

BRITISH IMPERIALISM AND THE NEED FOR MARXISM IN THE LABOUR PARTY

Title by the Editorial Board

J POSADAS

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"The Soviet leaders who decide to intervene in Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia and Vietnam are reversing their previous policy of 'pacific coexistence' with capitalism. Although this change comes from the Soviet leaders, it comes in reality from the Soviet economy. This is so because, in order to keep going, the Soviet economy must liquidate capitalism. If it does not, it enters a crisis". - J Posadas

The Labour Party is home to the idealistic method of thinking. Idealism keeps the Labour Party hoping that capitalism can be rejuvenated. And so the Labour leaders serve capitalism; some ingenuously, and the rest perfectly consciously.

Mind that the idealism that prevails the central structures of the Labour leaderships is never of the *ignorant* sort: it is always of the *interested* sort.

Basically, the Party 'does not do' dialectics. It is idealist in politics and it is idealist in the social struggle.

The way it sees things, social progress is a matter of centuries - at least two or three.

Capitalist evolution and birth of the Labour apparatus:

British capitalism is extremely open to science. It uses science extensively, as in the computing and atomic fields for instance. It has a way to research which it does not call 'dialectics' because it calls it 'science'. But science *is* dialectics.

Capitalism uses dialectics! It uses it in the economy. Only in the

economy. And in the economy, it uses it only if it turns out a profit. When it comes to politics, capitalism has no use for dialectics at all.

On the economic and political planes, the capitalists have become weak to the point of impotence. But the weaker they are, the grander does their idealism become. They do not remember – and indeed they cannot remember – that humanity already knows how to make Workers States.

Note how, up to now, all the victorious revolutions have been in economically backward countries. (Note that we say 'economically backward' and not 'backward'). Victorious revolutions happen there, but it did not have to be like this. The historic conditions have made it like this.

Since 1917, hardly 61 years ago (from 1978) the world changed completely, irreversibly. Even the way to look at the future changed. What happened? This happened: The most economically backward countries became the most advanced!

The Labour leaders do not entirely deny this, but they rationalise this transformation by saying that socialist revolutions are for others, the likes of the USSR, China, Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique. Poor countries. Things like that don't happen in places like Britain. We are rich in Britain. And we have the Queen.

The Labour Party has roots more than 160 years old, if you consider the movements that prepared the ground for its formation, like the Chartists¹, the *Fabians*² and others. The roots

¹ The long line of (Quakers) Binns' Family led to George Binns (1815-1847) and the **National Charter Association** (1841).

² In 1884, the **Fabians** included Reformers and Intellectual & Socialist tendencies. Bernard Shaw, H E Wells, J M Keynes and Bertrand Russell supported organisations that helped create the Labour Party in 1900. Edward Pease (1857-1955) was once Secretary of the Fabians. Member of the ILP in 1900, he served on the EC of the *Labour Representation Committee* for 14 years.

of the modern Labour Party were shaped by the process that brought British capitalism to full development, and the working class having to fight every inch of the way for wages and conditions.

British imperialism was the first, and the biggest economic empire of capitalism. It developed through the military, through conquest of territories, through the creation of bourgeois administrations in distant lands. This affected not only specific countries, but groups of countries, incorporating them, assimilating them.

It was not the intention of British imperialism to go about the world to crush populations. It was resolute in one thing however: it would not let those populations create independent bourgeoisies. In the distant lands, it would encourage the production of raw materials and some accessory industries as part of its lucrative investments.

When it comes to understanding the strength of the Labour Party's apparatus, the origins of the economic development of Britain cannot be underestimated. Back at home, the world power and prestige of Britain were central to the support which the petit bourgeoisie gave to British imperialism. The idealist way of thinking evolved in this process, at the heart of it. It shaped the Labour Party. It shaped it so deeply that Labour became quite impervious to dialectical materialism.

British imperialism realised its economic potential very much in advance of its competitors. This gave it a chance to build a structure of workers' aristocracy in Britain, and a particularly strong one at that. Not only there arose layers of well-paid and well-treated workers, but these gained access to important social functions. Behind these, many others could follow and join the ranks of the petit bourgeoisie. This developed a solid petit

bourgeois layer. That layer became the backbone of, and the social support for British imperialism.

The rise of Stalinism strengthened this:

Colonial expansion and its huge revenues favoured the formation of another special layer - in the Trade Unions this time. As this layer developed, it sprouted a structure that operated then, and still does, through the perpetuation of leaders who impose themselves from above. This structure learnt to behave as if it were a bourgeois class. It did this by imposing the top leaders, a method it still uses today.

Such are the Trade Union bureaucrats. They work like a class, a conscious class. They push up their selected cadres into Unions' positions, and through these, they take all the decisions. What choice have the workers but to accept? The bureaucrats do not need to blindfold the workers. All they need to do is stop the workers organising from below.

When someone like Stalin appeared in the USSR, it was like heavens' mana falling from the sky. The bureaucrats felt that their way of doing things was vindicated. Stalin made them feel supported and justified. They felt confirmed in their roles.

Bureaucracy means alliance with capitalism:

'Stalin' means 'reformist policy', but reformist policy means alliance with the owners' class, alliance with capitalism. Stalin forced the USSR to side with capitalism against the world revolution, hence against the extension of the Russian Revolution³ in the world.

³ Stalin intervened directly against Mao in China, against Tito in Yugoslavia, against all the left-wing Communists of the world, against the 1926 General Strike in Britain, against the Revolution in Spain in 1936, etc. Editorial.

'Stalinism' does not mean prisons, 'no liberty' and the persecution of opponents: those aspects characterise any bureaucracy. Stalinism means 'alliance with capitalism'.

As a conception, 'Stalinism' rose out of the ruling bureaucratic layers of the USSR after 1924. It stopped the USSR spearheading the world revolution. It stopped the USSR spearheading the extension of the world revolution therefore, and it made the USSR serve own bureaucratic interests⁴ instead. In this resides its alliance with capitalism, and it lasted many years. Back in Britain, the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy felt backed-up, justified and vindicated against the working class. This worked hugely against the British workers. It increased the pressure on the workers to keep down.

In 1926, Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy intervened in Britain directly⁵ to help the bureaucracy of the TUC⁶ defeat the General Strike. That strike came close to the struggle for power because all the conditions were in place. Stalin's imbecilic policies rescued the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracy, the latter being therefore allowed to survive. The defeat of the British General Strike granted the workers' bureaucracy another lease of life in Britain.

Although the Trade Union and Labour bureaucracy recovered, they did not do so through their own ability. Only through our lack of leadership. The lack of working class leadership. The lack of working class leadership was not just in Britain, it was in the USSR. The working class' bureaucracy does not win through qualities of its own. It wins as long as the workers can be kept down.

⁴ This is the long and the large of the policy of 'Socialism in one country'. Edit.

⁵ Read *Trotsky on Britain*: On the **Anglo-Russian committee** particularly. Edit.

⁶ **TUC**: Trade Union Congress. Then recently formed, in 1926! Headed by Fred Bramley and Walter Citrine.

As time passed, particular events and the last two World Wars turned the world upside down. They did weaken the bureaucracy in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions. Proof is 1948 when the Labour Party bureaucracy was weakest and facing strong opponents. If it continued after that, it is due to world circumstances where Stalinism stayed at the core of international relations. At that point once again, Stalinism helped to keep the Labour Party's bureaucracy in place.

Nowhere in the world is there a workers' bureaucracy that has reached prominence through its own capabilities. Nowhere! Where you have bureaucracy, it is because no-one is removing it. In Britain or anywhere. This is how, in Britain, the bureaucracy of the workers' movement has kept going until now.

Bureaucracy uses power like capitalism does:

Bureaucratic and capitalist functioning have resembling traits, particularly at the level of power. Power often passes from 'father to son' in both cases, 'to be kept in the family'. Bureaucracy is a cleavage of material interests and capitalist interests that clinging to each other for fear of being overthrown. This is observable as much in capitalism as in working class' organisations or in the bureaucracies of the Workers States.

There never was in history a bureaucratic structure stronger than that of Stalin. Between 1924 and 1937, Stalin drew strength from the retreat of the world revolution. Then, he drew strength from the decapitation of the world revolutionary movement which he carried out himself. In 1926, as we have seen, he gave direct and open support to the Trade Union bureaucracy in Britain (the TUC). His stance towards capitalism gave energy to bureaucracy everywhere, particularly in the North American Trade Unions.

With Popular Fronts in France and Spain, the tide of revolution returned:

In the workers' organisations of the United States and Britain, the years of world revolutionary reflux (1924-1937) had allowed Stalin's policies to tip the balance in favour of bureaucracy and against the working class.

However, the tide of world revolution had stopped ebbing as early as 1936. As if to give a loud and decisive demonstration of this, the Popular Front was victorious in Spain. That was the time of fascism's full ascendancy. On that same date of January 1936, Cárdenas⁷ was welcoming Trotsky in Mexico. In this action, Cárdenas was not inspired by any particular revolution in Latin America. He was inspired by the world. The tide of world revolution was returning.

In May 1936, another Popular Front was preparing for victory in France. It had reformist policies, but the working class was regaining confidence. The Front was accompanied by a General Strike (May-June 1936) which astonished the bourgeois class - and the Socialist leaders - by its vigour and completeness. A total strike. It transformed the country. It shook the capitalist system. The less well-off workers, the least politicised or militant Trade Unions were those who started the strike. They were then followed by others and the massive movement eventually reached the vanguard sectors. These were then swept off their feet and hoisted into the leadership.

The General Strike in France won its demands in June. Its victory proclaimed to the world that the masses were ready. That the masses wanted change and social transformation. In Paris, police turned up in ten large coaches to arrest some 1,000

⁷ **Lázaro Cárdenas** (1895-1970), army general in the Mexican Revolution. President of Mexico 1934-1940.

workers. A demonstration formed around the 10 police coaches full of arrested workers. It stormed the coaches, freed the workers and burned down the coaches. Over there, somewhere, Stalin declared himself scandalised...

In Spain, the Popular Front had been in place since January. Civil war started in July, and it would last until 1939.

Those Popular Fronts had reformist illusions, certainly. Their aim was not to confront capitalism but to have capitalism better administered. Because this outlook was feeble, it failed to attract the petit bourgeoisie. In Spain and France, the petit bourgeoisie was favourable to the Popular Fronts; but it supported the Fronts electorally and not socially. When the bugle of social transformation sounded, the leaders of the Popular Fronts showed that they were unprepared; and that they had not prepared others. Last minute appeals did not suffice. Support for this kind of thing must be built beforehand.

Those Popular Fronts enjoyed big electoral majorities. As they had left the masses socially unorganised, imperialism decided to have Spain invaded. The Franco leadership did not do all the counter-revolution by itself! World imperialism backed it up. It organised the invasion of Spain via the Nazis of Germany and the fascists of Italy. Had Franco been left to fend alone, he would have been destroyed in one week. It was world capitalism that assured Franco's victory, aided in this matter by the French Socialist Party which refused to mobilise France in support the Spanish Revolution - an act that forced Spain to fight all by itself.

Now it was failure in Spain that reinforced Labour's alliance with capitalism:

Buoyed by the revolutionary failures in France and Spain, the Labour bureaucracy in Britain nestled deeper down in its apparatus; just as Stalin had done in the USSR. Everything

considered, the Labour Party's apparatus is not very different from Stalin's. Like Stalin, its overriding concern is to ensure that no debate or resolution contradicts it. Like Stalin, it will not let any workers' initiative threaten its alliance with capitalism.

This does not stop the fact that the Spanish civil war (1936-1939) provided the conditions for revolutionary upheavals throughout Europe. Where is the proof of this? Here it is: 180,000 volunteers from all over the world went to fight in Spain. Testifying to the reanimation of world revolution. It proved also that the retreat between 1924 and 1936 had not been complete. It had not been written in stone that Spain was going to be defeated. The 180,000 volunteers had not believed this.

In 1939, the defeat in Spain gave to the apparatus of the Labour Party a new reason to think that its policy of alliance with capitalism was unbeatable. As time passed, the Labour apparatus drew its strength from the limitations of the world Socialist and Communist parties, their submission to capitalism, their policies of alliance with capitalism above all.

In the 1930's, the British economy was still resting on a strong structure. The latter was the result of the British empire – a mighty empire that been the first of its kind to spread over the world. It had conquered and dominated entire countries. It had integrated them in such a way that the Commonwealth, for instance, had become a world of its own.

Bureaucracy rests on the absence of proletarian leadership:

The success of British imperialism was helped by its very early development. This gave it the freedom to create colonies and big bourgeois layers on every continent and before anyone else. This is how the bourgeoisies of India and Ceylon came about, along with others in Africa and Asia. These saw themselves as Britain's natural allies, and it was in Britain's interests to keep them as

such.

It is very largely on this basis that the imperialist function of Britain helped to establish, shape and fortify the bureaucratic structures in the Trade Unions.

Today ⁽¹⁹⁷⁸⁾, Japan, Britain, North America, France and Germany are the five strongest capitalist countries in the world. There have been revolutionary processes in all of them in the past, but those in Britain and North America have tended to be more constrained than elsewhere. The historic explanation for this is the huge weight of their Trade Union bureaucracies, compounded by the particular effect of Stalin upon these.

Germany has seen much greater revolutionary upheavals than Britain for instance. This said, it is still the German Social Democratic Party (SDP) that crushed the 1918 German Revolution. The SDP defeated the German Revolution and surrendered Germany to capitalism. This delivered a body blow to the prospect of revolution in Europe, but the proletariat was not smashed. It was soon Britain's turn to have a Revolutionary General Strike.

When the British proletariat took central stage in Europe in 1926, its General Strike was about power. The proletariat rose to take the lead in society. It showed to the world that it had not been waiting passively for years under its cloak of bureaucracy. The General Strike in Britain did not succeed because its basic requirement had been destroyed: Leadership, programme and policy. Stalin had just been at work trying to destroy it.

Mind that bureaucratic power is not the same as capitalist power:

The only true leadership in history was that of Lenin. After him, no other. And none was allowed to develop either. So much so

that the proletariat and the petit bourgeoisie in Britain, who had become politicised in the Second World War, did not make the necessary experiences. They were not allowed to accumulate the forces and build the traditions that would have served them well in 1948, when they could have gone further yet than they did.

The 'Stalinian conception' is a way of thinking and a thought structure, but what does it look like in practice? In practice, it is anti-revolutionary, counter-revolutionary and full of mystical notions. Closer inspection however soon reveals that these mystical notions are never too distant from guarded power-bases. Social Democracy behaves similarly, and this applies well to Social Democracy in Britain.

The power that Social Democracy enjoys and the power that Stalin grabbed for himself never came from any feats of their own. Neither Social Democracy nor Stalin ever won their positions through having defeated Revolution in a fight. Power fell into their laps, that is all. They came to prominence through the absence of leadership. The absence of leadership gave them the stage.

Lenin was the only 'leadership' in history that deserves the name. There came no other afterwards. As a result, the proletariat and the progressive petit bourgeoisie that had developed in Britain during WW2 found themselves insufficiently guided for the experiences they were making. This allowed the *capitalist apparatus* of the Labour Party, along with the *bureaucratic apparatus* of the Labour Party, and their allies in the Trade Unions, to leave State power in the hands of capitalism.

Marxism is 'science' applied to society:

Neither the Labour leaders nor the Communist parties have accepted, or accept, the dialectical method of thinking. They use

dialectics in secondary matters, but not in the matter of where the economy is going. They use shreds of dialectics in the field of the social struggles, and they do not use any of it to analyse British imperialism. And in all matters where a social characterisation is required, they remain stubbornly anti-dialectical⁸.

After Lenin's death, the preoccupation for dialectical materialism vanished from the world Communist movement. Marxism was dropped and replaced by a caricature of it. This is why one of the gurus of this farce, Eugen Varga⁹, understood nothing at all. The most that he did was to copy down Stalin's words, by far the safest option for him.

After Lenin, the continuity of Marxist thought was broken. What an enormous lack of tradition there is now in the use of its method! The world proletarian vanguard hardly hears about Marxism nowadays, and the British working class least of all. From Lenin's death in 1924 and Trotsky's expulsion (from the Political Bureau in 1926 and from the Communist Party in 1927), the Soviet Union regressed and regressed.

It is in the field of Marxism, and its use, that the USSR regressed the most. The effect was to cut off the British working class from the experience of the Russian Revolution, from the experience of Lenin, and from Marxism as a method. In their quests for social progress, the Labour Party and the Trade Unions were left with no example to look up to. The most damaging of all was the absence of guide in how to analyse society scientifically, which is what Marxism is about.

The entire Stalin period has been a tissue of corruption:

⁸ *The British Road to Socialism* in the the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) idealises the nation. It is no surprise that the general view of most Labour leaders is for the preservation of Britain's 'great role' in the world. Editorial comment.

⁹ Eugen Varga (1879-1964): Soviet representative in Hungary in 1919.

corruption of the revolutionary principle, corruption of Marxism, corruption of the socialist objective. What other historic experience was there to remedy this? When Trotsky lived¹⁰, the IV International was very small, and still in a world situation of revolutionary reflux.

Trotsky strained every sinew to impart confidence in the Marxist method. He foresaw that the situation was going to improve. His prognoses were not inspired by wishes but by demonstrations based on the use of dialectical materialism. His writings are paragons of analysis and foresight. They show how to interpret and explain. In 1938 he said: "*Within 10 years, millions of revolutionaries will move heavens and Earth*". It turned out to be only seven years, not ten!¹¹

In May 1943, Stalin formally liquidated the *Third International* and many Communist parties along with it. In November, he made a Pact with British, US and Japanese imperialism in Teheran. By that time, Stalin's policies were giving free rein to capitalism against the Chinese and Yugoslav Revolutions. Back in Britain, these policies reassured the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracies¹².

'Pluralism' and 'euro-communism' harmed the Labour Party:

After the Second World War, Stalin's policy of alliance with capitalism left the British proletariat rudderless. This too gave elbow room to the Labour and Trade Union bureaucracies. It stabilised their power, a power they had never fought for, as we explain above. And the result? More of their arrogance towards the working class. More of their disdain towards Marxism. More of their inability to analyse the economy objectively, and more

¹⁰ Trotsky founded the **IV International** in 1938. He was assassinated in 1940.

¹¹ It was **even less than seven** – 5 years only – if you consider the "millions that moved heavens and Earth" at Stalingrad in 1943. Editorial.

¹² This was very damaging considering how much farther towards Socialism the 1948 Labour government might have gone. Editorial.

of their ill-will towards the Workers States.

This effect of Stalinism in the Labour Party weighed equally heavily in all the Communist parties.

With the rise of Stalin, the continuity of Marxism was broken and Trotsky had only few years left to live. This is how it happened that, apart from ourselves, no organisation dedicated itself to the task of showing to the Labour Party how to analyse scientifically, how to foresee scientifically, and how to reach materialist and dialectical conclusions.

Apart from ourselves, no organisation has done this. No organisation has dedicated itself to showing to Labour how to build its Party. The building of the Labour Party can only be done in light of the dialectical perspectives contained in the processes evolving ahead of us.

To this day ⁽¹⁹⁷⁸⁾ the Communist parties have been backpedalling and retreating. As their views and positions stayed glued to the Stalinian conception, they arrived at the notions of 'pluralism' and 'euro-communism' which they defend now. It does not seem to trouble them that, to get to this point, they had to jettison *the dictatorship of the proletariat* and *proletarian internationalism*.

Imagine the effects of all this on the Labour & Trade Union bureaucracy. The latter too has no time for *the dictatorship of the proletariat* and *proletarian internationalism*. Do not think that it has not understood what this fuss was about. It has! It took it all in. It fed on the cowardice of the Communists, and still does. It feels entirely justified to continue ignoring history and its processes.

The bureaucracy in the British Labour movement is a stratum, a caste. It has no idea how it landed the power it has. It is as un-

knowing about the causes for its pre-eminence as about the conditions that made it possible.

As far as the bureaucracy is concerned, Britain is an economic bastion where Socialism will be centuries in the coming. One little new step each century, that should do it.

The only thing bureaucracy knows is that the country needs administering. And who needs social transformation? Social transformation is not needed, surely, since not even the Communists speak of it.

From Labour - to Communism ...

Communism is the logical destination of the process of history. We do not reach this conclusion from our strong desire, although our desire is strong. We have simply observed that the moving process of history goes to Communism. The development of the economy and of its centralisation demands the complete utilisation of science and technology. In capitalism, science and technology suffocate.

If you were to put science and technology at the service of human intelligence, all the present economic and human problems would be solved in five years. Five years would be enough to eradicate hunger. Well used, the energy of the atom can breathe life into everything, and stop all the killing right. Who does not agree that this is possible and that it must be done? Capitalism. Only capitalism does not agree with this. Atomic knowledge does not deliver death. Capitalism does.

The necessity of Communism is called forth by relations that are already in place. These relations are already binding together the economy, science, technology and human intelligence. Communism is needed by life and the human need to live - a human need that capitalism cannot satisfy. These relations are

objective and irrevocable. Nobody can give orders to history. Nobody can choose their own brand of Communism either. There is no Communism 'à la carte'.

On the road to social transformation, various leaderships adopt different methods. They can proceed in a variety of ways, but what they cannot do is change the destination of the road. Because the destination is Communism, the varying programmes from the varying leaders in the world end up looking similar. Their tactics can vary; but not all that much, because tactics can never stray very far from the goals in the programmes.

The notion of 'euro-communism' responds to hopes that are timid, fearful and bureaucratically-interested. Such hopes can only arise amongst Communists because of a lack of sufficient research and development in the field of communist ideas. Amongst Communists, the persistence of hopes lacking so much in objectivity indicates a lack of proper investigation.

The problem of a lack of leadership is not specific to Britain:

The Argentinian Communist Party sits back and waits for Videla¹³ to implement democracy. A few years ago, as Echeverria¹⁴ was returning from a tour of the USSR and China, the Mexican Communist Party called "for the overthrow of fascist Echeverria". This was practically on the same day when Echeverria said: "If China and the USSR unite, we will resolve all the problems in Mexico". He was suggesting that this unification, in being revolutionary, would help Mexico to bring down capitalism. For the Mexican Communists, however, Echeverria was a fascist.

In conditions where the Communists are so limited, it is no

¹³ **Jorge Videla** (1925-2013), leader of the coup in Argentina against Isabel Martinez-de Perón. His murderous military dictatorship lasted 1976-1981.

¹⁴ **Luis Echevarria** (Born in 1922). President Mexico 1970-1976.

surprise to find a sturdy layer of labour bureaucracy in North America and in Britain. But it is not as if that bureaucracy had been fighting for its corner and grown strong from its victories. No such thing! It is a layer that was just left in place. It drew its strength and nourishment from the Communists not challenging capitalism, not presenting any anti-capitalist programme, not having any socialist policies. The Communists' abandonment of Communism reduced to trickles the spread of dialectical ideas and analytical currents. This greatly sustained the workers' bureaucracies up to now.

Mind that we are not saying that the limitations of the Communist parties make the Labour bureaucracy inevitable or eternal. We are not saying this! What we say is that the present situation ⁽¹⁹⁷⁸⁾ is utterly transitory.

The power of the Labour apparatus is transitory:

The task for the left in Britain is to help create a current in the Labour Party: A current that thinks dialectically. A current keenly interested in generalising the feeling of ability and confidence which comes with handling objective ideas and the dialectical method.

The power of the bureaucracy in the Labour Party and the Trade Unions cannot exist for ever. It has always been subject to pressures, particularly those coming from the world relations of forces.

The recent Miners' strike¹⁵ in the United States is more important even than the victory which it obtained. There is a combative tradition in the US miners. Only, they were 720,000 in 1936 and now they are 200,000 ⁽¹⁹⁷⁸⁾. They retained their fighting spirit however, and won their main demand: The right to strike

¹⁵ The Bituminous Coal Strike in the United States, from Dec 1977 to March 1978.

without repression.

These Miners won also the right to be hospitalised at the employers' expenses, the right to medical attention, and other rights when on strike. Three times the Union leaders called the workers back to work, and three times they were ignored. Carter¹⁶ himself ordered: "Back to work!" and nothing happened. Carter did not dare use the full force of the '90-days strike suspension' law. He decided on 9 days instead, fearing the reaction of the North American people.

North American and British imperialism are not omnipotent. They don't do everything they like. You measure the way they become decrepit and weak in their lack of resolve and competence. They can no longer go about the world, give orders and simply impose themselves.

The same process affects the bureaucratic layers in the Labour Party and Trade Unions. The world perspectives do not favour their continuation. Clueless about dialectical thinking, they deprive themselves of the means to groom their new layers of bureaucrats. This lessens their ability to shut out the revolutionary ideas. As time passes, these bureaucratic layers become less fit to hold on to the power of capitalism, which is the only power they have.

The world relations of forces pull in a direction opposed to that of their power. The Soviet leaders who decide to intervene in Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia and Vietnam are reversing the policy of 'pacific coexistence' with capitalism. Although this change comes from the Soviet leaders, it comes in reality from the Soviet economy. This is so because, in order to advance, the Soviet economy must liquidate capitalism. If not, it enters a crisis.

¹⁶ Jimmy Carter (Born 1924), President of the United States 1977-1981.

We hear a lot these days of 'dissidents'¹⁷ in the USSR and the Eastern European Workers States. These people come from the bureaucratic layer that has just been removed due to the change in Soviet policies¹⁸. The 'dissidents' are the former allies of the present Soviet leaders. The progress of the Soviet Union is casting them aside.

When coexistence with capitalism was official Soviet policy, the function of the Workers State was stifled and mutilated. But to exist at all, the Soviet economy must expand and extend in the world. Per force this clashes with the capitalist system! This is the principle that will eventually liquidate not only the bureaucracy in the Workers States, but that in the Labour Party too, and in the Trade Unions.

Social transformation will roll over the apparatus:

In the apparatus of the Labour Party, they do not discuss the objective experiences of history. But history is the most compelling teacher of its own experiences. The Labour and Trade Unions' apparatuses do not learn from history, but the masses of Africa do! As soon as the masses of Africa broke out of slavery, they moved in the direction of the Workers States. Mugabe does not represent the Workers State, but he represents a very elevated nationalism which can only be fulfilled by going the same way as Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia.

Such are the events that sap at the power of the bureaucracy. Any major upheaval in the world is bound to shatter Britain more than it already is, demanding dialectical thinking. The

¹⁷ This refers to a layer of **dissidents** from the Workers State and Communism. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sakharov were amongst those. In the Moscow Helsinki Group, there was Yuri Orlov. There were other such groups in 1978.

¹⁸ In 1977, **the New Soviet Constitution** declared that the USSR would support all the Movements for National Liberation. This basic departure from *Socialism in One Country* led to the 'dissidence' of former Soviet leaders. Editorial.

bureaucratic Labour leaders have no programme or policies because they have no aim beyond the world as it exists. In their view, the world as it exists is British capitalism, US capitalism, French capitalism and German capitalism. As for the 'socialist countries', well, they just happen to be there, you know.

Empiricism prevented the organisation of Labour currents:

Amongst the top Labour leaders as they have existed up to now, not one has written an objective line on the economy, on art, or even on football. They are the simple coordinators of the capitalist system. They are its administrators. They find strength in the apparatus – but the apparatus disintegrates. The arrogance of the apparatus is still 'in your face', but it is rotting inside. The day will come when the whole pack will fall.

There is no future for those who defend the Labour apparatus. They have the power of the machine, but they have nothing besides. They never had any dialectical and rational Party political life. They felt untouchable up until the end of Khrushchev¹⁹. That period in the USSR gave them strength. Now, they have little to cling to.

In the bureaucratic apparatus, power is not driven by intelligence. It is driven by people constantly measuring the relative strength of capitalism against the malleability of the Communist, Socialist and Trade Union leaderships.

From malleable Communist, Socialist and Trade Unions leaderships, the Labour Party never learnt more than its own method of empiricism. This was aggravated by the most empirical policy imaginable, that of Stalin, with its purges, acts of violence, coups and assassinations against the anti-capitalist

¹⁹ **Nikita Khrushchev** (1894-1971), led the USSR 1958-1963. "*Khrushchev continued the Stalinian policy of conciliation with world capitalism, and the Labour bureaucracy based itself upon this*", J Posadas, in an addendum to this text.

vanguard of the world.

The empiricism that characterises the Labour Party was unnecessarily boosted by the empiricism of Stalin's policies. It is true that the Labour leaders were master empiricists already, but Stalinism lent them yet more clout against the formation of proletarian currents and tendencies in the Labour Party. In the process that calls for the transformation of the Labour Party, this has been a most specific and fundamental obstacle. It has contributed to preventing the rise of dialectical thinking and discussing in the Labour Party.

Build a Labour left no longer dependent on leaders:

The British Communist Party (CPB) says nothing about the monarchy in its programme. This failure too has contributed to the power of the Labour bureaucracy. In Britain, the monarch plays no part in the intelligent organisation of the country. Capitalism clings to this institution because it knows, and fears, that upheavals and transformations are coming, and that ideas and thoughts are going to be transformed too.

Any challenge to the monarchy is going to trigger calls for a Republic as part of a quick transition towards socialist transformation. It is the fear of this reality that keeps the queen nailed where she is. And this, with the help of the Communist Party of Britain, CPB. The first line of the CPB's programme should read: "*Down with the monarchy!*" and "*For a Democratic and Socialist Republic*". The Communists must at least call for a 'Democratic Republic'! All they offer is a democratic queen!

It is not rare for Labour leaders to speak of nationalisations. They can talk well about it, and yet nothing happens. If you remind them, they say: "Ah yeah, nationalisation. Let's see, please wait". If you come back again, they say: "Let's see, yes, very good what you say. I am a bit busy just now". Such Labour

leaders are not to be trusted. They are not important. The important thing is to build a movement that no longer relies on them!

The Labour leaders favour the kind of nationalisation that has no political consequences. To date, no Labour leadership has ever declared its commitment to nationalisations with political consequences.

Rest assured that such a leadership will come.

It can only come from the struggles.

Finance capital concentrates for ever more upon itself to deal with its crisis. This leaves fewer and fewer countries at the top, able to compete. These are only about five left these days who can do this. The process of revolutionary transformation must advance a little more in the world before it reaches a country like Britain.

In Britain, the density of bureaucratic structure is not going to disappear overnight. British capitalism has still a certain force. Big upheavals are coming. One must intervene in these upheavals to help organise Marxist currents.

Some left-wing groups can be won over to this task. Generally speaking, however, they do not contribute to Marxism. They are eclectic, petulant and anti-communist above all. Where their anti-bureaucratic stance is anti-communist, do not seek in them the engine of class struggle.

J POSADAS

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