

# THE PROCESS OF BRITAIN, STALINISM AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE LEFT IN THE LABOUR PARTY

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*"To extricate its Labour leaderships from their historic and bourgeois entanglements, the British proletariat needs the massive intervention and counterbalance of the world proletariat. The proletariat in Britain – like that in the United States – needs the amplification of the world class struggle on a much greater scale than ever achieved up to now."*

*J. Posadas*

No more progress is to be had in capitalism. In Britain, social progress has come to a stop. The struggle of the masses has not stopped of course, and neither has the class struggle, but the progress of the country has stopped.

## **The Labour Party has to be transformed:**

Britain is a country where the Labour Party channels 99% of the forces of the proletariat and militant petty bourgeoisie. This leaves no space for other currents and tendencies. All the detractors of the Labour Party end up having to compete with it, and in the end, there is no room for them. What there is room for however, and a lot of it, is a revolutionary tendency. Be sure that such a revolutionary tendency will be formed in Britain. This is not going to happen immediately, but it will.

There is no future for the left groups which compete with the Labour Party. Their very position outside Labour marginalises them. And from the margins where they put themselves, they are eventually forced to concede to capitalism; or to make alliances with it. Having robbed themselves of a future in this way, they end up being no better than Labour itself.

The only possible way ahead is social transformation. Those who agree with this must recognise the need to involve themselves in the class struggle. In Britain, the process of the class struggle constantly reiterates the centrality of Labour. The class struggle educates the proletarian vanguard, the proletariat itself, the progressive sectors of the petit bourgeoisie, the exploited sectors in the countryside, and others. Every struggle there reiterates the need to organise a revolutionary leadership. For Britain to retake the road of social progress<sup>1</sup>, the Labour Party has to be transformed.

What weighs in Britain - and every day more than before - is the pressure, the influence and the advance of the world revolutionary process. This guides the activity of our British comrades. The activity of our British section<sup>2</sup> is not strictly determined by what happens from day to day, or even by the development of a Labour left. It is determined by the tasks that the development of the world process of the revolution renders necessary in Britain.

### **Stalinism was alive in Britain well before Stalin :**

After 1924, had the leadership of Stalin shown the will to

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<sup>1</sup> J Posadas analyses elsewhere how Britain broke from feudalism and the dogmas of Catholicism, and then, pioneered a scientific development that revolutionised the world. The social progress this led to was relative, but it was decisive in comparison with feudalism. Editorial.

<sup>2</sup> The British section of the Posadist Fourth International was formed by J Posadas in 1962. See [posadiststoday.com](http://posadiststoday.com).

understand Britain, it would have taken the side of the British Labour vanguard and encouraged the development of the young Communist Party. We are talking of the years before, during and after the 1926 General Strike.

At that time, a proper Soviet leadership would have helped organise a revolutionary leadership in Britain. Instead of this, the Stalin leadership worked in opposition to it. From that moment on, and worldwide for related reasons, a process of communist stagnation and retrogression settled. It was as part of this, that the British Communist Party failed to develop. The conditions had been very favourable to the young British Communist Party, but the growth of Stalinism stifled it.

We are in another stage today <sup>(1979)</sup>, but the British Communist Party<sup>3</sup> and the Labour leaderships seem incapable of change. The core of their policies being that of conciliation with capitalism. Leaving the Communists aside for a moment, why are the Labour leaderships so closely tied to capitalism? We are going to look at two reasons for the apparent strength of the Trade Union and Labour apparatus in Britain.

At the start of its development, British capitalism was able to intervene in, and greatly interfere with the growing political structures of the British working class. The bureaucratic structure of the Labour apparatus – essentially one of conciliation with capitalism – started its development as part of the rise and growth of British capitalism. As the latter stayed long powerful and unchallenged, the bureaucratic structure of Labour became solidified. We keep saying, and we repeat, that this solidity of Labour structure did not come - and does not come - from any ability on its part. The role of the Trade Union and Labour bureaucracy is to conciliate with capitalism. This is its ability. It has no other. And indeed, if you boil Stalinism down

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<sup>3</sup> The author refers here to the CPB, as it became in 1977. Editorial.

to the policy of conciliation with capitalism, you realise that Stalinism has been for many years in the Labour movement, and well before a Stalin came into the world.

The second reason for the apparent strength of Trade Union and Labour apparatus is this: When Stalinism imposed itself in the USSR (after 1924), Stalin's erroneous policies gave to the capitalist class countless opportunities to reassert itself against the working class. In the Trade Unions and the Labour organisations of Britain, the bureaucracies came back<sup>4</sup>. This is how you have these bureaucracies standing before you now. They will keep standing until they are removed.

Aware of this, the bureaucrats watch out against the development of left currents in the Trade Unions and the Labour Party. This is the bureaucrats' role, and they have no other. The capitalist class rewards them for the service they render in stopping the formation of Left Labour and Trade Union tendencies.

### **The shocking backwardness of the Labour apparatchik :**

Stalin's policies continued over many years, consisting in an alliance between the first Workers State and world capitalism. As we have seen, this crippled the British Communist Party. The rest of this history is as follows: In attracting fewer dedicated militant workers, the British Communist Party became less able to repel the combined attack of bosses, Tories and Labour right wings. As the workers and their organisations became less defended, they all became more repressed.

As we have seen, it is not that the working class had been weak or that the bureaucratic leaders had been strong! The latter had

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<sup>4</sup> The had almost been eradicated in 1926. Read Trotsky on the defeat of the British General Strike.

been mostly cast aside in 1926! The position is that, during the Stalinist years, the layers of pro-boss workers re-formed and reinforced the bureaucratic apparatuses. What we call here 'apparatuses' are cleavages of workers and Labour administrators incentivised by the capitalist class, with no idea, no political or ideological contribution to make. These people lead the Trade Unions and the Labour Party 'apparatuses', but the workers do not support them. At every strike and protest, the workers oppose them. The strength of these apparatuses is that which they inherited it from the past.

**The history of British imperialism stands behind the bureaucratic 'apparatuses' :**

The apparent slowness in the process in Britain has historic causes. The speed of social change does not depend on us, or on the Communist Party. And whilst it is true that Stalinism played the role of crippling the socialist transformation of the world, Britain included, more ancient factors intervened as well.

Whilst British imperialism expanded in the world, the foundations were laid for extensive layers of workers' aristocracy to rise on top. It is from these foundations that strong structures of Trade Union and Labour bureaucracies emerged. This period lasted for quite some time, giving to these structures a particular opportunity to develop and consolidate.

After WW2, the colonial revolution liberated territories previously conquered by British, French and Portuguese imperialism. In the European countries, this revolutionary transformation was brought to the attention of the Trade Union leaderships. These hardly noticed or rather, they used their insulating layers of bureaucracy to try and avoid noticing. They still do this today (1979). You can still find today workers' leaderships who act in the manner of 100 years ago. In a country like Britain, this is a shocking backwardness.

Mind that this backwardness does not come from the British proletariat! It does not come either from the lower layers of the petit bourgeoisie – the latter being increasingly sensitive to the world's examples of human liberation. The backwardness resides in the power structures which the working class inherits. These structures were built in the past, and built to oppose change. In most Trade Unions and the Labour Party, the leading posts go to those 'workers' who make it their business to stop the example of revolutions elsewhere from influencing their members...

In most of the organisations of the working class, these particular 'workers' are hoisted into leading posts for the purpose of separating the workers from their ability to make social progress, revolutionary progress above all.

At any given time, the relative strength of these 'leaders' gives a measure of how much capitalism still weighs in the workers' organisations. The erroneous policies of Stalin allowed the apparatus of these bureaucrats not only to rebuild, but to get more control than they had in the past. All this to explain why change is not bound to be easy, or quick, in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions.

It is no surprise therefore that the Labour leaderships – the left Labour leaderships included – are prone to weak and superficial positions. What do they see around them to show a better way? They might have looked up to the Communists at one time, but the notions of the Communists were never any guide. This worsened in recent times, with the Communists coming up with 'Eurocommunism', 'Pluralism' and the 'Independence of Europe' [from the USSR]. To the Labour and the workers' vanguard, these formulas bring no example or enlightenment; what they bring instead is the absence of ideas, absence of examples, absence of political orientation and lack of understanding.

## **The British Trade Unions and Labour Party started life in a rising capitalist world :**

The Trade Unions – and then the Labour Party – came about in world dominated by capitalism. Their industrial and class experience became formed in that world. The struggle to advance the interests of the British working class started in a world dominated by British capitalism<sup>5</sup>. This partly explains how, in the Labour movement of today (1979), one still finds strong attitudes of reserve and suspicion when one evokes revolutionary ideas, revolutionary events, revolutionary methods, movements, programmes and the likes.

The Communists' formulas of 'Eurocommunism' and 'Pluralism' have little effect in the British workers, but they influence the Labour leaders! To the latter, these notions are declarations that the Communists no longer want Communism.

If the Communists are 'pluralist' now - and are happy to team-up with the capitalists, what else to expect from the Labour Party? If the Communists abandon their programmatic and socialist values, who is there to show the socialist road to Labour? If the Communists no longer believe that "there is only Communism *or* Capitalism, and nothing in between"<sup>6</sup>, who will uphold this scientific conclusion for Labour?

Profound misconceptions in the top Labour and Trade Union leaders have been stimulated by communist surrender. When dealing with the Labour leaders and their policies, it is not enough to criticise them for being retrograde and backward. The

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<sup>5</sup> In other documents, the author deepens this idea roughly as follows: For almost 2 centuries, the British proletariat saw no other proletariat around. (Editorial note).

<sup>6</sup> The entire works of J Posadas explain how there cannot be another form of private property between private and collective. The historic antagonism between the two is leading to world war. The *mixed economy* in Yugoslavia did not lead to a new (third) form of property. It led to the violent re-imposition of private property by capitalism. (Edit. Note).

conditions that led to this situation must be taken into account. You can find any number of Labour leaders who are not keen on Socialism, certainly; but what is there in the world to edify them? Or to edify those among them who can be edified? Not the Communists - because they encourage socialist retreat.

**The duty of Communists is to showcase dialectical materialism :**

In the last period, the leaders of the Soviet Union vaguely exhorted the European Communists "to take power". But what is the good of this if the Communists want nothing more than a pluralist society with the capitalists? The Communists talk also of 'Eurocommunism', a notion which they explain by wanting more 'European' distance with the Soviet Union. The Labour leaders are not going to become better Socialists on that account. Everything that casts doubt on Soviet development - like supporting the dissidents in the USSR and Czechoslovakia - weakens the socialist cause, and strengthens its enemies.

The Labour and workers' leaders who observe such behaviour in the Communists feel vindicated in their disposition to spurn the dialectical ways of thinking and the didactic ways of organising. It is not true that Britain is a world apart. It is entirely part of the world! As in any country, if not even more than in any country, everything that happens in Britain emanates from world events. To succeed in their most important projects, the left-wing Labour leaders will need to keep their eyes on the big picture. Learning from others in the world for instance; and above all, working in solidarity with the workers of other countries.

The British Labour vanguard itself is the result of world conditions! This particular point must be analysed much more than is being done. In the world and in Britain, there is not enough of the necessary proletarian literature dedicated to this.



Few are those who draw conclusions from the experience of the world's proletariat with the aim of applying it in Britain. About the Russian Revolution for instance, the British workers know about Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev and others - but not *why* they were *all* assassinated!

**Historic factors are still slowing down  
the construction of genuine workers' leaderships:**

When the Communists refer to the Russian Revolution, they do not mention Trotsky, and they do not mention that the Bolshevik leaders of the Russian Revolution were all murdered. The British workers have heard of Trotsky. They know of Trotsky's fundamental and leading role in the Russian Revolution, but they also observe how his name is ignored and despised in the Soviet Union and the Communist parties. This leaves the vanguard of the working class in a state of suspension, with no explanation or intellectual support. It leaves it with the feeling that no one counts on its ability to think.

When ordinary British workers become Trade Union and Labour leaders, all this weighs on them. We must remember this when we criticise them. Our British comrades criticise sharply the limitations of the Callaghan (Labour) leadership and the timidity of the Labour Left. This is understandable certainly, but the comrades must give more importance to the underlying reasons.

Our International<sup>7</sup> developed the capacity to understand these questions because it constantly prepares theoretically and politically. In society at large, the workers receive no theoretical and political preparation for their role as class. When they become Labour and Trade Union leaders, it is without such a preparation. The assessments and important decisions they must make, and the problems that they must resolve, are all

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<sup>7</sup> The Trotskyist-Posadist IV International. J. Posadas died in 198. See [posadiststoday.com](http://posadiststoday.com).

rooted in capitalism. Pressed for solutions, these leaders look for answers in their immediate surroundings or in their empirical experience. This is how they resort to expedients. We do not say this to justify them but to understand their behaviour.

A set of historic conditions have stood in the way of the construction of genuine workers' leaderships. If we analysed these conditions here, it was to explain the sort of difficulties that the Labour left is having to confront in its struggle for socialist change.

**The only sustenance left to capitalism  
is the lack of workers' leadership :**

A crisis rages in most of the Communist Parties. The Portuguese Communist Party has the most advanced positions; but the Spanish has abandoned Lenin, and the Italian recently declared that it no longer recruits on the basis of the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin. The Labour masses observe this! They cannot speak up with their own voice in Britain because this requires organisation. The Labour people want to shout at the Communists: "And who is going to teach us, now, the way to find our voice?". The empirical method that the Communists are adopting is no good to Labour. In the matter of empiricism, the Communists have nothing to teach Labour. Labour knows all about it.

The Callaghan Labour leadership does not stay in office because capitalism supports it. No such thing, because the reverse is the case. It is capitalism, in its weakness, that clings to the coattails of Labour. British imperialism is mortally wounded - the loss of its colonies being one of the greatest causes. In the world of today, the ascending class is the working class. It draws its strength from its class courage and from the moving examples of social liberation in the world. The British proletariat wants an anti-capitalist Labour leadership and programme, but even

without these, it has had the historic force to keep pushing its Labour leaders to the left. The crisis in the Labour Party is about the Labour leaders being constantly pushed leftwards, always more to the left than they are prepared for. The British working class welcomes with joy the anti-colonial, anti-capitalist and revolutionary struggles of the world. It is influenced and inspired by the sight for human progress in Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, Cuba.

The British proletariat absorbs this world influence and this inspiration, and translates it into Trade Union and political struggles. Partly due to the density of Trade Union and Labour apparatus, this influence and inspiration never produced the corresponding Labour leaders at the top. Indeed, it is in this most crucial of matters that the main failure happened: the intervention of the world's Communists had the effect of hindering this, instead of facilitating it, as was their duty.

When the USSR started to conciliate permanently with world capitalism [after 1924], the creation of new European Workers States was postponed, and the formation of a historic proletarian leadership was prevented in Britain [1926]. Add to this the absence – the criminal absence – of correct policies on the part of the Communist and Socialist parties, and then the absence of correct policies on the part of the Workers States themselves. At any of these points, a correct policy would have helped the transformation and the organisation of the proletariat in the United States and Britain.

In the USA, the Trade Union structures submit to capitalism in a way similar to Britain. Mind that this does not come from the strength of Yankee or British imperialism. It comes from a greater need of the North American and British proletariat to receive the direct support of the world proletariat. This need was never addressed, and it is still not being addressed.

**What is "an advanced country" -  
and who is "backward"?**

The proletariat of Angola and Mozambique is small, but it receives actively and directly the influence of the Workers States and Communist Parties. The proletariat in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America is not stifled by the paralysing working class bureaucracies that you find in Britain. In colonial Angola and Mozambique, it was never the plan to raise the living standards for everyone. So much so that now, such a plan means the total transformation of the country. And as nothing was built for people in the past, everything remains to be built now. In Mozambique and Angola, this total transformation happens in conditions where the small proletariat is not faced, as in Britain, with the oppression of internal layers wedded to the capitalists. The workers and masses welcome the revolution with open arms; there are no internal layers within them waiting to attack the communist ideas and the revolutionary experiences.

**The proletariat in any part of the world  
needs the collaboration of all its parts :**

Mozambique today takes the straight road to the destruction of what is left of capitalism [1979]. As national liberation cannot happen there without social transformation, Mozambique takes quick steps towards Socialism. It is not hampered by internal bureaucracies standing in the way to hinder change. To the reverse of what happens in Britain, the working class of Mozambique is almost completely unimpeded. It never had much in the way of proletarian structures, but those which it has were never sufficiently interfered with by the capitalists. What is more, they were never penetrated by the communist bureaucracies that corrupt the course of revolutions with their Stalinism.

New Communist parties started being set up in more recent

years. This happened in Cuba in the 1960s. The Cuban Liberation Movement came face to face with the reality that its national liberation was amounting to the social transformation of Cuba. The world Communist parties had always rejected this principle, but Castro and his new Communist Party recognised it<sup>8</sup>. Note that it is the proletariat of the colonial (and ex-colonial) countries that led to this change in the Communists; although it was generally small, this proletariat was helped by the weakness of its bureaucratic apparatuses. Compare the way Mozambique advances with the way the British proletariat is held back!

As we said, the quick social development of Mozambique is due to the relative absence of workers aristocracies, bureaucracies and political aristocracies. Mozambique has also been spared the deadening effect that Stalinism has had, over the years, on the struggle of the British working class. In making these comparisons, we wish to give a measure of the nature and depth of the obstacles facing the comrades of the Labour left. We call for debates in the Labour Party, like 'what is an "advanced" country, and who are the "backward" ones?'

We recognise that what we have said does not explain everything about the slowness in the process of social transformation in Britain. It does not entirely explain either the continued backwardness that we observe in the Trade Unions and the Labour Party. At least another aspect intervenes here, and we outline it here generally as follows: Due to the social structures built by capitalism in the past, the British proletariat has needed - and still needs - the support, the participation and the collaboration of the whole world revolutionary and Communist movement.

To extricate its Labour leaderships from their historic and

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<sup>8</sup> Up to the Cuban Revolution, J Posadas was the only Marxist and Trotskyist leader in the world to have analysed that National Liberation in a colonial country had to mean social transformation. (Edit).

bourgeois entanglements, the British proletariat needs the massive intervention and counterbalance of the world proletariat. The proletariat in Britain – like that in the United States – needs the amplification of the world class struggle on a much greater scale than ever achieved up to now.

**On the actual nature of the Labour apparatus :**

Let us not overlook the nature of the apparatus of the Labour Party itself. This apparatus is a structure created to dominate the rest of the Party. Its leaders must be selected from above and these leaders must be acceptable to the capitalist system. This started in the Party as it formed, and it is still the case today. In the history of the internal life of the Party, the apparatus always favoured the notion that British capitalism is uniquely capable, uniquely special and uniquely deserving of world power.

Instead of challenging and correcting these misconceptions, the USSR under Stalin developed the same policies of conciliation with capitalism. The Trade Union and Labour leaders felt reassured and even vindicated. It became harder for the workers to oppose the bosses and the capitalists; their own Union and Labour leaders could keep them at bay more easily, and this continued after Stalin. It continues today. Here you have the outline of some of the costs which the working class had to pay for communist abandonment.

The ordinary Labour comrades see no purity<sup>9</sup> in the world's examples of 'Communism'. What they see is compromise and lack of uprightness. In the Workers States, the existence of 'dissidents' confirms them in their view of communist shortcoming. What the Labour people saw of Communism in the past was Stalin, and what they see of it now is the 'dissidents'<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> J Posadas never uses the word 'purity' in its religious sense. Here he means 'un-adulterated'. Editorial

<sup>10</sup> Solzhenitsyn in the USSR, Pelikan and Dubcek in Czechoslovakia (as was then), etc. Editorial.

**In its need for homogeneity, the Labour Left needs objectivity, explanations and historic truth :**

Most Labour leaders side with the 'dissidents' of the Soviet Union. This enables them to attack the Workers State and Communism. They take the keenest of interests in the plight of the 'dissidents', but they do not discuss *why* the Bolshevik leadership was assassinated, and Trotsky murdered. They are 'Labour' leaders but they do not look into revolutions. They do not ask why the Russian Revolution retreated, or what made it retreat. They do not analyse social regimes, and the way they clash. They behave like observers: "Seen Russia? They have dissidents there!". They do not want a historic discussion, and indeed they avoid it. Not surprising really, since the Communist parties do the same!

Of course, there are Labour leaders who wonder about these things. The best of them and the working class' vanguard have noted that the Communists discuss 1917 without mentioning that the whole Bolshevik leadership was murdered after having led the Russian Revolution. Doesn't that call for a word or two? The Labour leaders read books from various authors, and they see that the Communists do not write about this. We have looked and we found not a line on this matter from the Communists of France or Italy. Nothing - and no mention of Trotsky as one of the major leaders of the Revolution! When the Communists happen to name Trotsky, it is to show him the light of a visitor happening to be passing. Not a word about Trotsky the organiser of the Red Army, the co-leader with Lenin in the implementation of the programme of the Revolution, the author of the *Programme of the Left Opposition*! Stalin retook parts of Trotsky's "*Programme of the Left Opposition*" when Stalin tried to row back against the catastrophic consequences of his "*Socialism in one country*". Is all this unimportant, then?

The vanguard of the British Labour Party does not see an

objective discussion in the Communists. It sees subjective interests defending themselves. There is a need for objectivity and explanations in the vanguard of the British proletariat, the petit bourgeoisie and the revolutionary vanguard of petit bourgeois origins. These layers of people have few opportunities to live politically. They have no traditions of objective proletarian debate with a scientific method of thought. They need examples of scientific purity in the analysis of society and of history. What they see instead is the alteration and adulteration of historic truth.

**Lack of sincerity in the problems of socialist construction discredit the socialist cause :**

The British Labour and working-class vanguard sees that Trotsky does not figure in Communist history, and that Stalin's role is not analysed there. The Communists' documents on the Russian Revolution refer to Trotsky as of someone who happened to pass through. They speak of Stalin, but not of his crimes - like Stalin's crime of having had the whole Bolshevik leadership assassinated. The whole leadership that had made the Russian Revolution! But why? Why did Stalin do this? The workers of the world are asking. About this, the only thing the workers hear from the Communists of the world is silence. Silence, or the empirical justification of subjective interests. Not the logical, objective, didactic and dialectical answer that hands over to intelligence the task of interpreting history.

In Britain as elsewhere, this keeps the workers wary. Today, they see the Workers State of China invading the Workers State of Vietnam, and still the Communist parties are silent. The working class' vanguard asks: "Do 'socialist countries' invade each other then?" and "does war continue in Socialism?". The Communists imply that this is so, but the world's working class does not share this view. It observes that the 'socialist country' of China expels revolutionaries from its Communist Party,



reinstates to it the bourgeois characters it previously threw out, and now invades Vietnam. When it comes to the matter of Vietnam having intervened in Cambodia, the world's working class understood that this was different; it saw Vietnam intervening in Cambodia to remove Pol Pot and withdraw immediately after that. Vietnam's action in Cambodia was not an invasion therefore, but China's in Vietnam was.

Although the Communists do not explain this, the world's workers explain it to themselves. They learn about such things in their daily struggles against their own proletarian apparatuses. They have not waited to be told all this. What they cannot accept is the Communists hiding that Trotsky was a top leader of the Russian Revolution. And they cannot accept the Communists 'forgetting' that Stalin had the whole Bolshevik leadership murdered – the whole team that led the Revolution! The workers understood all this without depending on the Communists. What they want is honesty.

The British working class, the Trade Unions and the Labour vanguard are not after a Socialism where war continues. This is an aberration. Who wants that sort of Socialism? The answer is that China is not a 'socialist country'. It is only a Workers State. With their 'socialist country' definition, the Communists imply that in Socialism, egoism and self-interest continue to prevail over the human interest.

The workers of anywhere will tell you that they do not want this kind of Socialism. They want the Socialism where class struggle and war have been eliminated. For them, Socialism is a society of superior human relations, not just more things to have and more things to eat. We are the only organisation in the contemporary Communist movement to have reiterated this. We are the only ones to have explained Pol Pot in Cambodia and the reasons for the existence of a counter revolutionary leadership

in the Chinese Workers State<sup>11</sup>.

**Stalinism came from the bureaucratisation of the Revolution - not from the Revolution itself :**

In the matter of the construction of Workers States, the world's proletariat needs to see the problems handled scientifically on the basis of historical facts. Far from this being done, it is being resisted. The deficit this creates strikes a major blow at the confidence of the world proletariat. The Trade Unions' and Labour bureaucrats derive strength from this - their only strength being our limitations.

We reiterate what we often say: It is not that the bureaucracy of the British workers' movement is strong! We reject the analyses of those who speak of the "particular strength of bureaucracy in the British Labour movement". They are wrong. The Socialist and Communist parties never explained how a bureaucracy took hold of the USSR. Had they explained this, the role of bureaucracy in the working class' organisations would have become unveiled. In the USSR itself, its more recent leaderships never explained why the Bolsheviks and Trotsky had indeed been murdered. Had they done so, the workers of the world would have understood that Stalinism did not come from the Russian Revolution, but from the bureaucratisation of the Revolution.

Along with Lenin, Trotsky led the struggle to implement the social, economic, political and military programme of the Russian Revolution. The Communists who persist in unearthing the 'errors of Trotsky' must give him credit for having been one of the foremost leaders of the Russian Revolution. Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev and many others were there as well, but Trotsky was key to the Revolution. It is not a small thing either that he organised his whole life accordingly. How can this stay

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<sup>11</sup> Order the documents by J Posadas on these matters from [mlsculturaleditions@yahoo.com](mailto:mlsculturaleditions@yahoo.com).

so much unrecognised and undiscussed?

The debates regarding this and related questions are still to be had. For the world's Communists and Socialists, this is one of their most urgent tasks. In Britain and everywhere, it is necessary to discuss how the Eastern European Workers States came about. For example, as soon as they were set-up, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland adopted a comprehensive policy of conciliation with capitalism. That was the policy of Stalinism. As Tito resisted, Stalin looked for every means to push him (Tito) back into the arms of capitalism. Stalin even envisaged to invade Yugoslavia! The Communist parties do not discuss this; and when they come near to discussing it, they soon get lost in abstractions.

On a world scale, and in Britain, these matters lie at the heart of proletarian experience.

It is the duty of the Communists, the Socialists, the Labour Left and the Left everywhere, to review and clarify all these questions. Why was Stalin so interested in Yugoslavia failing? How did he get away with all his attempts at making it fail? What did he have to gain from a complete break of relations with it? Why should a Yugoslavia overcome by capitalism be preferable to a Yugoslavia disobeying him? The vanguard of the world is still keen to know what motivated Stalin in such matter.

**The role of bureaucracy is to keep the working class down :**

Considering how mercilessly Stalin threatened Yugoslavia and Tito, it is not surprising – and not very new today – to see how China invades Vietnam (1979). Stalin pushed Yugoslavia into the clutches of capitalism rather than let it become a source of disobedience, indiscipline and confrontation with the Stalinist bureaucratic interests of the USSR.

All the young Workers States of Eastern Europe had to start their new lives in the teeth of Stalin's opposition. Making full use of the authority of the Soviet Workers State, the Stalinian bureaucracy blocked the revolutionary development of Yugoslavia - as well as that of other revolutions<sup>12</sup>. Yugoslavia's case became notorious because Tito rejected Stalin's policy of reformism and conciliation with capitalism. The world proletarian vanguard observed Tito not giving up and never forgot it. And it cannot forget, really, because it gets periodical reminders of this kind of thing in the class struggle. One most recent reminder lies in this invasion of the Workers State of Vietnam by the Workers State of China; as a class, the working class did not find this event completely inexplicable or surprising.

Let us consider now the role of bureaucracy in the working class. In Britain, the strength of the Trade Union bureaucracy is not its own. It has evolved historically and with one single ability: to manoeuvre. Besides this, it has no other capacity or project of its own. It manoeuvres and has no other role. It is the master of manoeuvre, and that is all.

As a phenomenon, bureaucracy prospers when conditions favour strong economic development with a loss of proletarian weight. The conditions conducive to this have ended, however. So much so that today, wherever you look, you see capitalism failing, retreating, concentrating and closing-in upon itself. Big capitalist expansion has finished now, whilst the weight of the proletariat has hugely increased due to the existence of the Workers States; the Workers States and the constant struggles of the working class everywhere.

**The role of the Stalinian bureaucracy has been to stop the rise of revolutionary tendencies :**

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<sup>12</sup> The Chinese Revolution in 1925-27, Spain 1936, Mao Tse Tung 1947, and many other cases. (Editorial).

What gives strength to bureaucracy – as in the British labour movement – is the fact that the Workers States and the Communist parties do not confront capitalism. What they do instead is hide how Stalin murdered the entire Bolshevik leadership, the leadership that made the Russian Revolution. They 'forget' it. They hide that Stalin pushed Tito as far as he could into the arms of capitalism, to stop Yugoslavia originating and influencing revolutionary processes *against the Soviet bureaucracy*.

In all the Workers States that came after the Russian Revolution, the role of the Stalinian bureaucracy has been to stop the rise of revolutionary tendencies. This has been its role, and this is still today.

The USSR, China and the Communist parties do not analyse why Stalin tried to push the Chinese Communists into alliances with Chinese and North American capitalism. And they never mention either how Mao Tse Tung stood firm and refused to do it!

Observe how all this was removed from the history of the world's working-class and how the latter did not allow itself to become paralysed. It has kept on fighting the capitalist system, and it even uses the Workers States and the Communist parties wherever it finds it possible to do so. This is how the Workers States and the Communist Parties continue to make progress in spite of their limitations.

It is not our intention to focus on their limitations, or even on what happened in the past. Now we look at their roles in the class struggle of today. We recognise that the masses look up to them and use them as instruments. In the masses, the thirst for human progress is overriding - economic, social, political. The Communist Parties and the Workers States respond to this, correcting themselves along the way.

**The task is less to build the economy  
than to make it serve human progress :**

The Workers States continue to exist because they answer to human need. This reality forces them to understand. They are forced to make socialist progress because any duplicitous alignment with capitalism threatens their economic foundations. This state of affairs keeps going even when the Workers States shy away from revolutionary measures. In 1945, Stalin was relying on this to try and stop new Workers States like Yugoslavia and China becoming the anti-bureaucratic and revolutionary spearhead of the world communist movement.

Stalin could do this in 1945, but it can no longer be done today. In 1945, capitalism had some strength and could still put up with some Workers States. Today, capitalism has stopped developing. In the face of its decline, the Workers States compare increasingly well, particularly at social and political level. Today, capitalism finds the competition of the Workers States quite intolerable. It does not want to put up with them. It wants them out.

It is true that the crisis of capitalism is economic, but its crisis is social and political above all. Capitalism can still face the economic competition of the Workers States, but it copes less and less well with their social and political competition. The structure of capitalism still operates, but it does so in a growing kind of vacuum, with its social support dwindling, with no political ability and no cultural, artistic or scientific transcendence.

Capitalism has plenty of money and weapons, but it has no social support, no social authority, no future. Every experience made by people in the world reaffirms that the process of historic development is basically social nowadays - and no longer

basically economic.

The need to develop the economy has been central to human development for a whole historical period. This has changed now, because the economy has developed a world structure. The problem now is to make the economy serve human development.

Today, 'human development' has stopped being a simple economic matter. It is generally understood to prioritise the human being, the human social relations and the need for dignified human relations. People understand 'development' as an economic order dedicated to the satisfaction of human need. Human development has moved up the figurative agenda where economic development used to be. Because this rather pushes capitalism to one side, the latter responds with alarm and hostility. Here you measure the extent to which capitalism has run out of the social, political, scientific and cultural means to perpetuate itself. The only thing it has left is war.

In spite of all their efforts at conciliation with capitalism, the Workers States' bureaucracies are less and less able to conciliate. Between the regime of capitalism and the regime of the Workers States, the contest is primarily *social*. The Workers States cannot continue to exist and progress without expanding in the world. Their existence demands of them that they expand economically, and above all socially.

There is no way the Workers States can continue to exist without expanding in the world, but there is no way capitalism can let them expand either! This antagonism between the Workers States and capitalism is of historic dimensions and can only intensify. It will reach the point where the only possible outcome is world war between the antagonists. This is what makes the atomic war inevitable.

**It is the continued existence of Workers States that demands capitalist elimination :**

Note how world war is not made inevitable just by some capitalist leaders wanting it. It is made inevitable by the fact that capitalism, as a system, seeks war and needs it. This may not be expressed by German or Bolivian capitalism (for instance) but it is entirely expressed by the conduct of North American capitalism. The conscious expression of world capitalism is Yankee imperialism. See how it acquires all the means of world war, in every part of the world, in the name of capitalism. If the other capitalists do not have the means, the United States have.

Such are the conditions that gave birth to the Workers States. As the Workers States derive their existence from a situation that confronts them to capitalism, they can only project their future existence by preparing for the elimination of capitalism. The antagonism between the Workers State and capitalism bars them from living alongside in perpetuity. The Workers State can only exist through steps compatible with capitalist elimination.

Too many prominent figures in the Workers States believe that endless efforts at conciliation with capitalism can postpone endlessly the advent of the war. There are many such persons in the Soviet Union, but they don't all agree among themselves either. Prominent scientific, communist and military Soviet leaders have expressed the view that a Third World War can only come from what they observe around them. The fact that they say this publicly expresses on their part a certain grasp and confidence that this war is also the worldwide elimination of the capitalist system. This helps in preparing the world masses, but this is limited. It is the Soviet Communist Party that needs to analyse and explain all these things. And the Soviet Communist Party cannot do this as long as it has not corrected its previous errors.



**Stalinism is not inherent to Socialism.**

**This is the lie of the enemies of Socialism :**

The Soviet Union and the other Workers States do not have a very great influence in Britain, but they influence a lot in countries that used to depend on British imperialism. It needs books, and not just texts like this one, to do justice to these subjects. For instance, why did the masses of East Germany (GDR) rise in 1952? Why were there two uprisings in Poland? Why was there another uprising in Hungary? Weren't people expressing their rejection of bureaucracy in those events? How did it happen that some 50,000 members were expelled from the Yugoslav Communist Party on ground of being "bourgeois"? How had all these bourgeois got into the Party in the first place? What happened to make a '*Cultural Revolution*' necessary in China? What is a *Cultural Revolution*? Is *Cultural Revolution* necessary in other Workers States? If so, why? What could possibly explain the need to have killed (around 1937) all those who had led the Russian Revolution? We say that the elimination of the '*Gang of Four*' in China has corresponded to the murder of leaders like Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky. Why shouldn't these events be explained? But none have been explained. They need to be!

In Britain meanwhile, and regarding the above, the working class and the Labour vanguard have had to do without any explanation. We keep saying, and we repeat, that it is not as if the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracies were playing necessary roles. Because they do not. They operate instead in the spaces granted to them by relations of forces where the working class is kept unsure and doubtful. No explanation about what happened in Russia in 1937, or in China with the *Gang of Four*, forms part of what leaves the British workers at the mercy of anti-Communist campaigns. Stalin's crimes – and the attempts at concealing them – have played a key role against

the construction of a Workers State in Britain. For decades, the bureaucracy in the British working class enjoyed the freedom to present Stalinism as inherent to the construction of Socialism. This shored up the bureaucracy and made it more difficult to remove. Bureaucracy stays in place as long as it is not removed. It just lives off our shortcomings and failure to remove it.

The British workers continue to defend their rights; they make strikes and they want rid of capitalism. They are held back by the bureaucratic leaders who say: 'Back to work, no more strikes!'. The workers are constantly told that 'the conditions are not ripe' for them to strike. And there is always a Union official to threaten: 'See what happens in the socialist countries!' and 'See where Socialism gets you!'. The workers' bureaucrats do not deny that the workers are right; they just defend their posts by telling the workers "to wait". Wait for the negotiations! Wait for the conditions! Wait for arbitrations! Wait for the good leaders! Wait for no more criminals like Stalin. Wait!!

The position of the Trade Union and Labour bureaucrats gets strengthened by the scandals that the capitalist class creates in the news, where it exaggerates, ridicules and distorts every Workers State's shortcoming. When you see the workers standing up to the capitalists, it is because those workers already won other battles, like those against their bureaucrats. Whenever you see bureaucrats cast aside and overruled by militant workers, you are struck by how much it had been the sole bureaucrats' role to stand against the workers' fight. Bureaucracy had stood there for no other purpose! And if it had originally asked the workers "to wait", it was never for the sake of any shrewd or long-term goal.

Bureaucrats are not for ever. No Stalin stage is about to return to history! The clock of history isn't going back to a Stalin. Forward it goes to the elimination of the capitalist system.

**On the incompatibility  
between capitalism and human equality :**

People repudiate inequality. They want the end of all forms of arrogance. They want the end of all forms of historic adulteration. It is unstoppably and inexorably that they have always demanded those things.

On the road to capitalist elimination, the demand for equality and justice becomes increasingly recognised as incompatible with capitalism. Justice and human equality become clearly seen as un-achievable in capitalism where the wealth flowing to some people is extorted from most others. Capitalism rests on institutions based on this principle, with some of them in the working class' organisations.

You see the proof of this when you study countries where the mass of the people, and the workers' organisations, never had very strong bureaucracies. In countries like Mozambique, Cuba, Angola, Vietnam for instance, the revolutionary processes are 'purest' – so to say – and generally more straight forward. When we say: 'purest' and more 'straight forward', it in comparison with the pro-imperialist structures that block the revolutionary processes and the workers movements in countries like Britain or the USA for instance.

**The Labour Party needs to see  
the Communists dedicated to historic truth :**

The leaderships of the Workers States make many mistakes: they do not help the world masses sufficiently, and they do not champion the dialectical capacity to think. Today, 'capacity to think' means capacity to see that social transformation is necessary for progress. Instead of deceit and empiricism, the Labour Party needs to see the Communists dedicated to historic

truth. The Labour Party must see the Communists defending the scientific conclusions of the Communist ideas. If the Communists run in the opposite direction, they do a massive disservice to the working class all over the world.

In spite of all these shortcomings however, the necessity for logical thought keeps advancing in humanity. The Workers States were created on the basis of logical thinking, and this is a fact. It is also a fact that they faced the most exacting historic tests imaginable, and that they passed those tests. As they continued to exist in spite of it all, and to be examples to the world, they proved that they had found the correct road.

**The working class apparatuses impede human progress, but they cannot stop it :**

The Workers States appeared in history and they went away again. Instead of this, their continued existence created a world situation that allows the most [economically] 'backward' masses to take the greatest of the historic leaps forward possible. The masses of the least 'advanced' countries do this by creating societies that build upon, or retake, the most elevated experience, understanding, education and intelligence originated in the Workers States.

The apparatuses that lead the Workers States make difficulties and impede human progress, but they cannot *oppose* this progress. The Workers States cannot continue to exist without developing in some way – which means that they must oppose capitalism in one way or the other. Whilst they cannot develop as Workers States if they do not do this, history has also proven that they are here to stay. This is why the apparatuses of the Workers States cannot *oppose* human progress.

The Workers State is a State that plans the economy. The planning of its economy requires the expansion of its Workers

State economic model in the world. It is not an expansion motivated by the wish to dominate. It is the expansion required by human development, by planning and coordination.

The expansion of the Workers State is a logical necessity. It is inherent to the Workers State's nature based on planning. Aside from any other consideration, the Workers State is a million times more capable and productive than capitalism. The masses of the world know this. They are making the experience of it, or they are witnessing it. They are not going to throw away this knowledge.

In the world, the existence and the development of Workers States has a growing impact. It provides guidance to countries. It inspires the struggle for change in mass organisations. In the Communist parties and in the Labour Party, for example, deep changes are observable even if they do not directly alter the political lines. These parties do not speak in terms of changing the capitalist system by the means of *force* or *overthrow* - but yes, by they speak in terms of the need to replace capitalism.

**The working class' apparatuses  
denigrate the revolutionary road:**

In spite of the limitations of the Communist leaderships, there is still an immense progress in the Communist parties themselves. And not all them are the same. The most important such parties are those who centralise the masses, as in France, Spain, Italy and Portugal. In the smaller Communist parties as in Britain or Germany, the bureaucratic layer persists whilst the proletarian base is not large; they are bureaucratic parties in that they do not preoccupy themselves with the process of history. They live the immediate process, but not the process of history.

The Communist Parties of Britain, Germany and Belgium have a mystical notion where they view themselves as proletarian

emissaries and vanguard in history. In recent elections in Germany where the Social Democrats (SDP) won, the SDP increased by 3.5% and the Communists passed from 20.000 votes to 9.000 (a loss of 52%). This is a considerable fall, and for the third time in three consecutive elections. The Communist vote had increased in the past. This loss is directly connected to a growth in the SDP left and left-leaning elements in the SDP leadership. The SDP adopted a position critical of the United States. Not from a socialist standpoint, but from the capitalist objection of Yankee attacks against German capitalism in the market and competition. This is how the Communists must 'live' this process, and interpret it.

**It is to build Socialism**  
**that the British proletariat stays with Labour :**

It is not true that the Labour Party's apparatus is very strong. The force which it has, it draws it mostly from the limitations and errors of the Workers States and Communist parties. The fact that China invades Vietnam is an attack on the confidence of progressive humanity. It strikes at the Labour masses of course, but the damage could be limited if the Labour and Communists leaders gave explanations. The lack of explanations hands over to the right of the Labour Party the opportunity to ridicule Socialism and to conspire against the Labour left.

The British workers and the Labour left do not lose heart, but they are not fooled. The silence of the Communists on the key questions of socialist construction has reduced the ability of the Labour left to organise its class and political understanding. It has been more difficult for the British workers to influence politically. This emboldened the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracies, made them feel safe. The Labour masses have suffered infinitely from the limitations in the world's communist movement. The British masses never stopped fighting however, and they stayed in the Labour Party to continue the fight.

It is to build Socialism that the British proletariat stays in the Labour Party. The British proletariat is not in the Labour Party to follow the bureaucrats or to support them. The fact that left wings keep occurring and re-occurring in the Labour Party is the proof of this.

In the history of Britain, there have been many waves of Labour lefts. Their programmes have always demanded the nationalisation of important centres of production. There was a time when the Labour left called for the nationalisation of the banks. Some Labour governments were bold enough to implement some of these programmes, but no Labour government ever set out to nationalise the whole imperialist structure. This is not surprising really, given the considerable shortage of theoretical and political preparation for this in Britain. There is also the fact that the British proletariat made practically all its political experience through the Labour Party<sup>13</sup>.

Beyond this, and from the time it was born, Labour could almost always point to the limitations in the Workers States to justify holding back from the socialist road. This went on for many years, long enough to keep the Labour bureaucracy in place!

Resulting from historical events, the political experience of the left in Britain was made almost entirely through the Labour Party's national and bureaucratic structures – structures that could always justify their bureaucratic policies of conciliation with capitalism by showing that this was the way of the Workers States themselves, and of the Communist parties.

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<sup>13</sup> The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) - formed in Britain after the Russian Revolution - played a role in its first few years. As it soon adopted Stalin's policy of *peaceful coexistence* with capitalism, it failed to lead the 1926 General Strike. It never developed into a mass Party after that and this is why the author says that the political experience of the British proletariat has passed mostly through Labour.

Editorial note.

## **The Workers State is right to intervene militarily**

### **In other countries :**

We have been the only ones to explain China's invasion of Vietnam (March 1979) and the difference between this and the military intervention of Vietnam in Cambodia (Dec78/Jan79). In both instances a Workers State intervened militarily in another country. As these events were downplayed and almost hidden by the Workers States and Communist parties, the capitalist system was able to suggest that there is no such thing as a 'Workers State' or else, war continues to exist in 'Socialism'.

The Workers State is right to intervene militarily in other countries when the need for human progress makes it necessary – the same applying to the Revolutionary State<sup>14</sup>. Vietnam invaded Cambodia to remove Pol Pot because that was the necessary thing to do<sup>15</sup>. In the other case, the bureaucracy of the Chinese Workers State (with some Pol Pot allies) invaded Vietnam to stop the revolutionary ideas of Vietnam stimulating the revolution back in China and Cambodia. This was counter-revolutionary. It had to be stopped and the Workers State of Vietnam stopped it.

In the matter of Workers States intervening militarily in other countries, it is the duty of the communist leaderships, as well as of the left everywhere, to take positions and to make pronouncements. This applies to the Labour left too. It is their task to show that there are times when a Workers State must intervene militarily in another country.

In the matter of *Vietnam in Cambodia* and *China in Vietnam*, the

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<sup>14</sup> J Posadas characterised as 'Revolutionary States' countries like Tanzania under Nyerere, Mozambique, Angola, Egypt with Nasser, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Ethiopia, and dozens of other countries. Venezuela became a Revolutionary State with Chavez. More about this on demand.

<sup>15</sup> In other documents, J Posadas analyses that the rise of Pol Pot had been stimulated in Cambodia by the bureaucracy of the Chinese Workers State, to defend itself from the revolutionary pressure of the masses of the region.



world communist movement never produced analyses or compared the two things. Worse still, a number of Communist parties started to blame Vietnam for having “invaded” Cambodia to bring down Pol Pot!!

In 1972, many of these same Communist parties had blamed Tanzania and Nyerere for welcoming refugees from Uganda and supporting – from inside Uganda – the overthrow of Idi Amin. And in the years 1975-78, when Cuba intervened militarily in Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia to support the revolutions there, the major European Communist parties had fallen silent, and kept silent after that.

The problems of this historic stage are not all equally significant, but they all spring from the irrepressible longing for progress that lifts the peoples everywhere. The various revolutionary struggles exist because people fight for progress. Why should it be always wrong for a Workers State to intervene militarily in another country? Has the Workers State no right to defend human progress, or to defend itself as part of human progress? Regarding these questions, there is very little discernment in the proletarian organisations of the world. Even in the matters of the greatest import to the working class, the major workers’ parties of the world seem very unclear.

With so little orientation from the world’s Communists over the decades, the working class of every country was left to its own devices. In Britain, this suited the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy perfectly. All that the latter wanted was to be left alone with its self-serving webs at the heart of working class’ organisation. The role which bureaucracy plays, its only role<sup>16</sup>, is to keep the lid on the working class, its independent initiatives and its revolutionary pressure.

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<sup>16</sup> It is the employers and the capitalist class who give an authority to the working class ‘leaders’. Indeed, those have a ‘role’: to stop the workers’ rebellions and strikes, ensure they don’t unite between them. Editorial.

But the situation is changing. This cannot last because the masses of the world continue to struggle. In many countries, they make revolutionary leaps that take them quite close to building Workers States. Capitalism tries to put them down, but this is the trend, and capitalism cannot reverse the trend of history.

The prospects for Britain are determined by this process. The perspective is one where the development of the Labour Party takes it less and less towards Labour, and more and more towards Socialism.

The same awaits all the Social Democratic parties of the world.

As we have said, it is for Socialism that the British masses are in the Labour Party.

**Help organise a Marxist-Labour vanguard :**

We insist on the above analyses because they can only be made from an international standpoint. Our International (the Posadist IV International) organised itself to show to comrades the socialist and internationalist way ahead. We have no way to do this other than by learning to do it ourselves. Learning to reason and learning to convince. We seek to turn the attention of the workers' vanguard towards the historic stages that are coming.

We encourage our British section to develop more cultural, didactic and revolutionary activities towards the Labour Party. In Britain, our aim is to combine the immediate needs of the day-to-day Trade Union and political struggle with a greater cultural, scientific and historical understanding in the Unions and the Labour Party. Note that no other organisation is actually doing this. We are the only ones. It is the wish of our British

section to put its Party and political life at the service of this aim.

In the Labour Party, the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy serves the interests of British imperialism. With one foot in the proletariat, the other in relatively progressive Labour layers and all the rest of its body representing imperialism, this working class' bureaucracy cannot be homogeneous.

This heterogeneity evolved over time from the specific history and nature of the class struggle in Britain. It is through the Labour Party, for example, that the British proletariat achieved its very high level of political centralisation. As a result, entire layers of Labour *leadership* are bourgeois. Bourgeois we say - and representative of capitalism. Bourgeois, and not mistaken! In the Party's functions, these layers of leadership must work alongside others whose views can range from the quasi revolutionary to the downright conservative, with the middling sectors in between.

In Britain, the working class' base of the Labour Party is always present in the mass movements, and the mass movements always gravitate towards Labour. In short, Labour is the axis of the class struggle. It is *in* the Labour Party, and not outside of it, that the most important left-wings get formed. In Britain, no one can be serious about social transformation without paying attention to Labour and its Left wings. This strong national characteristic of Britain is entirely the result of the world process. *Where Britain is going*<sup>17</sup> - as Trotsky used to say - is entirely determined by its place and relations with the world.

The bourgeois apparatus of the Labour Party does not have the strength to determine where Britain is going. It is the colonial world and its revolutions that force Britain to change. This process goes on every day, but it needs organising. It is our

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<sup>17</sup> This is an oblique reference to Trotsky's book: *Where is Britain Going?*

task, and that of the Labour Party comrades, to organise a Marxist-Labour vanguard in Britain. The aim of our British section is to assist in this task. It must take the lead where appropriate, and assist in the formation of a Marxist-Labour vanguard in Britain.

Britain has no future as a capitalist country, and this applies to every capitalist country. At the moment (1979) Britain can still live closed-in upon itself, but it will not progress any further without social transformation. The world at large shows that social transformation is necessary, that it is possible, and that it can happen much sooner than one thinks.

The discussions in the Labour Party at this time do not reflect the interests of the ordinary workers or those of the educated petit bourgeoisie. They reflect the petty concerns of leaders with pro-capitalist interests. People do not stay in the Labour Party because they admire its bureaucrats and capitalist agents! They stay in the Party to meet each other and keep strong.

Our British section must intervene to support the organisation of the Labour vanguard. Where possible, our section must also intervene in the *Communist Party of Britain*, CPB, keeping in mind that it is one of the most culturally and scientifically backward Communist parties. This Party will never become large now, but it could still play an important role in helping organise the Labour left. Communism is not for now in Britain, but there will be a Communist stage in Britain.

### **How the Communists can assist the Labour vanguard :**

The CPB must accept that the working class is centralised in the Labour Party – meaning that it (CPB) must adapt its own role. The first need is to lift the veil on the monstrosities committed by Stalin and which the Party has kept concealed and suppressed

over the years, and up to now. This demands a self-criticism from the Party for this concealment and suppression. It also demands a self-criticism for the role of accomplice which the original Communist Party played in Stalin's monstrosities.

If the Communists in Britain could admit all this, it would be part of their developing ability to understand why the Chinese leadership invades Vietnam. The historic silence of the Communists regarding the rise and development of bureaucracy in the USSR – hence Stalin's role – keeps them stranded in incomprehension. The damage this causes is incalculable. In the instance of China's deadly actions in Vietnam, the silence of the Communists amounts to covering up for China. This imposes silence on the communist members too, who toe the Party line because they have to, and not through reasoning.

**The irreplaceable scientific capacity of the dialectical method of reasoning :**

History has a reasoning of its own. From time to time, it decides its course through force and military means, but that is because a decision must be made. You could say that the military means determine the course of the reasoning of history, such as it is. But in the process leading up to what history eventually decides, other decisions had been made, that had not been military. It was human reasoning, for instance, that led to the creation of Workers States. Human reasoning makes decisions that can pull history in the direction of Socialism.

Our British section must aim at encouraging the Labour vanguard. Where that vanguard is missing, it must help to create it; and where it already exists, it must help its development. Our British section has also the essential task to demonstrate to the Labour comrades the superiority of the materialist and dialectical method of thought. In its activities and in its documents, it must evidence the superiority of the dialectical method of thinking

over all the other methods, how it works and how one learns to use it. Our section must showcase the superior level of confidence and security that the materialist and dialectical thought-method imparts.

If British capitalism remains one of the vital centres of the capitalist system, it is mostly through its 'special relationship' with the United States. Unlike in the US, where there is no Labour Party, British Labour is a major political force. It is important that it still claims to speak in the name Socialism. The British Trade Unions are among the strongest in the world, with some influence even in other countries. The same goes for the Trade Unions and Social Democracy (SDP) of Germany. In Britain and Germany, the weight of working class apparatus is particularly heavy, but the ascending course of the world revolution keeps the working class of those countries stimulated and forward looking.

Over the years, Labour Left-wings have kept appearing, re-forming and reorganizing. Due to the intractable nature of the capitalist crisis, this can only continue. A similar process goes on in Germany. In Britain and Germany, the crises in the working class' apparatchiks are the crises of Social Democracy, moved – at least in part – by the crisis of capitalism itself. The fact that the Callaghan Labour government seems to get away with dreadful bourgeois policies<sup>18</sup> does not mean that it is strong. It means that it feels a strong urge to contain the working class. The Labour Left does not go along with this. It does not believe in the accords that Labour makes with the capitalist class. It sees the world progressing along anti-capitalist lines, and not capitalist ones. It repudiates this Labour government.

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<sup>18</sup> The Callaghan Labour government was still in place in April 1979 when J Posadas wrote this document. The latter analysed this Callaghan government as '*ultra-capitalist*'. On 3 May 1979, Margaret Thatcher won the elections. It is likely that most of the capitalist class went to vote to bring Labour down, whilst it is likely that most of the 24% abstentions were Labour. Having attacked the big workers' strikes, Labour lost the elections. Thatcher did not win, it was Labour that lost. And Callaghan resigned from the Labour leadership some months after this.

**Only the Workers State  
can make the necessary transformation :**

The masses are succeeding in many strikes and struggles. This points to where they want to go, and which they will reach in not very long to come. What is missing is leadership. The curve of human progress would be steady and rising if conscious proletarian leaderships were already in place, theoretically and politically prepared. As this is absent, the line of progress oscillates up and down.

Only the Workers State can produce the kind of social transformation that brings a solution to all the problems that capitalism poses. The working class' parties of Britain do not have much in the way of theoretical and political preparation. We must discuss with them without depreciation or haughtiness. We must dedicate everything to explaining and explaining.

It is not weapons and finances that decide the course of history. It is not. By the way they incorporate the lessons of the world, the Labour masses show that they accept this conclusion. Only, the British workers were never shown how to make assessments through theoretical and political ideas. Add to this that, in the world where they grew organised<sup>19</sup>, the British workers had only their own struggles to learn from. This is how they became conscious of themselves as *class* - and the habit stayed with them afterwards. Then the Communists hampered by Stalinism never gave to Labour the strong cultural support which they should have given. So, it is mostly by themselves that the British workers learnt to analyse, to make experiences, to discern and to draw conclusions. They made of Labour their political centre, but they could not make of it the cultural centre for the theoretical, political and scientific tool which they required.

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<sup>19</sup> The first large working class in the world. No other important working classes to learn from.

From the time when Labour leaderships started to appear in history<sup>20</sup>, they favoured positions opposed to the use of theory and method. When the epoch of Stalinism<sup>21</sup> came, these leaderships became entrenched in this orientation. This problem in Labour is not rooted in Stalinism. It existed there, and in the Trade Unions too, many years before the Russian Revolution.

The fact remains that with the rise of Stalinism, the Labour bureaucracy had the opportunity to grow much stronger in the Party, instead of the opposite. The Labour Party had become a political centre by then, but the world policies of Stalinism helped to stop the creation of a theoretical and cultural nexus inside it.

The formation of the Labour bureaucratic apparatus was never a pre-planned design. It just came. It came as part of the historic development of Britain.

What happened with Stalinism is that, in its extended historic period, it showed to the Labour bureaucracy how to falsify history, how to adulterate ideas, how to lie, and how to corrupt people in the name of Socialism.

It is Stalinism that taught the Labour bureaucracy how to oppose the Workers State in the name of Socialism.  
Here you have Stalin summed up.

It is Stalinism that brought to Social Democracy the idea of opposing the Workers State in the name of Socialism.

**J. POSADAS**

26.04.79

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<sup>20</sup> Many years before 1900. Editorial.

<sup>21</sup> After 1924 in general, and from 1937 in particular, and all the way to the 1950's. Editorial.