

Democracy

Bob Dixon

April 23rd, St George's Day, saw the biggest non-demonstration that London had never seen.

About two million people didn't march
and didn't carry banners proclaiming:

WE WANT WAR!

and KILL ALL THE BLOODY FOREIGNERS!

The fascist banners were nowhere, neither saying,

KEEP BRITAIN WHITE!

nor IF THEY'RE BLACK

SEND THEM BACK.

Other banners didn't say,

POLLUTION IS FUN

FUCK THE FISH!

nor did they say,

MAKE WAR, NOT LOVE!

Many of those who didn't march

Hadn't made their own placards.

One didn't say:

ACTUALLY, I LIKE SEEING FOXES

TORN TO PIECES ALIVE, ACTUALLY

and another didn't say:

MAKE BRITAIN GREAT AGAIN

BRING BACK THE THUMBSREW, THE RACK,

THE BIRCH AND THE NOOSE

Another didn't say:

SEND BACK BOGUS ASYLUM SPONGERS AND

SCROUNGERS AND TERRORISTS MILKING THE

SYSTEM SWAMPING BRITISH CULTURE AND

LIVING ON HAND-OUTS FROM BRITISH

TAX-PAYERS IN LUXURY COUNCIL FLATS

AND HOLIDAY CAMPS WITH FREE HEALTH

CARE AND EDUCATION IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS

As the throng didn't move along Piccadilly,
 their silent chants
 didn't bounce off the façades
 of the huge buildings.
 We didn't hear:

*What do we want?
 Blood!
 When do we want it?
 Now!*

nor:

*One two three four
 give us war give us war
 two four six eight
 love is dead give us hate*

Nobody was stirred by this non-demonstration.

The prime minister, however, heeded their
 silent protest,
 noted their absence from the lobbies
 and lack of petitions and letters
 and promised to give an ear to their unvoiced cries
 – in the interests of democracy.

Bob Dixon died in 2008. We are grateful to his publishers, Artery Publications, for permission to reprint this poem from Make Capitalism History: Poems and Other Communications. More of Bob's poems will be read at a Poetry and Music Evening in Solidarity with Venezuela at the Embassy's cultural venue at Bolivar Hall (nr. Warren St. station) on 16 April at 7.00pm.