ludicrous now as nation-states themselves! Interpersonal and inter-corporate exchanges are conducted internationally via technologies that, whether you like it or not, are pretty well impossible to regulate or control.

A: But, immediate exchanges will always involve cash unless the principals involved negotiate the exchange of other valuables.

*Cut back to the waiter and the customer. After the customer has given the waiter some visible cash; they- now have sex in the staff washroom. The customer is servicing the waiter.*

B: Our long-term employee is I presume acting locally while thinking globally?

A: Absolutely.

B: You know *me*. I've always thought anarchy could only be feasible with the elimination of the money system.

A: You mean that barter economies could eventually replace the old cash and carry?

B: Sure they can. You have something I want and I have something you want. Therefore, why can't they be of equal value and why can't we then make a perfectly fair exchange?

A: In principle, why not indeed?. But... that particular exchange is between individuals. What about among communities or societies? The elimination of money still wouldn't eliminate the profit motive.

*Cut back to Mr. A and Mr. B on the telephone.*

B: I wouldn't make that generalization, A. By privileging the objects of exchange over the *currency*, the currency loses its value outside of the actual transaction and ultimately becomes irrelevant.

A Too naive by half, B. Individuals will still have to assign values to their properties or their merchandise. Therefore, how can arguments and disputes about value be avoided?

B: If the government is truly self-government; then what would give anybody other than the individuals or the society any authority to assign values?

*Cut back to the waiter and his sex-customer.*

A The buyer will always want the value to be lower than the seller. But, I'm a cynic and you're an optimist. The waiter who inverts the equation while taking a break in his shift is the realist.

B Because he knew what the customer was really ordering all along?

A You've got it, Pontiac.

B Well, let's drink to realism.

*Cut back to M.A and Mr. B hanging up telephones and then tipping their drinks to themselves. Then fade down.*