

# AFGHANISTAN, IMPERIALISM, THE USSR AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM

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First Part

*Editorial note to the reader: this text is in two parts. The first dated 31.12.1979, is an analysis made by comrade Posadas immediately after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. The second part dated 5.1.1980 refers to the unfolding events and broadens the analysis.*

*On the French speaking section of this site, there are two more texts by J Posadas as follows: "On the Revolutionary State Coup in Afghanistan" 27.4.1978, and "Afghanistan and the discussion for the progress of history" 20.1.1980. These will eventually be added to this book.*

*All subtitles and footnotes are from the Editorial Board. More reading on Afghanistan on [posadiststoday.com](http://posadiststoday.com) - 16.11.2021*

The present process shows the depth of the capitalist crisis and the development of the Workers States. In that process, capitalism has arrived to a more open display of its war preparations - an index of its crisis. In the various countries, this crisis is not essentially or particularly of an economic or social order. It is the crisis of the capitalist system in front of the Workers States. This crisis does not spill out of a strike or of unemployment. It is not even due to the market being saturated. All this exists and forms part of the conditions of crisis. But about this crisis however, its essential depth lies in the fact that capitalism can no longer put up with the progress of the Workers States; a progress expressing itself most of all in the intervention of the Workers States to stimulate the spread of social transformation.

In any part of the world nowadays, the workers movements are aware of the existence of a support, a sustaining power and a relation of forces in the world greater than their own. They know this strength does not come from their Party or from themselves. It comes from a world balance of forces with a center located in the existence of the Workers States, the existence of the Soviet Union.

This process doesn't unfold in all countries in the same way. It is uneven and combined. Countries with not much working class, political, trade union or military preparation, decide to take the road of social transformation. They don't have much strength and their development is very uneven in comparison with the rest of the world. They are poor, they have no developed economy, and still they find the strength to progress towards social transformation.

This unequal and combined process gives to the most backward countries the resolve to make social transformations. This applies to very small countries like Grenada, a small island in the Caribbean, where they decide to adopt a socialist program. Grenada is a small country with neither the

economic conditions, the financial base, nor the links with the world to explain this decision. It is a small island, but it is stimulated to adopt a socialist program.

This decision coming from Grenada on a one hand, and Soviet support for the revolutionary movement in Afghanistan on the other, are two essential strands in this uneven and combined process. It is the world relations of forces that determine the course of this process, economic, social, political, revolutionary and military.

Any important aspect in these five categories is determined by the world relations of forces. The world relations of forces determine what happens in each of them. This is going to influence all the communist parties. In the Workers States, a factor of concentration accumulates all the forces necessary to the progress of history, whilst in the capitalist system, this factor accumulates all the detritus. This tends towards the reduction, the elimination of the conditions that have provided for the existence of all bureaucracies. Reduction and elimination does not mean disappearance. Bureaucracies can live on and have some activity, but the process tends towards their elimination.

In this same process, movements issued from protest campaigns start developing more organically, like the Ecologists, or the Homosexuals to a lesser degree. Ecology is the result of the barbarism of the capitalist system. To resolve the problems of Ecology, it is necessary to resolve the cause of the problems, which is the capitalist system. This necessity is expressed in a special and particular Ecology movement because the workers parties do not fulfil their role of overcoming capitalism. It is their duty to destroy the capitalist system and build socialism, but they have not done it. This is why particular movements get formed, the Cannabis movement, the Ecology and the Homosexuals ones.

The existence of such movements expresses the absence of the necessary historic response for which the conditions exist. But the old Communist parties, the Socialists, the trade unions and the Workers States themselves have not given that response. It is not true that this response could not be given. The idea is not to indict the Workers States, but to establish that they have not dealt with these problems. Because to deal with these problems demands the actual implementation of capitalist destruction, elimination and overcoming.

The complete and acute crisis of the capitalist system leads it to war preparation - and this, in the most open way. In the past, capitalism proceeded in stages; negotiating with the Soviet Union on weapons, negotiating on SALT, pretenses of agreement with the Workers States, etc. Capitalism used to conceal its search for ways to survive. It can no longer do this now. If it still appears to do so, it is only superficially. The tensions intensify with such force that the Workers States have to react. See how the Workers States intervene now, and as they do so, how it becomes plainer that even bureaucratic sectors inside themselves find the need to stand up to capitalism. Even if this should mean war. What this shows, even more importantly, is that the bureaucracy is now obliged to ponder the war with some elements of foresight. This is no longer as in Stalin's times, when the Soviet bureaucracy made an alliance with the Germans (imperialists) in hope that the German's first strike would be against the so-called democratic capitalists. But it was Stalin that the Germans attacked first! See here all the lack of political capacity of the bureaucracy - its lack of understanding of the historic function of the Workers State. Bureaucratic thought is essentially limited to its own interests. This is why it cannot see or interpret the world.

It is necessary to understand this process. There was a time when one had to understand the Permanent Revolution and the Political Revolution. Now, one has to understand this which is

happening today. All the old Trotskyism has been annihilated because it did not prepare theoretically, politically and organizationally to understand today. Those involved have retained the thought of Political Revolution and Permanent Revolution, but only to continue to conflate Soviet leadership and Stalinism. And when they deal with Stalinism, they do not feel impelled to expand on its general form - they only focus on particular aspects. The organizations who have not moved from the Stalinism of 1935 show their political annihilation. They have no more to do with Trotskyism, nor even with revolutionary ideas. They are detritus. The Ecology movement exists because there is a need - a need that the workers parties do not address. The old Trotskyism does not respond to this. It expresses the backwardness it has fallen into. It does not see the progress of history because it has become marginalized. It does not tie its functioning to the progress of history, to the progress of the Communist parties, and even less to the progress of the Workers States.

There are such ultra-left and rightist organizations in the Workers States as well. In Yugoslavia, right wingers exist who correspond to groups like Rouge in France<sup>1</sup>; they correspond to all the movements still living on the critique of the Communist parties and of the Workers States. They give no thought to today being another situation. A situation where the final settlement of accounts is being prepared (the war system against system. Editorial note). In today's situation, the Workers States support and impel the world revolutionary movement in practically all the necessary forms - limitedly in some cases, but they support.

In our present relations of world forces, those who continue with the old Trotskyism give no thought to the situation the Workers States find themselves in. Today, the Workers States have no choice but to become associated with the progress of the world revolution against the capitalist system. The old Trotskyist organizations do not see this. They continue speaking of Political Revolution and Permanent Revolution, but they do not value the experiences and the conclusions of the present historic process. Their interpretations have become backward.

History gives clear and decisive guidelines. If Grenada decides to advance towards Socialism - without strength, economy, technicians or preparation - it is because it receives the influence and the impulse of the world process of the revolution. This means that in the world, people see capitalism as weak and the Workers States as strong. They respond to the fact that historic necessity means Socialism. They want Socialism. A country like Grenada has little in the way of anything, but it has experienced the most brutal forms of exploitation under British imperialism. It is not a strong country, but it has decided to find the road to Socialism. It wants progress, and its people accept this. With only a few plantation workers, Grenada has little proletarian base. It was never allowed much culture or educational knowledge, but it is the socialist road that it wants.

## THE SOVIET INTERVENTION IS FIRM AND RESOLUTE

Afghanistan uncovers a situation similar to that in Grenada. Afghanistan initiated a revolutionary process two years ago. The leadership was indecisive then, because there was no Party, no trade unions and no leadership. The Soviets were slow in lending it enough support to create a movement, or a Communist Party. As political indecision was allowed to prevail, political layers formed with no homogeneous programming or anti-capitalist understanding. This gave way to the currents and

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<sup>1</sup> 'Rouge' is the paper of the Mandelists in France.

tendencies linked to the old feudal sectors governing Afghanistan. Even in that situation, the Soviets intervened for two years. Their intervention was politically limited, but a government appeared with some socialist resolve. The sector of Hafizullah Amin in Afghanistan was not similar to that of Pol Pot in Cambodia. He came from a movement of bourgeois origins mixed with petit bourgeois sectors, combined with others more linked to the Soviet Union and the Communist Party. With Pol Pot in Cambodia, the movement was communist - or considered to be so. In Afghanistan, Amin was a sector more linked to bourgeois structures.

The Soviets did not intervene in Afghanistan with defined educational policies, explanations or examples of socialist measures. This is what allowed the bourgeois sectors to prevail. This timid attitude on the part of the Soviets came from their fear of imperialism, but also from their fear to compromise their own apparatus. Had this been different, there would have been no necessity for an Amin to appear in Afghanistan. The same happened with the Communist Party of Iran. The latter was very brave, but its erroneous policy stopped it foreseeing Khomeini. It did not believe that the process could give rise to a Khomeini.

See how the Soviets intervene in the world, and with troops. They do it in conditions where imperialism does not hide that it is preparing for war. The Workers States respond through the Soviet Union, and the resoluteness of the Soviet Union in this matter shows how it prepares for the war that imperialism is preparing.

Through the Soviet Union, the Workers States show that they are prepared to confront imperialism. They are ready to win all the territory, all the countries, all the historic political, social, economic bases, all the facilities of countries in whatever part of the world, to confront the capitalist system. They do not seem overly preoccupied - they are preoccupied in part, but not essentially - by the reaction of imperialism to its interventions.

This attitude of the USSR is totally to the opposite of when Stalin made the pact with Hitler. Now, the USSR does not make a pact with Yankee imperialism. Instead of that, it impels the revolution everywhere in the world. This leaves no room for backward left movements like those of Trotskyist origins who do not see this. The problems of today are no longer resolved in a regular, normal, electoral, parliamentary or even trade union way. They are resolved in a concentrated way, in the form of the system-against-system confrontation.

It is true that the French and Italian proletariat is very powerful and strong; and that the Communist and Socialist parties of these two countries are strong also. It is true that British Laborism is strong, but the genuine representation of the world proletariat is the Soviet Union. It is not even the communist parties or the trade unions of France, Italy, etc. It is the Soviet Union. There, the world proletariat sees the realization of the anti-capitalist struggle. It sees in the Workers State the representation of the historic and concrete interests of the working class against the capitalist system. This does not take anything away from the proletariat of France, Italy or Britain, or the great courage and determination of their struggles. Only, the masses of the world are guided by what the Soviet Union represents more than by the actions of the proletariat and communist parties.

This is what decides. The process today leaves no room for backward movements that do not understand - be they of Trotskyist origins or not. Events are pushing these organizations to a small margin. Those involved do not understand how this can be, but if Ecological movements exist today, it is because Ecology is needed. Ecology is the protest-riposte of the population. It is supported by

persons of petit bourgeois origins, sometimes well-off, but petit bourgeois in general, and also bourgeois sectors as well.

Ecology is generally the response of the petit bourgeoisie, especially the poorer sectors of it. Those involved create movements with particular concerns because they are not attracted to the Socialists and the Communists. The latter lack in continuity, in consistency and in anti-capitalist political confidence. The result is the start of movements that remove themselves from central-stage; but who also show that to protect the environment and improve human life, one must eliminate what pollutes. Which is the capitalist system. It is not the fault of the Ecologists if they stand apart. It is a consequence of the lack of security and confidence in the workers parties. These parties did not wage the anti-capitalist struggle in time, and they should have done it.

Three years ago, and in one of the most important Manifestos of the Posadist IV International, we referred to the Ecologists. We supported their concerns and posed the need for their incorporation in the workers parties. The existence of Ecologists does not show that the struggle against capitalism is decomposing, fractioning or splitting. It shows that the will for anti-capitalist combat exists, a combat where the Workers States and the communist parties have been deficient. Movements like the Ecologists are therefore those who maintain the combat! This is how to see and win them.

The new movements being formed (like the Ecologists) get no support or acceptance from the capitalist system because they are against the capitalist system. The Homosexuals of Europe have not been considered important or significant, but they unite between themselves and do not wish for the continuation of capitalism. They join the struggles where the left develops. This happens because of the rupture of the capitalist system with culture, science, art, human progress and civilization.

It is in those conditions that capitalism prepares for war: Conditions for ever less favourable to it - and for ever more favourable to the revolutionary movements. Movements as in Grenada, Nicaragua, El Salvador. People observe with increasing conviction and confidence that the road to progress passes through the anti-capitalist struggle. They are stimulated to take part. The countries we named are 'backward' in the sense that they have nothing. This is the uneven side of this history, but the combined side is that other countries, in other parts of the world, equally with nothing - like Cuba, Ethiopia, Angola or Mozambique - have already waged great struggles and triumphed. The successful revolutionary movements in those places won victories by attracting the communist parties, or by becoming communist parties themselves; communist parties following on the road of the Soviet Union today, mind. In these conditions, capitalism is left with no point of support or aid. It prepares the war in utmost solitude.

In this stage of struggle, as in Afghanistan where the Soviets have decided to intervene (since 25 December 1979), the conditions are different from Poland and Finland in 1939. In those days, there was only one Workers State, the USSR. To face down the Nazis, the USSR under Stalin had to invade Poland and Finland. Stalin did this to gain space, and because of this, Trotsky supported the measure. The idea was to keep the Nazis at a distance. Not long afterwards, the Nazis also invaded Poland: that was to get closer to the Soviet frontier and deploy against the USSR in a pincers' movement.

So, it was with perfect right that the Soviet Union invaded Poland. People accused Trotsky of supporting an *invasion* perpetrated by the *Stalinism* that wanted him dead. Trotsky replied that the invasion of Poland was a necessary evil. He also said that the historic problem being posed in this

matter was not going to be resolved through small countries. It was going to be resolved at world level through the large ones, Germany, France, Britain, the USSR.

The social progress of history was at stake in 1939, and only the large countries could decide. When it comes to the small countries, they count little as instruments for the progress of history because they can be forced to bend to one side or the other. In this event, Poland did not have a force of its own. Decision-making was in the hands of the big powers. The small countries were going to suffer the consequences, but Trotsky saw the Soviet invasion as a necessary evil. That action was interrupting 'democratic' life of Poland certainly, but the aim was to find a superior level of democratic life. The Soviet Union did not induce a Workers State in Poland at that point, nor was it possible just then. But it helped this to happen afterwards, when Poland became a Workers State.

The invasion that truly wanted Poland smashed was that of the nazis. Not so regarding the Soviets. Observe how the problems of democracy and of democratic rights are correlated with the process of the progress of history. Had the Soviets not invaded Poland, the Germans would have crossed Poland and appeared on the Soviets' frontier. Had the Soviets respected the rights of this small country, the beneficiary would have been the power (nazis) bent on making history retreat. Trotsky never saw democracy as a decoration. He always saw it as a function of history, there to serve progress.

Capitalism declares (in opposition to Soviet intervention): "Let the people of Afghanistan decide!". It claims that its capitalist system offers a freedom and democracy where 'the people can decide'. But it is not the people that decide in capitalism. The ruling class decides in capitalism, not the people. It is different when - as in Nicaragua - the people intervene under the guidance of their anti-capitalist political leaders. The 'let the people decide' abstraction does not stand scrutiny. In Afghanistan, where the Soviets intervene militarily, the Soviets contribute to the elevation of the life conditions for everyone in that country. And they help to eliminate at the same time the sectors in Afghan society that repress and assassinate the Afghan people.

The Yankees occupy Puerto Rico militarily. Why don't they leave Puerto Rico? Those on the left who protest the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan - why don't they make a campaign against the Yankee occupation of Puerto Rico? Why not demand the expulsion of imperialism from the zones it occupies and has no right to? All the zone in the South East of the United States belonged to Mexico. The British (imperialists) still have colonies in Latin America. Let us focus on this! The not raising of those points helps the 'democracy' of the Yankee capitalists to continue to assassinate people. This 'democracy' is a label, a sham, it does not exist. Democracy is not the right to vote or elect. It is the right to live, to progress, to improve the conditions of life, and to gather freely the means to obtain these things. There are times when one country must enter another to assist it. If a country contributes technical, scientific and cultural means to improve the life of another, its intervention is neither an invasion nor an occupation. It is not a retreat of history. In such a case however, one must propose the full development of Soviets and Soviet democracy in the country of intervention.

This conception of democracy has to be applied to Afghanistan. Democracy is an instrument for the progress of history. Those who want the Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan in the name of 'democracy' are serving political reaction. Their 'democracy' does not defend the historic rights demanded by the progress of life. It attacks the Soviet Union. It bows to the power intent on making the rights of life retreat. All those who are concerned with the interpretation and the application of

democratic conclusions must check these against the necessity of the progress of history - with respect to Afghanistan or any other country.

Many of those who write on this matter, of Trotskyist, communist or socialist origins, are furiously attacking the Soviet Union on grounds that it *invades* a country. They sometimes say that the USSR stops the right of Afghanistan to develop, but they do not say what 'right' is in question. There is feudalism in Afghanistan. When the critics say that 'the people must speak' in Afghanistan, it is a hoodwinking distortion. What 'people'? Outside the revolutions, there is no place where the people decide. Electoral representation is a deceit and a lie. In elections, a layer intervenes - it may be 20% of the population - which is bourgeois and has nothing to do with progress. In Britain for example, the Conservatives just won thanks to some 20% of the votes from a layer that has nothing to do with life, with history, with culture, art, or anything else; and these include the Queen and all her family.

The big proprietors of land, banks, industry and commerce have nothing to do with anything. And they have no idea about anything. They have no knowledge or culture - and yet, they intervene. There are 70, 80, or 90 year-old who have nothing more to do than to collect the interests on their investments. These people vote, but on the base of what do they vote?

Regarding all the champions of liberty and democracy that we have just mentioned: what democracy and liberty do they defend? Democracy is an instrument of the progress of history, and history is that of the class struggle, and the class struggle is Workers States versus capitalist system. It is all this that the function of democracy must correlate with.

If we demand democracy in the capitalist system, it is because democratic rights serve to impel the class struggle towards a Workers State. Democratic rights are not an abstraction. They are an instrument for the progress of history. That 'the peoples decide' is a lie. No single 'people' exists that can decide through its own will. It does not have the means to do so. Children of eight work in India, in Latin America, even in Europe. They vote when they are 18, but at 8 they already work. We are told that the children do not have the consciousness to vote, but *to be exploited* yes, the children have a use. If the children voted, they would do so in accordance with their function in the economy. The person of 80 who collects the profits, has a consciousness yes: - a capitalist one. There is a whole mystification about democracy, a mystification shared by the groups of Trotskyist origin when they say: 'let the people decide!'. What people? In Afghanistan, it was not 'the people' who decided before.

In Afghanistan now, it is precisely with the support of the Soviet troops that 'the people can decide'. It is now that the people can stand up and go against the landowners who were the ones supported by Amin<sup>2</sup>, by imperialism, by socialist parties, and movements of socialist origins, but not by the population of Afghanistan.

As a remnant and consequence of past feudal dominion, many countries face the same problems. Take Iran. How can one say that the government of Khomeini is a dictatorship, same as the Shah?

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<sup>2</sup> Hafizullah Amin took power in 1978 in Afghanistan. He had communist origins and formed a pro-Soviet administration. This earned him the enmity of the landowners and their anti-Soviet imperialist allies. Amin went on to make agreements with the landowners, as well as with Pakistan and the USA. He then assisted in the coup of the landowners against his former comrades. The Soviet intervention helped the revolutionary process that defeated this coup. Amin was killed on 27.12.79 and replaced by pro-Soviet Babrak Karmal. A pro-Soviet administration remained in power in Afghanistan for three years after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989.

The dictatorship of the Shah was linked with the CIA. It impeded the development of the economy, of culture, of civilization. It was a world reactionary springboard and base for the capitalist system. The revolution in Iran has cancelled this. How then say that Iran has not changed? It is a lie to say so. The movements who say that Iran has not changed fail to see that even with all the theological, religious limitations of the Muslim movement, Iran impels the struggle against the capitalist system and is one of its supports. If the Iranian leadership is indecisive and lacks consistency, this will get resolved in an evolution of movement, of program, of policy, of discussion to incorporate the population. But to say that Iran must have 'complete liberty' in order to advance is to negate reality. For our part, we want complete freedom certainly, but with the socialist program.

In Iran, we support the present progress being made, even if it is led by the Muslim movement, because it rises up in struggle against the capitalist system. One makes alliances with transitory allies, and in the process of the alliance, a part of the ally is won. It is like this with Khomeini<sup>3</sup>. If the democratic, socialist or communist movements do not understand this, it is not through ill will or because they are allies of the capitalist system, but because they do not have the theoretical and political preparation to understand. This leaves them baffled by the impressions of democratic abstractions. They do not see democracy as an instrument of progress.

For example, Afghanistan is under feudalism. To progress, the Soviets have no other remedy than to intervene. Not only to defend the frontiers of the USSR, but to have Afghanistan advance and so also defend the frontiers of the USSR. To make Afghanistan advance, in this instance, is an instrument for the progress of history.

There is not one single anti-Soviet *mass* movement in any country of the world. Not one. Neither can the Yankees make one. Regarding the 'left' movements we have mentioned above, they propose an abstract defense of democracy. They are often intellectuals, state employees, functionaries and the like. They live incarcerated in themselves, not in contact with the progress of the struggles, not in contact with the significance of the struggles. They do not see that in Afghanistan, even with Soviet intervention, this tends to eliminate feudalism and impel the Workers State. Even for those who recognize the need to make democratic-soviet demands on behalf of Afghanistan, they must do so by supporting the present Soviet intervention because it is a necessary instrument.

The US supports of the Shah - is this not an intervention? The Shah has stolen 15 thousand million dollars from Iran. Is there a government leader in the world who earns 15 thousand million dollars in the job? Yankee imperialism finds this ok, but hasn't Iran the legitimate right to retaliate against US imperialism that protects the Shah? Shouldn't all the above-mentioned critics of the Soviet Union - Trotskyists, Democrats, Socialists and Communists - declare that the thousands of millions of dollars stolen by the Shah must return to Iran? Mustn't the United States be tried for having aided and abetted criminals and assassins in Iran? If something attacks democracy, isn't it the US' intervention in Iran? It is not the Soviet troops that attack democracy in Afghanistan! The Soviet intervention brings human progress to Afghanistan, and the protectors of the Shah bring it retrogression.

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<sup>3</sup> The Ayatollah Khomeini was raised into government by the Iranian Revolution of 1 Feb 1979.

## THE WORKERS PARTIES LACK UNDERSTANDING IN FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

In our historic stage, the political experiences being made expand in every direction. The present political groups, and the Communist parties themselves, lack the theoretical and political preparation to intervene in them. In the case of the Communist parties - of Italy, France and elsewhere - this causes them to adopt uneven positions with respect to the Soviet Union. In this matter, their differences depend on how each Party receives the influence of its country's bourgeois class. Far from decreasing, this unevenness is bound to become more marked and extended.

The instruments of history are the communist parties, the big trade unions and the Workers States. Apart from the partial criticisms to be addressed to the Workers States on their roads to progress, it is necessary to give unconditional support to the historic function that they play. The positions of groups like 'Rouge' are no use. Their attitudes and criticisms are increasingly outside history.

The communist parties do not educate their cadres in the certainty of dialectical preparation. This makes their political positions constantly contradictory. The French Communist Party used to give outright support to Soviet policy. Then came the time, even before the Soviets' intervention in Czechoslovakia, when it suddenly produced criticisms and doubts regarding the Soviet Union. And when it adopted Euro-communism and pluralism, it became resistant to the idea of an alliance and united front with the Soviet Union.

For a Communist Party, an alliance or a common front with the Soviet Union cannot be an episode or a tactic about one problem or other. The united front with the Soviet Union is the precise and consistent program of the anti-capitalist struggle.

To deal with those problems, the communist parties, the Socialists and the trade unions have to become more persistent, consistent and determined. Capitalism can no longer give anything anymore. The workers movement and the workers parties are increasingly pressed to surpass the diversions and disputes. They must respond to the workers' demands, keep on responding, keep on progressing.

This becomes more evident as capitalism concedes no more. If Ecology has arisen, it is because capitalism has nothing more to offer. When a revolutionary movement appears in Grenada, takes power and speaks of Socialism, it's because capitalism does not provide anymore. Besides, Grenada and Nicaragua show the authority that Socialism has, even in the most so-called 'backward' countries of the world.

This process is much more profound than what shows on the surface. It is a constant source of crisis. Crisis in the capitalist system, crisis in the communist parties. Only, with the communist parties, crisis leads to changes in the leaders. Take the French Communist Party. It once spoke against the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, now it supports the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan! It is not that the Afghan case is very different. What has changed today is the level of pressure the Communist base exerts on its leaders, on top of the greater pressure coming from the objective process. The result is this new position of the French Communist Party. This did not happen in Italy however, where the Italian Communist Party condemns the Soviets in Afghanistan.

In this matter of Afghanistan, the absence of assuredness and unanimity in the positions of the communist parties is due to their lack of theoretical and political preparation. They persist with the idea that democracy is the instrument to transform society. But democracy cannot transform society.

Bourgeois democracy is an instrument of history through which one advances the struggles. One defends the democratic rights, therefore, as a means to influence the population in the struggle against the capitalist system. But to overthrow the capitalist system however, a combination of more forms is necessary. Democracy by itself is not the means through which the capitalist system is overthrown, overcome or replaced.

The attitude of the communist parties is ambiguous in relation to Soviet policy; it is ambiguous in relation to the nature of the intervention of the Soviets in Afghanistan. But in Afghanistan, Soviet policy supports a revolutionary movement against feudal owners and their representatives. There is no future in resisting the worth of this support, or in opposing it.

There are sudden changes of positions inside the communist parties, and there is a lack of unanimity between them. On Afghanistan, the divergences between the French and the Italian communist parties are open and public. It all comes from a lack of theoretical and political preparation, a lack of objective Party-political life in front of the processes. This stops them discerning that, although democracy is an instrument for the progress of history, it is not *the instrument* through which progress is made. It is a transitory instrument of progress. Bourgeois democracy is not going to allow the communist parties to go beyond it, democratically or on any parliamentary road.

The communist and socialist parties of Italy believe in bourgeois democracy. But they now receive from everywhere examples, influences and blows which demonstrate how social transformation is also required. They are quite right to defend democracy and democratic rights. This must be done, and to the maximum possible level. Democracy is an instrument to overcome the capitalist system and make progress. In parliamentary roles as much as in the trade unions, one demands the maximum possible level of democracy.

The population matures on seeing the need to struggle for democracy and human progress. But since the bourgeois class makes it clear that it will not agree to being removed, the struggle for democracy and human progress presents the need for social transformation. The capitalist system will not consent to social transformation. Along with the struggle for democratic rights, and at the same time, one must therefore propose a concrete program of social transformation with policies to implement. This way, the masses and the petit bourgeoisie see that democratic rights are an instrument for the progress of history, which progress must be taken from the capitalist system.

This Soviet intervention in Afghanistan happens as the SALT negotiations take place. The US talks of arming of the European capitalists with nuclear weapons. The boldness of the Soviet move can only increase the determination of the US right-wing to proceed with implementation. Such Yankee plans with the European capitalists show clearly that the capitalist system is preparing for war. The Soviets realize that their best response is to extend the frontiers of the USSR, and in so doing, extend the revolutionary process. The Soviets are ready to spread their influence therefore, even in Iran. Aware of their need to get support, they intervene in Afghanistan to expand the Soviet Union. Even on the part of the Soviet bureaucracy, this shows the determination not to yield to blackmail, not to be deluded again as in the past.

Stalin was deluded the last time this happened. He partook in the interests, sentiments and consciousness of the bureaucratic Soviet layers most cut off from history. If Stalin managed to stay on top and his pact with Hitler did not tear the USSR down, it was because the Soviet army, issued from the Red Army, did not buckle under. The Soviet working class and Communist vanguard were

never going to abandon the Soviet Union. Thanks to that, they did not fall prey to defeatism or desperation. They allowed the USSR to rally and confront the nazis.

Matters are different now in this Afghan case. This time, a Soviet Union fortified by 20 Workers States takes the initiative and confronts the capitalist system. Imperialism prepares for war, but the USSR is no longer taken by surprise. It is not as when the Nazis invaded, and Soviet policy was basically ingenuous and bureaucratic. The Soviet leaders around Stalin were not ingenuous, but their bureaucratic policy prevented them from being objective, realistic, dialectical. It is these factors together that made them ingenuous of the ingenuousness of those who are afraid of the revolution. No such ingenuousness is observable in the Soviet Union today (1979). What had looked like ingenuousness in the past had been no other than an attitude of fear in front of the progress of humanity, from where the fear of the war had partially come out of.

Matters are different now. The Soviet Union shows that it is ready to extend its frontiers. Ready to broaden the existence of the Workers States. This amounts, in the end, to increasing the historic power of the Workers State against the capitalist system, shoring up countries like Cuba, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Afghanistan. To the pole opposite of what the imperialists say, this is going to have a big influence on Iran, on Pakistan too, on India and Turkey.

The bar has been raised on the level, the motives and the quality of this discussion. Neither the Communists nor the Socialists have answers in any of this. They do not have them! They are now facing problems that they never foresaw, never understood and never cared to prepare for. History grabs hold of them therefore, and drags them along. The French Communist Party was waxing lyrical about *pluralism* when it suddenly started supporting revolutionary movements opposed to pluralism, like Afghanistan! The French Communists speak of their 'local road' to Socialism, but their program, policy and objectives remain universal. The universal program is the one that upholds social transformation to eliminate capitalism - a program that cannot be counted upon to implement itself. The consequence is that imperialism prepares war. And it prepares war because it finds itself without the social, economic, political, cultural or scientific means to maintain its authority and leadership in the world, not even in the capitalist world.

The French Socialist Party remarked on US atomic arsenals to be deployed in Europe. Although it does not clearly say so, it does not agree with this. This is because the socialist base fears these preparations more than the Soviet danger. The European workers parties observe that the Communist parties of France, Portugal, and Italy reject this deployment openly. The mass of the people does not trust the capitalist system. The proletariat and the petit bourgeoisie recognize that the crisis is due to the capitalist system, not to the Workers States. The view gets confirmed that the Soviet Union and the Workers States are on the side of the progress of history. Should this be different, you would hear patriots crying: "Long live my country! My country against the rest!". This does not happen. The workers' movement shows to the masses that it opposes arming the capitalist system against a country like the Soviet Union that represents the progress of history.

Unlike 1914 or 1939, the war that imperialism prepares is against the Workers States. The joint declaration of the communist parties - in opposition to more US arms for the capitalist system in Europe - strengthens bases for the advance of the anti-capitalist struggle.

## THE WORKERS STATES EXERT DECISIVE INFLUENCE ON THE MASSES OF THE WORLD

There is not a single movement in the world against the Soviet Union. There are criticisms of the bureaucracy, but there are no movements against the Workers States. What you find is movements today against the equivalent of the nazis, which is Yankee imperialism.

In the socialist parties, the discussion is going to deepen over what to do about the crisis and the war preparations of the capitalist system. There is more to this than the war preparations. With its crisis - and with its war preparations - the capitalist system attacks the workers and populations more and more virulently. The socialist parties are concerned by the challenge this poses to their alliances with the capitalist system. There is not an objective and stable base for their alliance with the capitalist system. That alliance is weakening although it still partially exists.

The influence of the Workers States over the world masses gives a constant and profound stimulation to see the Workers State as the solution. The masses do not see the Workers States as bureaucratic and murderous monsters. They accept the criticisms, but they note that the Workers State looks after what capitalism does not: employment, health, life, culture, science, art and sport. To demonize the Workers States, capitalism accuses them of just what it (capitalism) is guilty of. The Soviets occupy countries, we are told. But the masses do not believe it. They create movements like the Ecologists, and none against the so-called Soviet occupation of Ethiopia or Afghanistan. You can find groups of objectors not very acquainted with culture, science and politics, but nothing more.

The leaderships of the communist parties want to limit the working class down to their own level. But the working class participates in the historic experience of the Soviet Union. It is unconditionally with the Soviet Union. It sees that the Soviet Union is a progress, an indispensable progress of history. It sees in the Soviet Union the vital center for capitalist overthrow. For the working class, the Workers State is what opposes the capitalist system and encourages the anti-capitalist struggle. This is how the world's working-class vanguard sees the matter. It sees that capitalism has not succeeded, and that it has not any success against the Soviet Union.

The Communist parties of France and Italy have come to doubt those principles. They have not developed the political and theoretical ability to remain in alliance or United Front with the USSR at the same as retaining the right to criticize the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union must be criticized for its lack of superior development in Soviet democracy. This criticism is necessary certainly, but the Communists' United Front with the Soviet Union is necessary too, and on an anti-capitalist program.

What just happened in Afghanistan is going to be repeated in other countries. Imperialism complains, protests and launches accusations, but it doesn't intervene against the USSR. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan is a stimulus to revolution in Iran. The imperialists say that Iran is going to see 'the Soviet danger'. This is the view of the Iranian bourgeoisie and some capitalists around Khomeini. These see a Soviet danger. But the Soviet Union does not threaten Iran with usurpation, whilst from Soviet example in Afghanistan, layers around Khomeini will gain in maturity and confidence. The Soviets helped Afghanistan defeat the coup of the landowners, sectors which exist also in Iran.

It is necessary to call on all the Workers States to help and contribute to the development of Afghanistan. The Workers States (socialist countries) must contribute with economic help and credit, and they must plan this help. Part of what is being produced in Poland, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Germany, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union must be earmarked for sale to Afghanistan. This will help Afghanistan

develop and will have an immense effect. Technological and scientific help is also necessary. The Workers States must send teachers and professors immediately to help raise the educational, cultural and scientific capacity of the country. The effect will be to develop the country economically and culturally.

Should this be done, it will have an immense effect on the masses of Iran, Pakistan, India and all the rest of the world. These will witness for themselves the actual function of the Workers States. On seeing its daily, immediate and practical form, they will want to do the same in other countries. They will have learnt that a most backward country can catch up with the more advanced level of the Worker State with no need to pass through any stage of capitalist development - a stage devoid of bourgeois democracy anyway. For this is no longer the stage of bourgeois democracy. Capitalism no longer carries forward the bourgeois democracy of its early stage of development.

It is fundamental that the Workers States should deal with Afghanistan in this way. The shining example of this measure will impact the intellectual formation and the cultural development of the peoples everywhere. It will energize the social resolve of the 'backward' masses throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America. It will invite the Workers States themselves, and among them China, to put an end to the counterrevolutionary role of the leadership of the Chinese Workers State.

It is necessary to send appeals, demonstrate and call meetings. One must hold discussions in the factories, the workers areas, the cells of the communist parties. Addresses must be sent to Workers States like Bulgaria, the USSR, China, Cuba and others.

Let the world communist parties declare that in Afghanistan, there has been no invasion; that there has been the necessary extension of socialist influence to the rest of the world; the influence you observe every day, in various forms, cultural scientific, economic and political; the influence that defends the conquests of the socialist progress of humanity, for the sake of the whole of humanity, and not for any new class or any new leadership.

The need to support the USSR in Afghanistan must be understood. It is not as if the USSR were helping the formation of a new bourgeois class. It is not as if the Soviet leaders were trying to enter countries and monopolize the power, as capitalism would have us believe. Stalin tried to do this with the communist parties of the world, but what he tried was destroyed. Stalin assassinated the leadership of the Bolshevik Party in the name of the (then) counter-revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, but what he had sought was destroyed. The Soviet bureaucratic apparatus assassinated the Bolshevik leadership, but the Soviet Union went forward.

The masses of the world welcome unconditionally the support that the Soviets give to Afghanistan. In that support, they see neither an 'invasion' nor an act of a bureaucratic imposition. They see that it extends the revolution. The same happened with Cuba. When the Cuban revolution occurred, the Soviet Union was ready to give it support and it intervened. The Soviet Union could not support Cuba with troops because Cuba was not on its frontiers, but it intervened.

All those who criticize and protest the Soviet intervention, omit to say - for reasons of self-interest - that the Soviets were invited by the Afghan government of the time. The Afghan government asked for Soviet help. But what if Afghanistan had not called for help? The Soviet Union had still a right to intervene because Afghanistan is on its frontier, a strategic point which imperialism can use against

the Soviet Union. The Soviet intervention gave an impulse to a country that needed it, not to annex it to the Soviet Union, but to develop it on the road to the construction of Socialism.

Communist comrades criticize the Soviet Union over Afghanistan as if the USSR had committed an act of annexation. The truth is the reverse. The USSR routinely encourages the communist parties to adopt resolutions in support of Cuba, and for the expulsion of imperialism from Cuba. Imperialism is the one that occupies a part of Cuba, and with atomic weapons besides. What the communist parties must pose therefore is that US imperialism be expelled from Cuba. The Communists must go to the various parliaments and demand this. Their meetings and congresses must focus on this aim as well: "Imperialism out of Cuba!".

The critics of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan never made a comparable campaign to throw imperialism out of Nicaragua. And it is the masses who are throwing imperialism out of El Salvador. The comrades must discuss this. It is not a question of passing eventual resolutions, or of declaring 'Out with imperialism' now and then. This question demands a consistent policy to throw imperialism out, in association with the forces that impel the overthrow of imperialism throughout the world: these are the Soviet Union, the Workers States and the masses of the world that constantly engaged in doing it.

## AFGHANISTAN, IMPERIALISM, THE USSR AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM

J Posadas

05.01.1980

Second Part

The Soviet Union is conscious that its intervention in Afghanistan can lead to war. It does it anyway and organizes in the prevision of the possibility of war. No panic, no fear. Among the Workers States, not one has warned to say: "Careful, don't do this". Instead of this, they tell imperialism: "It is you who looks for war". The one seized with panic is capitalism - the whole system, not only the Yankees. The latter are now trying to meet with the main governments of capitalist Europe. Their intention is to draw these governments closer to the US, provoke ruptures with the Workers States, reduce the commercial, economic and social relations with the Workers States and secure a greater liaison between them all.

Imperialism goes through all these hoops to justify itself as it cries: "Look at the savagery of what the Soviets are doing!". It is all lies of course and without foundation; even the paper of the French bourgeoisie LE MONDE has to say: "What business do the Americans have in Afghanistan? How dare they give lessons of non-intervention when they supported the Junta in El Salvador, and Somoza of Nicaragua to the last? What a comedy!". This viewpoint, also shared by Schmidt and Brandt in Germany, shows the insecurity of capitalism. It does not enter war with resoluteness and confidence. It feels the weight of the socialist and communist opposition, which is big. The Socialists may be

expressing a weaker opposition, but they too question imperialism because they see the war as the end of them all.

The imperialists realize that all-out war does not have popular support. At the time of the Second World War, they justified war by saying that the Nazis were responsible. But this sort of thing cannot be said today. The Soviet Workers State intervenes in Afghanistan, but a war on the Soviets does not have popular support. This points to the immense authority of Soviet Workers State. The capitalist system panics, not knowing what will happen in the first days of the war. It makes a thousand maneuvers and movements to justify its war preparations before the masses. It maneuvers not only to justify itself, but to find the internal coordination that it does not have. It has coordination on the military plane, but not in relation to the population. Jane Fonda organized a demonstration of more than 200,000 people against the war on Vietnam, against the Yankees and against imperialism, but not against the Workers States!

Imperialism could never find 10,000 demonstrators to defend the 'sovereignty' of Afghanistan, or to demand the liberation of the US hostages at the Yankee embassy in Teheran. Imperialism prepares the war with feet of clay. It is tottering, collapsing. The Yankees panic as they realize this. For the same reason, you see no anguish in the Workers States in spite of possible war staring them in the face. Even Rumania has not condemned the Soviet Union directly. Imperialism sees in the depth of this situation. It sees that the Workers States intervene confidently, and that the masses are not intimidated.

In the last world war, each Communist Party supported the bourgeoisie of its own country. Whatever happens today, the communist parties are with the Soviet Workers State. The Spanish Communist Party itself had to say: "We defend national sovereignty, yes, but what right have the Yankees in Afghanistan?". The capitalist camp enters the final stage of war preparation in a state of fragmentation and uncertainty. Imperialism has two fronts to face: external with the Soviets and internal with the masses. There will be a time, in the war, when the internal front will be the one that decides. The next war is not going to last months or years. It is going to be a matter of days, perhaps just hours. Such is the reckoning of the Soviets - a correct one. The Soviets say that they will destroy New York and the United States in half an hour flat. This is no banter! They will do it because they have the weapons for it. They will destroy the essentials in a few hours, and all the capitalist system will collapse.

Capitalism finds itself in the worst conditions of history for its survival. The masses of the world see that human progress is on the side of the Workers States. You get countries, even small ones like Grenada - not much bigger than the pomegranate - declaring to the world: "It is Socialism that we are making". When they are told: "But how can you? You have nothing, you have always depended on the English!", they answer: "We are building Socialism. Did Cuba have more than us? See here ... we are going to do like Cuba".

Capitalism is far from certain of winning and imposing itself in the next war. It is important to note also the mental feebleness of the capitalists. Their disposition is more secure on their military side than on their mental one. Their mental resilience is slight because they do not have the right of history on their side. This inner fragility drives their actions much more readily towards panic than towards logical reasoning. There is no self-confidence in their attitude. They are mooting a series of reprisals against the Soviet Union, but these are not war measures.

The Soviet Workers State has an enormous authority over the North American petit bourgeoisie. It is not by chance that Carter feels the inappropriate need to say: "We have overcome the Vietnam complex". What Vietnam complex? He looks for support in a petit-bourgeoisie that does not want to be sent to death in another conflict like Vietnam. This is the 'Vietnam complex'! Carter addresses an immense technical and scientific petit-bourgeois layer that used to support the capitalist system and imperialism, and that is now either doubtful or opposed.

Imperialism prepares itself for war in the worst conditions for itself. Its survival will be all the shorter for this. It is going to perpetrate enormous massacres, but its disappearance is certain; as certain as continuation for the Workers States. Hence the panic you observe in all the capitalist measures.

The Soviets intervene in Afghanistan with much determination. This comes to them from having prepared previously. By all evidence, the Yankees knew about this preparation. The way the Soviets prepared and carried out their intervention shows them sure-footed and single-minded. Stalin abandoned half of Poland in the last war, but the Soviets of today intervene first, before the Yankees, resolutely. Stalin accepted to enter and occupy Poland, against his own [German] ally, because the Soviet Communist Party and army forced him to. The Communist Party was not functioning but it reacted against German capitalism and in defense of the interests of the Workers State. Unlike in Stalin's time, the Soviet Union of today has decided to take the initiative and expand in the world.

The masses of the world see that progress obtains under the form of the Workers State. No capitalist country allows any progress under the form of capitalism. In the capitalist countries, all you see is pure criticism, recrimination and evident public repression. Capitalism is responsible for every evil and backwardness, whilst in spite of its bureaucratic leadership, it is the Workers State that brings progress. This is so, in the eyes of the masses. Tiny countries like Grenada, and others hardly any bigger like Nicaragua and El Salvador, decide to take the road of Socialism. They see how much capitalism is opposed, so totally against the logical necessity of history. Who hopes to stop the Sun rising by covering it up? The Sun will not be covered over. The progress of history is like the rising Sun. Everyone knows this since Copernicus ...

For all its military mobility, it is with great social inertia that capitalism prepares to confront the Workers States. The Workers State, for its part, prepares with a great military capacity - superior even to that of imperialism - and a social capacity even greater than its military one. This is why Workers States spring up everywhere. On the drawing closer of the war preparations, more and more Workers States get formed; while for capitalism, it is only defeats upon defeats. A sentiment of defeat is etched in the spirit of all the capitalists.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan champions the confidence of the Workers State, its mightiness, its transcendence and its Workers State perspectives. This underscores all the feebleness of the capitalist system, its divisions, its fears. The Soviets did not hesitate. They had originally looked for conciliation with Amin; but to defend the Workers State, they had to overthrow him and extend their frontiers. This carried the risk of adverse reactions on the part of Iran<sup>4</sup>, the Yanks, Pakistan and China, but the Soviets did not give up; this act of resolve and self-confidence revealed a much greater capacity to decide and maneuver politically than in the past. In Afghanistan, the feudal layers ready to open the doors to the Yankees - directly or indirectly - were stopped from returning

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<sup>4</sup> Imperialism kept hoping to be able to set the Muslims of Iran against Soviet 'communism'. The Shah only fled to the United States on 16.1.1979.

to power, and the Soviet Workers State said to the world masses: "We are ready to defend this historic conquest, even if the price is war". The masses of the world understood. They saw that the Workers State extended its frontiers to spread beyond itself conditions similar to those in the USSR, that is to say, against the capitalist system. The masses of the world feel this and understand. The Soviets are learning to develop the capacity for political maneuver worthy of the historic finality of the Workers State, and not in the interests of a ruling caste.

The Soviet interventions as in Poland and Finland before the Second World War had the same decisiveness about them, although they were conducted with less tactical skill and mass acceptance. In Poland, the Soviets intervened against their nazi ally and with only a part of the Polish population supporting them. Today, the whole Afghan population active in life and intervening, supports the Soviet intervention. It is a country of nomadic tribes with plenty of poachers and thieves. The bourgeois press tells us: "The poor Afghan people fights and resists the USSR, it brings down planes, it destroys tanks". But the bourgeois press does not say who sends weapons, transport means and military training to these rebels. The capitalist declarations have the coherence of the killer, of the assassin. Coherence here demands to know how these Afghan tribes, said to be poor and with nothing, can stand up suddenly with weapons matching those of the Soviet army. Can it be that the Soviet army - the one that crushed the nazis and that imperialism now recoils from attacking - is being routed by 'poor rebels' with hunting riffles? Totally stupid to believe this. All packs of lies. Mind that we heard those lies before, when the Eritreans fought Ethiopia. The Eritreans could destroy 15 Soviet tanks with the modern weapons the imperialists had sent.

Imperialism sees the danger: should Afghanistan progress and develop, it will influence Iran and Pakistan. It is to prevent this that, imperialism exploits the situation in Afghanistan. This is the actual reason why it is involved. It cannot do much from the geographical point of view, and it has not the time to start building much forces in the zone. So, it tries to exploit the situation and contain progress. It makes itself the center of an anti-Soviet struggle by stopping each capitalism, be it French or Japanese or British, from conducting particular negotiations with the Soviets. If the Soviets managed to intervene as directly as they have done, it is because they were ready to advance to the fullest possible extent, even with the danger of war.

The Soviets do all this, but they try to prevent the war at the same time. They get prepared, but they negotiate to try and prevent the war. Something Stalin did not do. Stalin was only very relatively prepared on the military plane, and he was not prepared at all socially. Today, the Soviets are preparing very well both militarily and socially. There are 20 Workers States and the masses of the world do not let themselves be befuddled; they do not view the Soviet intervention as an annexation. They see it as a necessary measure - a measure to which they aspire. For weren't the people of Nicaragua anxious for Cuban help?

The opposition to Soviet intervention that exists in some parties and trade unions is very superficial. Nothing about it is serious or important. And it emerges, besides, from movements with no purchase over the political conduct of the proletariat. They may have some weight in the trade unions, on the plane of transitory demands. Historically speaking however, they have no weight on the political and social planes. Because there, it is the proletariat that decides. The Soviets and the pro-Soviet proletarian vanguard are those with an authority over the rest of the working class.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan is a very great defeat for imperialism. The Yanks were hoping to use Pakistan to settle there, and then keep Iran under control perhaps with some concessions. The idea was a pincer around the Soviet Union with war in mind. But for imperialism to have thought this possible shows all its stupidity. Note how it moves now in crazy jerks, but with a certain prudence indicative of resistance, inside the United States included. The US government had to meet wheat producers concerned about a wheat embargo against the USSR, illustrating how the capitalists take measures in their own commercial interests, and not in their common interests as capitalists.

Regarding its need to have foreseen and contained the Soviet intervention, imperialism has been powerless. And it is the Soviets, and not the communist parties that decide. What the communist parties say has no influence in Nicaragua, but what the Soviets say, yes, has an influence there. When they look at the Soviet leaders, the masses of Nicaragua and El Salvador do not see a bureaucratic caste. Indeed, they are no longer a caste, even if they are still bureaucratic. The masses see that progress comes from the Soviets. They saw how a Stalin came, how he was liquidated, and how the Workers State continued to forge ahead. When they looked at the United States on the other hand, they saw that Carter followed Ford, and that nothing changed.

The positions of the communist parties are expressive of doubt. The French Communist Party supports the Soviet intervention in general. The Italian Party does not oppose it intransigently; it makes circumstantial political criticisms, but no campaign against the Soviets. Even the Spanish Party criticizes the Soviets without condemning; it criticizes the Yankees as well to keep touch with the Communist base. The attitude of the French Socialist Party is quite significant. It indicts the Yankees' for their invasions and refers today to the Soviet 'intervention'.

The conduct and resolve of the Soviets in Afghanistan show a great progress of history. All those who talk about "the big fight of the Afghan rebels" forget to ask where the rebels get their weapons. Their weapons come from the capitalists, who arm Pakistan, who passes them on to 'the rebels'. The rebels are feudals and bourgeois. We used to be told that the Kurds of Barzani<sup>5</sup> could bring down Iraqi planes with cutlasses and pocketknives. The same used to be said of the Eritreans whose exploits had obviously needed modern weapons, and not just grit and heroism as we were told. Are we to believe that the USSR "is dropping napalm bombs" and that the Afghans hold their own with knives, toy revolvers and friction matches?! But this is what the newspapers say. The journalists who write such things are culpable too. Their duty is to say: "Look, I will not broadcast this, it is a pack of lies"! Those who put out such news, do it with a clear political motive.

The attitude of the Chinese is more cautious, aware of the complexities. The (anti-Soviet) assessments coming from the leadership of Workers States like China and Yugoslavia, are in reaction to what the Stalin-led Soviet bureaucracy used to impose upon them. They reckon nothing has changed. They do not see the changes that have occurred in the Soviet Union since Stalin, although the reason why they continue to oppose the Soviet Union comes from them having developed bureaucratic interests of their own that correspond to Stalinism.

The Soviet intervention took place openly. The character of this intervention is being discussed in the communist movement of the world. They discuss that an intervention in another country is not

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<sup>5</sup> In Iraqi Kurdistan, Masoud Barzani used to entertain a feudal court.

always an invasion or an annexation. And that some interventions are necessary to assist the development of other countries.

The Soviet bureaucracy never stopped saying that "it intervened because it was invited"; as if this were not a confrontation class against class, Workers States against capitalism. It still wants to have it believed that one can profit from one's relations with imperialism in order to prevent the war. This is why the concept of the inevitability of the war did not spread in the world, although the Soviets have been preparing internally for it. Their military preparations have been to that end, but they still use the justification that they do not prepare because the war is inevitable, but to dissuade imperialism from attacking. This is how they have believed in their power to advance and disable imperialism progressively, permitting the advance of the communist parties.

It turns out that the advance of the communist parties went the other way. They declared themselves independent from Moscow, or they developed a policy apart. Some have policies opposed to the interests of the Soviet Workers State, and not even beneficial to the masses of their respective countries. The bureaucratic policy of the Spanish, French and Italian communist parties, for instance, seeks conciliation with the capitalist system. The Japanese Communist Party used to do this, but it changed when its anti-Soviet wing was cast aside. A big progress resulted from this in the Japanese Communist Party, and the same happened in the Portuguese Communist Party.

Capitalism prepares the war in a state of very great feebleness on its part, and in the worst conditions in history. It prepares for war with no inner cohesion between its capitalist sectors. These club together through their same class fear, not to defend free competition as source of a superior ability to think and to create. They have no time for such things. They are united by fear, but they cannot ignore the reality of the Workers States. The world masses see that it is not the Workers States that retreat, but capitalism. They see that progress and anti-capitalist social movements develop where the Workers States intervene. Capitalism steps in the war in these conditions.

The behaviour of the Soviets shows a very great resolve. This doesn't mean that they are going to consent entirely to revolutionary progress or allow revolutionary wings inside them. It means that bureaucratic power is going to lessen. This triumph and progress of the Soviet Union signify a reduction in the power of the bureaucracy. In 1945, the victory of the Soviet Union marked the end of Stalin. The bureaucratic apparatus kept on weakening after that, until Khrushchev's fall, when the brutal and crude apparatus fell. To keep touch with the world, Brezhnev made the present Soviet Constitution. That Constitution states: "The Soviet Union seeks the construction of world Socialism", and "it supports any movement of National Liberation and of social progress".

Capitalism is besieged throughout the world. There are Workers States everywhere, in Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe. Capitalism is encircled. It wants to encircle others via weapons, but weapons are the weakest instrument of history. It is the Soviet Union that besieges capitalism via Socialism, which is the mightiest arm of history. Socialism has within itself all that it needs to forge ahead. Weapons kill, they do not create. It is Socialism that creates. The masses of the world see this, and the Soviet masses see it too. Capitalism steps into the war with the hunch and the consciousness that this war is the end of its existence, the last act in the capitalist tragedy.

The Yankees cannot look for sympathy in the North American masses, and they would not dare. The Soviets do not appeal to the US masses either, but all their actions represent such an appeal. They intervened openly and directly in Afghanistan, while the Yankees had to hide and disguise their own

intervention. There has not been any demonstration in the United States against the Soviet Union or Vietnam; and it is in the United States that Carter speaks of "the Vietnam complex now being eliminated"<sup>6</sup>. This means there was such a complex, it is not a simple formula. In the North American bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie that complex is a state of mind at the wonder that they could be defeated, that their war was unjust and their intervention was dishonorable. When Carter says that the "Vietnam complex is over now", it is because the complex is still around and not obliterated. They have the "complex" of seeing that capitalism is going to be crushed. The Yankees have just declared an embargo on wheat sales to the Soviet Union, but the US wheat producers have announced that they do not agree. Such are their contradictions.

## IMPERIALISM HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFRONT THE WORKERS STATES

The movement developing in this process of war preparation is going to roll over the heads of all the communist leaderships that are timid, conciliatory and evolutionist in their conception of the progress of society. They are going to be cast aside, eliminated. The communist parties have no sure or firm positions. They vacillate, adopt a position, drop it, return to it - but the Soviets have firm positions. They intervened in Cuba, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and now Afghanistan. This is how the masses of the world learn what 'the world balance of forces' mean. They learn it in practice.

This Soviet intervention is a very great progress. It indicates the few perspectives left to capitalist existence. It is not just that capitalism enters the war in a state of great feebleness, it has not managed to terrorize humanity either - starting with the Communists. The pro-Soviet *Letters to the Editor* in UNITA (Organ of the Italian Communist Party) express the thought of the Communist base.

This situation shows that Soviet confidence grows with its ability not to let itself be intimidated by capitalism, by the (hostile) attitude of the Chinese or by the objective single front that the Chinese are making with capitalism. The Soviets know that once the war starts, the Chinese will be on their side. Harold Brown (Carter's Defense Secretary) has gone to China to seek a common front there. Should he succeed, expect very important movements in China against their leadership (Deng). The latter acts arbitrarily and with no notion of anything. But the Chinese masses, and even a part of their present leadership, do not.

As there is no political or trade union life in China, we cannot see precisely what movements are bound to occur. There is no doubt that the pro-capitalist measures are being resisted. There was a time when we could see Chinese Schools of Occidental Dancing and Hairdressing on TV. This changed and diminished. Had it grown instead, China TV would have continued broadcasting to prove to capitalism that China does as it is told and to attract certain popular layers. This has eased off; and if it still goes on, it no longer has the prominence.

In China, the proletarian revolutionary vanguard and a part of the leadership wait for their time to intervene. The Deng leadership has not been able to organize any important mass movement, assemblies, meetings or congresses. If it doesn't do it, it is because it is not sure to get a majority. It may not even be sure of an important minority. In any war against the Soviet Union, China will be on

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<sup>6</sup> The 'Vietnam syndrome' is sometimes called the 'Vietnam complex'. This term refers to the widespread aversion in the North American public to US military involvement abroad, particularly since Vietnam.

the Soviet side, not on the side of the United States. Imperialism tries to utilize China, as best it can. See how not even Japan has wanted to be involved with the Yankees over Afghanistan. Like Germany, Japan feels that it is going to disappear in any future war.

Imperialism has not been able to do anything against the Soviet intervention. It hoped for an anti-Soviet reaction in Iran, but that did not happen. The Yankees rushed over to say: "Iran is going to see that it is the Soviet Union that invades Muslim countries". But the Iranians have launched no attack on the Soviet Union. Here is a process where the Workers States have all the conditions to win because what they say is true. Even in Iran, a process has now started that has no way to go back. Iran cannot be used as an anti-Soviet base, or even grow into a new capitalism.

Regarding the hostages<sup>7</sup>, it is an error to keep them any longer. They should have been tried or released. The best thing now is to free them and have them transmit resolutions and declarations to the North American people: Like "We free the hostages, we have treated them well, these are our aims". The freed hostages should be taken on a tour of Teheran to see where the situation there. The Iranian revolutionary leadership does not have this comprehension. This is why it stays stationary in this matter. One should get the hostages tried, although it is not so very important politically. The most important is to communicate to the North American people the aims of the Iranian revolution and the progress that it has already made. The Shah is a thief and an assassin. He stole more than 20,000 million dollars. He did not get this fortune through hard work!

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan responds to a necessity of the progress of life, of history. It gives an impulse to the social and economic progress of Afghanistan. In that country, the Soviets continue what they did for Cuba, Ethiopia and Angola. This intervention is not an annexation but an aid. The masses of the world see this; they judge that this is the case through the behaviour of the Soviets and through the results.

An invasion leads to the subordination of a country. In Afghanistan, the economy, society and the human relations are developing. Then, what "invasion" was this? In the same way as science and culture contribute to knowledge and to progress, the Soviet intervention contributes to the development of Afghanistan. So, it is not an invasion.

The masses are learning also that decisive relations are being created along the main lines of history which are the Workers States on a one hand, and the capitalist countries on the other. Capitalism means death, regression, the burying of culture, of the economy. The concern that capitalism has for the productive apparatus is accumulate profit from it; not to raise the level of life for people. But the Workers State takes the life of the people to its heart. The result of its intervention is to put the economy at the service of people. When the masses see such a result, they know there was not "an invasion". In Afghanistan, there is "an intervention" because it brings development to the country on the cultural, economic and scientific planes.

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<sup>7</sup> The hostage crisis: On 4.11.1979, a group of Iranian revolutionary students occupied the US embassy in Teheran and held 52 US diplomats and staff hostage. They demanded US apologies for the overthrow of Mosaddegh in 1953, the release of all Iranian assets frozen by the US, and apologies from the US for interference in Iran's internal affairs. The hostages were freed on 20 January 1980.

In the 1940-45 war, the Soviets occupied Germany. In spite of Stalin, they made a Workers State there, as well as in Poland and other countries. Stalin wanted to impose himself on Yugoslavia and Tito, but the Soviet army did not invade Yugoslavia. That was not because capitalism was threatening and pressing; it was because the Soviet population and army were opposed to the use of military force against Yugoslavia. The same happened with China, and the Soviet Union did not invade. A movement existed therefore, that even under the regime of Stalin, was stopping the bureaucracy from deciding everything in the conduct of the Workers State. That movement was already on the march, and it ended up liquidating both Stalin and Khrushchev.

The masses judge that this Soviet action is neither an invasion nor an occupation. It is an intervention to help another country develop. And that is the way to look at it. The Soviets themselves should be saying: "We intervened in Afghanistan to help that country develop". But they do not say that. This comes from the bureaucratic conception which they have, that in not saying this, they can keep war away, or at least not precipitate it or push towards war.

The progress and development of humanity is not determined by the small countries. It is the big forces that decide the course of history. The existence of capitalism keeps the masses plunged in backward living. Throughout its 300 years of its existence, capitalism has kept half of humanity in the hunger zone. In all the capitalist countries, children die in their hundreds due to hunger or overwork. In India and Pakistan, children work up to 10 and 12 hours a day from the age of five.

The world balance of forces is determined by the participation of the Workers States in the world. This balance of world forces is what empowers any movement, as in Nicaragua, to go and bring down Somoza without fear of Yankee intervention. The Yankees tried, but they failed, because the Soviets and the Cubans were ready to step in, and the masses of Latin America would have fought back too.

What decides the course of the progress of history is the Workers States. Capitalism wants them surrounded to deplete their forces, their importance and their weight in history. The Workers States have every right to flatten all imperialist attempts at suffocation. It is completely just! Such a measure, even where it implies military intervention, is not any annexation. It is an intervention to develop politically and socially a country with not enough support otherwise. It is not an annexation. It is a measure necessary to the progress of history, a progress that gets decided in the *capitalism* versus *Workers States* confrontation.

The Communist parties of Spain and Italy do not see it that way. They believe it still possible to have the independence of each country respected. Go and believe this when capitalism respects nothing! Capitalism respects only its own interests. It kills and assassinates. It poisons the population in every way to maintain capitalist accumulation, to sustain inter-capitalist competition and keep its antagonism up against the Workers States. How can the Communists say that "each country must be left alone to decide for itself"?

The world relations of forces are such that the small countries cannot decide. It is the big countries that do. On the capitalist side, this brings death and the subordination of the small countries to the big capitalist ones. On the Workers State's side, this means development for the small countries because the Workers State is not imperialist, it cannot accumulate profits or subsume others to itself. Should it try, the Workers State itself regresses culturally and scientifically.

The condition for the continued existence of the Workers State is that it must develop others, beyond itself, on the scientific and cultural planes, and from there onto the economic plane. The communist parties that demand "liberty" and the "respect of national sovereignty" must subordinate these demands to social historic reality, to the progress of the necessity of history. Capitalism has never granted democracy anywhere, while the Workers State needs to spread in the world and allow the development of the countries where it intervenes.

This intervention in Afghanistan is no different from the Soviet's in Angola and Mozambique. Why then didn't the Communist leaders protest the Cubans' intervention in those countries?

Do these Communists doubt that the Soviets gave Vietnam military and economic support when Vietnam intervened in Indochina?

One cannot analyze history with the recommendation of: "Let us respect the independence of each country". Where one defends such a line, it must impel and develop the progress of history. It is not true that the people of each country decide their own destiny. It is true in the USSR and the other Workers States, but it is not true in the United States. There, it is the Yankee imperialist government that makes the decisions. In countries like Afghanistan, the people were not deciding before, not even electorally, since 80% of the Afghans have no vote. Those with the decision-making power in Afghanistan are the big landowners and the feudal lords - the same who prevent the development of the country. Soviet actions there have helped eliminate these people and helped in developing the country. This is no "invasion". It is a participation in the progress of Afghanistan, and an intervention whose military form is rendered necessary by the need to eliminate the sectors that prevent the social and economic progress of the country. This is the way to analyze. The same goes for Ethiopia and the other countries in Africa and Asia.

This Soviet intervention does not show the Soviet Union subordinating the world. It shows it spurring the world to take a socialist road. No country where the Soviet Union intervened was ever left in a state of submission. All such countries have developed, and Vietnam is one of them. How can it be said, then, that the Soviet intervention is tantamount to an annexation? How defend the view that "each country must be sovereign"? This does not exist! In Afghanistan, the people never decided because the decisions were always taken by feudal camarillas. If the Soviets had to dislodge Amin, it is because the latter was negotiating with the feudals, the capitalists and the Yankees.

The Yankees gave full backing to the Shah<sup>8</sup>. As they welcomed him and protected him politically and militarily, they assisted an assassin and a thief, because the Shah had stolen at least 20,000 million dollars from Iran. Is that "an annexation", yes or no? This is what the Italian communist comrades should say! They must say that those who do annexations are the Yankees. By protecting the Shah, they made an annexation of 20,000 million dollars. It is the US imperialists who protect robbery and assassination. The Soviets do not set out to kill and murder. They went to impel a country because this is the condition to take the Workers State further toward Socialism.

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<sup>8</sup> The Shah was granted permanent protection in the USA on 16 Jan 1979. I

## FOR A PROGRAMME OF PROGRESS AND MASS INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

One must support any measure like this Soviet intervention which pulls Afghanistan towards a Workers State. At the same time, one must call on the population to intervene, to participate in discussions, to organize trade unions, workers' areas committees, committees in the countryside. One must get the populations quickly involved in programs of cultural development, education and artistic knowledge. Intense cultural and scientific programs must be put on radio and TV. Cadres must be created in the trade union and university fields to guide people into intervening in this process. The nomadic groups that are under the control of large proprietors must be invited to take part. As in Afghanistan today, the Soviet Union was full of nomadic groups when it was formed, and the USSR incorporated them into Soviet social life.

The communist parties must interpret the Soviet intervention in this way. The criticism to be made of the Soviet leadership is that it limits the development of internal Soviet democracy. This being so, one demands more Soviet democracy. But before making such a demand, the communist parties must start by practicing Soviet democracy themselves! The Italian and the French Communists cannot demand more democracy from the Soviets when there are no debates in their own parties.

One must not only support the Agrarian Reform, but give it a systematic character: distribute the land to the peasants, set up collectives and State cooperatives, expropriate the big landowners, hand over the land to the peasants. Propose a plan of production supported by the technical intervention of the State, or in the form of lands that the State takes over and get worked under its direct control. At the same, one raises the level of trade union and political life: organizing cooperatives, intensifying education, the literacy plan, the political education. The plan for industrial production must respond to the needs of the population: housing, roads, transport, hospitals, running water, gas, electricity and foodstuff of every sort.

Let the population see that the plan does not aim at profiting the capitalist sectors. That the plan does not bend production in a way that favours or reproduces the capitalist interests and exploitation therefore. Organs must be formed in the schools, the factories, the living quarters, to discuss the program, and to have it applied in a way that raises the political and cultural capacity of the population to intervene in production. This will give to people an immense confidence.

One raises the political education of the masses in the realization that it is on the basis of such a program that the population develops an interest and ability to learn. The population will be quick at learning when the education plan leads directly to progress in its living standards. It will then see the unity between political reasoning and the program to satisfy the necessities of life.

The Soviet government must give all its support, arrange for loans, economic grants. It must appeal to the international working-class and the revolutionary movements, for them to support this movement in Afghanistan. The latter is bringing the masses out of backwardness. The world Muslim movement must be made to feel that the Soviet Union and the other Workers States are engaged and interested in the progress development of the populations, be they Catholic, Moslem, Jewish or of any other religion.

The Workers States have an objective interest in the social and cultural development of the populations. What the Soviets have done was the way to do it. It was the right way to influence the Moslem movements. It made the Moslem masses of Iran feel no contradiction between the Workers

States and the social and cultural development of the Moslem movement. Religion is not an obstacle. The Workers States do not see religion as an obstacle or a hindrance to the cultural, social or economic development of the populations.

The Afghan population must intervene and lead this transformation. It must learn to do it. This will prevent the formation of the bureaucratic apparatus that contains and diverts the scientific and cultural process of elevation in the population. There is an internal struggle in the course of which, even if with some retardation, a leadership is being formed for this particular situation. The Soviets and the communist parties have intervened late - but a leadership is in formation. There is an elevation of the struggle internally and internationally. It is obvious that imperialism has interest in blocking the political authority and extension of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet intervention is not an invasion. Invasions aim at crushing or at preventing the development of a country. The Soviet Union does the reverse: it develops the country. About all those who demand the expulsion of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan - shouldn't they be making a special campaign to expel the Yankee troops from Cuba? The Yankees' troops are illegally occupying Guantanamo which is part of Cuban territory. These troops are there specifically to prevent the economic and social development of Cuba. And if they are not succeeding, it is because the world relation of forces has prevented imperialism from intervening.

The actual process is a struggle between the capitalist system and the Workers States. A struggle system against system. The masses of the world look up to the Workers States and not to the capitalist countries. The masses follow the communist parties because they see in them the representatives of the Workers States. Although the communist parties do not say so, the masses see them as the representatives of the Workers States and as the instrument to eliminate the capitalist system and make new Workers States.

The masses of the world observe the war preparations also, and they are not afraid. Capitalism hoped to petrify them with its war threats, but the masses do not let themselves be intimidated. The military petulance and the all-mightiness of the big Yankee arsenal have not intimidated them. They feel backed up and protected by the Workers States. They feel allied to them and to the big communist parties of France, Italy, Japan, Portugal, and in part Spain. The masses of the world feel confident, and act accordingly. They are not without perspectives either. They know that progress needs statification (state-ownership), the participation of the trade unions, the functioning of organisms of mass intervention in the factories, the districts, the schools. They have learnt from the Workers States that you can pass from the most backward level in the economy over to the most advanced. Even where the countries have not the economic means to develop by themselves, like Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique for example, they feel that life is that of the Workers State.

The masses of the world repudiated the campaign of imperialism against Vietnam, and imperialism had to drop it. The masses saw that Vietnam did not enter Cambodia to crush it, but to help it progress. All those Vietnamese (boat people) who fled Vietnam were thieves, escapees from work and from the construction of Socialism. The masses have seen that it is not the Workers State that crucifies, tortures or maltreats people. This is how people judge. They see that it is the Workers States that have stopped imperialism from launching its attacks against the revolutionary movements of today. Imperialism cannot intervene as it used to, where it likes, and when it likes, because the Workers States are there.

Capitalism prepares the war in conditions where the masses feel that progress is on the side of the Workers States, not of the capitalist system. The masses learn. They realize that if a criticism must be made of the Workers States' leaders, it is about the lack of Soviet democracy. Soviet democracy is the democracy needed to make Socialism, not the right for everyone to say just what they like. The masses do not let themselves be intimidated by the dissidents of the Workers States. The dissidents give no ideas. They are Workers States' escapees. The masses of the world understand that, even if the Workers State must be criticized, it is the force that supports the development of social transformation. It provides the conditions for social, cultural, and scientific progress. Such are the world relations of forces. The masses see that the Yankees cannot intervene without the Soviets, Cuba or Vietnam intervening in their turn.

The masses saw how Vietnam did not let itself be intimidated by the Chinese invasion<sup>9</sup>. And that was an invasion alright! The Vietnamese showed they could defend themselves and see off the Chinese. This had an enormous influence on the Chinese masses. Regarding all those who protest the Soviets today, how many of them protested against the Chinese invasion of Vietnam? That was a proper invasion however, aimed at crushing the social development of Cambodia and Laos, to guard China from its influence. It is the Chinese however who lost the battle. Strong of the world relation of forces, Vietnam managed to stay firm. The Yankees could not intervene because the Soviet Union stood there. And for the same reason, the Chinese (the Deng leadership) measured to the millimeter how far it could further penetrate Vietnam. One more step and the Soviets would intervene.

And so it was that, after decades of war and with no material means, the Vietnamese defeated the Chinese, forcing them to withdraw. The masses of the world have witnessed all this. They have gauged the conduct of Vietnam. Vietnam could have annexed Cambodia and Laos, but it did not, because what it wanted was their development. You don't build Socialism with annexations. To be born, Socialism needs to impel the anti-capitalist struggle and lay the bases for new Workers States.

There are limitations in this process due to the lack of maturity and the lack of preparation of cadres. There is a lack of previous political, cultural and scientific life. These factors have helped in the development of bureaucratic apparatuses. The struggle against capitalism forces every aspect of political, cultural and military life to concentrate around its objective. This allows the creation of bureaucratic apparatuses, but these find fewer and fewer conditions to intervene to their profit. Even they must act more objectively against capitalism. This leads to a higher level of cultural, social and political development in the population, weakening the bureaucratic apparatuses of the Workers States and communist parties. The communist parties must talk about this.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan is a necessity of history. A necessity to stop a feudally-based government allied to imperialism forming, threatening the Soviet Union, Iran and the revolution in all that zone. Such is the aim of the Soviet's intervention. This is a defeat for imperialism that the masses of the world observe it with joy and satisfaction. They are not guided by the declarations of the press, of the United Nations or of the imperialists.

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<sup>9</sup> The Chinese bureaucracy of Deng Xiaoping invaded Vietnam on 19 Feb 1979. It said it wanted Vietnam punished for intervention in Cambodia where Vietnam defeated Deng's feudal allies of Pol Pot and Khmer Rouge. The vigorous opposition of the Chinese and Vietnamese masses expelled Deng from Vietnam after only four weeks.

At the time when the Vietnamese intervened in Cambodia<sup>10</sup>, the capitalist press and the imperialists howled: "Vietnam annexes Cambodia!" But the masses did not see it that way. Their experience and cultural capacity is infinitely more elevated than that of all the leaders of the communist parties. The masses have no particular cultural or scientific preparation, but they have a very elevated political and social comprehension. This is due to their life experience, and to the fact that they see an impulsion to progress in all the countries where the Vietnamese and the Soviets have intervened.

This Soviet intervention is not an annexation to the profit of the Soviet Union. It is an intervention which is going to develop Afghanistan. The capitalist cry is: "Annexation! Annexation!" because they want to prevent the anti-capitalist development of Afghanistan and the whole zone.

No country that has been occupied by the Soviets, by the Cubans or by the Vietnamese has kept a capitalist regime. To the opposite, these countries have eliminated capitalism and created the conditions for the development of the economy, culture, science and art.

Such is the conclusion to draw.

## **J POSADAS**

31 Dec 1979 - 5 Jan 1980

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<sup>10</sup> Vietnam had sent troops to Cambodia at the end of December 1978 to remove Pol Pot. Vietnam and others succeeded in this aim.