



Rudolf Steiner / Maynard Keynes Builders of a World Economy

with Christopher Houghton Budd, PhD.

Saturday / 2 June 2012

Rudolf Steiner House, 35 Park Rd, London (near Baker Street Tube)

At the end of the First World War, Rudolf Steiner described how the Anglo-American community would dominate social life for a hundred years through an economics seemingly devoid of spirit. But he also said the same people had the talents to do the opposite. Now we are nearing the end of that time, what is the situation?

Steiner said this in the context of his conception of society as having three independent yet coordinated spheres, each with its own modality of governance – an idea strongly resisted then and ever since. And yet, the world economy is now dominated by the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO, a fact that shows that the principle of economic self-governance, far from being strange, is the basis of modern economic life.

10:00	The Unspoken Mission of John Maynard Keynes
11:00	Pause
11:30	Liquidity, Capital, Governance IMF, World Bank and WTO
13:00	Lunch
14:00	UN or a Choir of Peoples?
15:30	Pause
16:00 to 17:30	The Role of Britain

Except that the way these institutions are understood disguises the deeper possibility Steiner pointed to. On the other hand, prior to their birth in 1944 they were conceived by one of their main architects, the British economist John Maynard Keynes, as something other than they became. Not as instruments of foreign policy but as the organs of a world economy. In this sense, can Keynes be seen as giving practical expression to what Steiner hoped for?

The aim of this workshop is to explore the possibility that today's economic life is more autonomous than we think, and to see if the supposed gulf between current realities and what Rudolf Steiner had in mind is as wide as we sometimes believe.

The day will begin with an introduction to Keynes's work in the light of the part played in history by Joan of Arc. It will then look in more detail at the origin, purpose and latent meaning of the IMF, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation.

Why now? Because, having become used to telling the peoples of the world how to behave, those institutions now need to listen to what the different peoples of the world themselves see as their next steps. For this, alongside the need for a world economy, in the sense Rudolf Steiner meant it, one needs to imagine its corollary – a choir of peoples. Each people of the world has to sound its unique tone, one that no other country can sound. The global financial crisis has made this need plainer than ever.

In the case of Britain, what is its task, other than to continue the geo-political roles born of its erstwhile imperial past?

As part of the work of the *Economics Conference of the Goetheanum*, this seminar is one of several being held in 2012 in different countries.

Open to all. No formal knowledge of economics required.

Cost: £35 (£25 students) payable on day. Less 10% if paid on or before 26 May by cheque to 'CFAE Limited' or Paypal: admin@cfae.biz.

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