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From the Cold War to the Kosovo War: Yugoslavia and the British Labour Party[1]

The protracted and violent collapse of Yugoslavia was one of the profound international crises following the end of the Cold War. The inability of the United Nations to stop the bloodshed, the retreat of Russian power alongside the failure of the European powers to reach a common approach, and the ultimate deployment of US-led NATO forces to settle the Bosnian War and later to conduct the Kosovo War exposed the unlikelihood of what George H.W. Bush had hailed as a 'new world order' based on collective security. The wars of succession in the former Yugoslavia in fact provided the spring-board for a different vision of global security under American hegemony, which would characterise in particular George W. Bush's project to reshape global affairs in the new millennium (Rees, 2006, esp. pp. 34-35). It is unsurprising in this context that scholarly production relating to the collapse of Yugoslavia and its importance for international relations has been immense (for a recent short overview: Baker 2015).

This article will explore an under-researched aspect of the Yugoslav Wars, namely, their impact on the British Labour Party. While studies of New Labour's foreign policies abound (for an overview, see: Daddow and Gaskarth, 2011), few accounts have emerged of the impact of the Yugoslav Wars on the Labour Left. The latter's decline, which became visible in the mid-1980s, did not make it an attractive proposition for study: it seemed hardly relevant (works exploring the radical left in Britain like Smith and Worley, 2014, were a rarity). With the unexpected election of Jeremy Corbyn to the leadership of the Labour Party in September 2015, however, this changed, with multiple works emerging (Seymour, 2017; Perryman, 2017; Hannah, 2018). While worthwhile, such publications are only the beginnings of an attempt to overcome the lack of serious documented investigations into the activities of the Labour Left generally and since the 1980s especially.

By investigating the Labour Party's relations with Yugoslavia in the Cold War and the Yugoslav Wars, this article will help illuminate more fully the debates between Atlanticists and anti-interventionists that continue to help to shape the current UK opposition and UK political life more broadly. The first section of the article will lay out the first step in the argument, that the Labour Party's foreign policy is best understood in terms of its 'dual class' nature, a fusion of middle class and trade union elements, which broadly underlies a right-left split not just on domestic but also on foreign policy issues. These ultimately revolved around how socialist the party's and country's foreign policy should be, which played itself out differently over several epochs in twentieth and twenty-first century politics. The article will then go on in the second section to concretise the left-right split in the concrete circumstances of the Cold War and Yugoslavia. This is a necessary step that helps to establish the extent of continuity in Labour Party thinking in post-Cold War times, which will be dealt with in the third section. The conclusion will set out the implications for the further study of the Labour Party.

Explaining Labour Party Foreign Policy

The historiography on British Labour Party's approach to foreign relations concentrates largely on the first half of the twentieth century (Vickers, 2004; Douglas, 2004) or the post-Cold War era (Little, Wickham-Jones, 2000; Williams, 2005), with little on the interceding period (Callaghan 2007, Vickers 2011). The dominant view is that there was a shift from a dominant pre-war liberal standpoint, inherited from ex-Liberal members for the early Labour Party, towards an overriding realist defence of Britain's declining role as a Great Power after the Second World War, punctuated by a temporary shift back to liberalism in the 1980s (Thorpe 2008). If Britain's decline as an imperial power was

[1] I would like to thank Carol Turner, David Jamieson, Dragan Plavšić, Milica Popović, Robyn Rowe, Alex Snowdon and two anonymous reviewers for help with this article.

comparatively less tortuous than that of rivals like France, it was only because Britain had the option of merging its imperial role with that of the rising United States. The main goal was to delay decolonisation as long as possible and to replace direct colonial rule with indirect neo-colonial economic pre-eminence. Britain ceded to the United States where it had to in exchange for privileged second place in the new Atlantic order. Moreover, to maintain this role, Britain also backed the United States when it stepped in for other colonial powers, like France in Vietnam, or when it enforced its power in its so-called back yard, Latin America. The Cold War against the Soviet Union, while a genuine geopolitical conflict, nevertheless was more a useful legitimising strategy for preserving this imperial role than a product of real fear of Soviet potential. The USSR was the weaker superpower throughout, as was realised by British policy makers from the end of the Second World War. Throughout this period, critics have argued, there was fundamental bi-partisan agreement on almost all major foreign policy questions in British politics (Curtis, 1998, pp. 48-62; Curtis, 1995).

That is not to argue that there was no friction between the two main political parties over foreign policy, or indeed between the parties and the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Treasury, as shown by Hughes's study of Harold Wilson's period in office in 1964-1970 (Hughes, 2009). It does suggest that, for the purposes of a general overview of foreign policy towards Yugoslavia, it is possible to speak of relative consensus around the national interest in the Cold War era. Indeed, studies of the British approach to Yugoslavia have generally been in agreement that Britain was a *status quo* power in the region for much of the twentieth century. This was for a variety of reasons, but largely emanated from the longer-lasting British aim of maintaining a balance of power in continental Europe (Drapac, 2010). Britain proved a keen supporter of the creation of Yugoslavia after the First World War (Evans, 2007). Although Yugoslavia fell into the Nazi German orbit in the 1930s, popular revulsion and a military coup encouraged by British intelligence prevented the ratification of the Tripartite Pact in 1941 (Hoptner, 1962). Axis invasion of Yugoslavia started days later and the country ceased to exist, but resistance to the occupation also quickly emerged. Initially supportive of the royalist Chetnik movement under Dragoljub Mihailović, Britain switched support to the Communist-led Partisans who proved to be the more effective fighting force (Roberts, 1987; Pavlowitch, 2008). Though relations with the post-war Communist regime were initially tense, the 1948 Tito-Stalin split provided the possibility for Britain to continue to support Yugoslavia (Heuser, 1989). As a bulwark against the Soviets and potentially a magnet for 'national communists' in the Soviet bloc, an independent and stable Yugoslavia served Western interests. At the same time, as a state run by Communists, and often on the brink of domestic instability, with a recurring nationalities problem, Yugoslavia posed a risk to Western policy-makers: it could eventually collapse, inviting Soviet intervention, or it could abandon its non-aligned status, were a pro-Soviet leadership to emerge in response to economic decline or political instability. Western support for Yugoslav borders thus always went alongside support for domestic forces which could spur on liberal market reform or at least prevent a pro-Soviet orientation (Unkovski-Korica, 2016).

Britain found in Yugoslavia a willing but cautious collaborator after 1948. Its peripheral position in the world economy and its precarious position between the blocs made Yugoslavia a keen proponent of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) in the Cold War. Hoping for an end to Cold War divisions, the Yugoslav leadership was fearful of provoking either side to cease relations with it and sought consensus positions in the NAM. Vijay Prashad demonstrates that Yugoslavia very much represented the middle ground in the NAM, more interested in diplomatic coalitions between non-aligned states for a more just global order and the struggle for non-interference in domestic relations between states than it was in mass movements from below with a potential for overcoming the limitations of the state as an agent of change (Prashad 2007). This is similar to the finding of other studies, including those by Susan Woodward (1995), Andreja Živković (2015), and Unkovski-Korica (2016), which

underline the corrosive influence of dependence on Western capital on the declared quest for equitable growth in the country, undermining the orientation to national independence and foreign policy non-alignment over the long term, and provoking domestic crisis and inter-republic competition. By definition, inter-republic rivalries had to affect federal foreign policy priorities. John Lampe's brief overview of Yugoslav foreign policy confirms such a trend. Yugoslavia tilted East and West at different times to maintain its independence, sometimes relying on the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) for protection, and at other times leaning towards one of the blocs when the NAM became an unreliable ally. By the 1980s, however, different republic trade priorities and overall responses to the debt crisis appeared to determine greater or lesser attachment to economic relations with the NAM. The more developed north-western republics desired closer integration with the West, predictive of post-Cold War re-alignments among the (post-) Yugoslav republics (Lampe, 2013). By extension, it could be expected that British-Yugoslav foreign policies would often tend to coincide on East-West relations, but be blighted by periods of Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement; to be fractious on issues pertaining to decolonisation, but be tampered by Yugoslavia's moderation in the Third World; and to diverge towards the end of the Cold War, when the north-western republics would be seen as the preferred partners over the more intransigent Serbia.

Indeed, it did take time for British and Western foreign policy to react to the Yugoslav collapse (for contrasting views, see Gibbs, 2009, and Glaurdić, 2011). Early caution and indecision led to profound rethinking of British policy more generally. Political attitudes towards the collapse of Yugoslavia in both of Britain's main parties initially split between interventionists and anti-interventionists of various shades. Nonetheless, criticism over alleged inaction in face of Serbian and Croatian war crimes against Bosnian Muslims during the war that lasted from 1992 and 1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina began to take effect. By the end of the conflict, a Labour leadership increasingly exasperated by what it saw as the ineffectiveness of the Conservative government and the United Nations emerged (Schreiner, 2009). Its triumph in the national elections of 1997 crowned the rise of a resolutely Atlanticist foreign policy in which purportedly ethical concerns would be paramount and in which regional alliances were expected to intervene to protect human rights and prevent humanitarian catastrophes. The result was New Labour's role in providing ideological support from this standpoint for the NATO bombing of the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during the Kosovo crisis in 1999. Military intervention without a UN mandate was legitimate and necessary, the argument went, in order to prevent what has widely, though not universally (see for example: Schabas, 2007; Gibbs, 2015), been seen as genocide pursued by Serb forces during in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Ali, 2000). The unilateralist approach developed by the key powers in NATO would resurface again in the widely criticised US-UK-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 (see for example Coates and Krieger, 2004).

It is important to explain why Britain's social democratic party followed, and at times remained ahead of, the ruling class Conservative Party, in taking Atlanticist positions throughout this period. Although both parties remained divided over foreign policy, Labour was quicker to understand imperial decline than the Conservatives, and its right wing became the most Atlanticist wing of the political class into the twenty-first century (Gamble, 2003, 229-231). This set the British left apart from its European counterparts. Indeed, British exceptionalism in the context of European left politics has often drawn comment, both in terms of the extent of the hegemony of the Labour Party over the movement and the extent of its subordination to British foreign policy. The weakness of Marxism in the British context was especially obvious (Callaghan, Fielding, Ludlam, 2003). Perhaps the most famous interpretation was the so-called 'Nairn-Anderson thesis', named after the works of Marxist thinkers Tom Nairn and Perry Anderson. Despite differences, their work underlined the comparatively early birth of capitalism in England. This led to the attendant weakness of the British bourgeoisie, which was subsumed by the aristocracy. The lack of distinct revolutionary traditions and ideas more generally, against the unique

backdrop of early industrial revolution and empire, affected the working class movement too. They could not but negatively affect the possibility of the emergence of militant working class organisation (Davis, 2003; Wickham-Jones, 2003). Such an approach, while certainly of great value, has been criticised for overestimating the extent of the identity between the Labour Party and the labour movement. Figures and forces to the left of Labour, active in attempts to intervene in daily politics, provided an alternative account. 'New Left' thinkers like E.P. Thompson and Raymond Williams underlined that political choices played a key role in stifling those labour traditions which could have led to a more socialist working class movement in the late nineteenth century. Concretely, the success of Fabian utilitarianism and the failure of a crude Marxist economism were crucial to the outcome of this ideological struggle, the result of which was not structurally pre-ordained (Davis, 2003, 47).

However apt its criticism of the 'Nairn-Anderson' thesis was, however, the 'New Left' itself failed to offer a fully satisfactory theory of the Labour Party. It remained divided between proponents of breaking with the Labour Party and those who, in the aftermath of the defeats of working class militancy in the second half of the 1970s, sought a strategic convergence with a radicalising former cabinet minister, Tony Benn. As Alex Callinicos has argued, there was a near identity of ideas between the insistence of key thinkers in the 'New Left' that Britain needed to complete its bourgeois revolution and Benn's conclusion that Britain needed a constitutional revolution to restore 'self-government'. Benn had reached conclusion following his experience of government, in which he famously stated that he held office but not power. What he meant was that the left had been undermined by a loose coalition of multinational corporations, civil servants and international organisations while in office (Callinicos, 1988). Both the 'New Left' and 'Bennism' failed to shift Britain left, however. Indeed, by the end of the 1980s, most Bennites, though not Benn himself, accepted that there was no alternative to Atlanticism and the market, while the *New Left Review* failed to clearly condemn American-led war against Iraq in 1991 (Callinicos, Foot, Gonzalez, Harman, Molyneux, 1991).

At root, their failure is best explained by their inability to grasp the dual nature of the Labour Party. In their account, Tony Cliff and Donny Gluckstein underlined that understanding the Labour Party as a 'bourgeois workers' party' could explain the trajectory of both the Labour right and the Labour left, both those who wanted to better capitalism and those who wanted to reform it away. The 'bourgeois workers' party' refers to the foundation of the Labour Party as a fusion of middle class politicians and the trade union bureaucracy at the start of the twentieth century. The latter's role in particular is crucial, as it determines the character of the party. Union officials act as mediators between capital and labour, enjoying benefits and conditions that separate them from ordinary workers. While this means that they will lead a fight against capital at times, their fear of militant struggle prevents them moving beyond capitalist political categories. That in turn leads to their subordination of economic struggle for wages and conditions to the electoral struggle for reform. They thus accepted the Parliamentary Labour Party's (PLP's) formation as an effectively separate party in 1906, and for almost all of the party's history until the 1990s remained to the right of constituency parties, which contained ordinary party members (Gluckstein and Cliff, 1996, esp. pp. 23-53).

By contrast, the left largely organised in constituency parties, and was able to fight for reforms locally, but its weakness remained its orientation towards a parliamentary majority. This routinely led it to compromise with the right. Before Benn's rise and fall, a similar trajectory had befallen the veteran leader of the Labour left, Aneurin Bevan. He had been a syndicalist but, seeing the 1920s strikes following the First World War defeated, he chose what he called the 'political' road. Though often opposed to particular government policies at home and abroad, he embraced NATO in the 1950s and spoke in favour of Britain's possession of the hydrogen bomb in 1957. Michael Foot, later a Labour leader himself, explained Bevan's actions by his desire to ensure a Labour government (Gluckstein and

Cliff, 1996, pp. 261-271). Benn's later movement was rhetorically further to the left and gained greater union support than Bevan had had. The weakness of Benn's movement, much as that of the 'New Left', was not just a continued belief that capturing state power could be done electorally, but that leaving union power in the Labour Party untouched would not prevent a transformation of the character of the party. The Bennites wasted much energy on internal party manoeuvres, without recourse to winning hegemony outside parliament, as if the question were simply one of mobilisation of an existing base. Once it became clear that conference resolutions did not automatically transform the base, and that the union movement was failing to stop Thatcherism, the result was demoralisation and a rightward shift among left union officials, Bennites and the 'New Left' (Gluckstein and Cliff, 1996, pp. 348-355). The Labour Left did maintain a foothold in national politics in the 1990s and 2000s, though, largely through being seen to oppose both Conservative and Labour Party policy, but also by being associated with the increasingly mass extra-parliamentary movements against war and austerity that did try to shift public opinion at large (Nineham, 2017).

While not dismissing the importance of ideas and personalities in foreign policy debates, this section of the article has sought to link these with the material and class underpinnings producing and limiting them. Starting from these premises, which emphasise the importance of state interest to both the parties to the relationship, it becomes possible to predict broad points of convergence and divergence between the Labour Party and Yugoslavia. In the Cold War, convergence would occur in many spheres where there was joint suspicion of the Soviet Union. Divergence would occur by contrast in relation to disagreements related to domestic regimes, decolonisation and bloc politics more generally. The Labour Party itself could be expected to be divided between a right and left, with the former closer to reasons of state and the latter more responsive to pressures from the working class base of the Labour Party. Yugoslavia's regime, meanwhile, being more remote from the working class, could be expected to divide between more market and less market oriented wings, increasingly divided by republic basis. This, at least to some extent, could help explain diverging views of relations between the two in the Cold War and after. Since theory cannot be used to fully predict history, the following section demonstrates how these trends worked themselves out in reality.

More Tito than Self-Management? The Evolution of Labour Party Sympathies for Cold War Yugoslavia

The initial friendship between the Labour Party and Yugoslavia emerged in Cold War Europe. Finding itself locked out of, and threatened by, the Soviet bloc, Yugoslavia needed Western aid and security guarantees, so it sought out ideologically defensible allies in the West. The connection with the Labour Party, established in 1950, was a Yugoslav initiative, which took the form of an invitation not from the state or the ruling Communist Party, but the Popular Front (and later the re-named Socialist Alliance of Working People, the Party's umbrella organisation for its mass organisations). This reflected awareness among top Yugoslav officials that the anti-Communist climate in the West would prevent direct contacts. This trend appeared to predominate for most of the Cold War, except for a few years in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when Communist party officials from different bloc countries attended several Labour Party conferences, during Labour's swing left.[2] Nonetheless, Yugoslav officials hoped to use the good offices of the Labour Party to impress on the British government that Yugoslavia was a reliable ally against the USSR. They also hoped to project soft power in Britain by presenting Yugoslavia as a country evolving towards a more palatable and democratic form of rule, symbolised by the introduction of worker participation in factory management ('self-management') in 1949-1950. This appeared to work, as much of the Labour left held out hopes for change in the USSR or at least

[2] See below.

left convergence across Europe, independent of the superpowers; Yugoslavia in this context served a good purpose, and was a useful contrast with British-backed right-wing governments in Greece or Italy (Unkovski-Korica, 2014, pp. 27-31, 34-5).

Nonetheless, the initially special character of the relationship did not last long. The belief among Yugoslav officials that Britain was overly keen on reconciliation with the USSR led to the slow move to increase support for Yugoslavia outside Europe. This would lead to a clash over empire. Yugoslav approaches to Asia's socialists in 1953 and Tito's trip to India and Burma in 1954-5 served as signals that the country's leadership was hoping to make common cause with the rising number of newly independent states in international relations. Such an approach led to friction with Labour Party representatives, whom the Yugoslavs accused of being insufficiently critical of empire (Unkovski-Korica, 2014, pp. 37-40). Meanwhile, the Labour Party as a whole became increasingly critical at lack of progress in terms of domestic democratisation in Yugoslavia, after the promise of the early reforms began to evaporate. Most symbolic was the fate of a leading Yugoslav reformer and then dissident, Milovan Djilas, on whom the Labour Party leadership, and the left in particular, placed great hopes. Djilas began to press for democratic reform in Yugoslavia, allegedly even touting the possibility of a second political party, which led to his fall from grace. Tito blamed the influences of western social democracy at least in part for the Djilas's trajectory. Indeed, Djilas's fall from power and later series of imprisonments became a major obstacle to good relations between the Labour Party and Yugoslavia, although the issues was more often raised by the left of the party (Djokić 2006). A further complication arose between Yugoslavia and the Labour left because of their differing views about the potential for a thaw in relations between East and West. The Labour left was more consistently in favour of a lessening of tensions, while Yugoslavia tended to fear potential invasion. The Labour right even cited Yugoslav stances on international relations like German re-armament in order to discredit left positions at a party conference in 1955. Moreover, the Labour left tended to admire centralised planning, viewing Yugoslavia as making too many market concessions (Unkovski-Korica, 2014, pp. 41-5).

The trends identified for the 1950s held for much of the rest of the Cold War, though relations never reached the high point of the early years. The two parties' mutual suspicion of the USSR continued, guaranteeing British security support for Yugoslavia. This is despite the fact that Soviet-Yugoslav tensions never again reached the low point of 1948-1953. Moreover, for a time, there was Western concern that Yugoslavia was tilting back East in the 1960s. Tito failed to condemn the Soviet decision to test the hydrogen bomb during his speech at the Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961 and he was unhappy about the 1967 war in the Middle East. It was only after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia that Western security guarantees became once again central to Belgrade (Lampe, 2013, 98-9). Indeed, discussing the unlikely eventuality of a Soviet attack on Yugoslavia, leading members of the Labour government did indeed appear to be ready to send military assistance to Tito's government in case of need in 1968 (Hughes, 2009, pg. 149).

During the intervening time, leading Labour politicians and supporters showed their Yugoslav counterparts that they were lukewarm and even suspicious about the meaning of non-alignment. On a private visit to Yugoslavia in 1961, Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell made it clear he believed non-alignment would not achieve much.[3] Later in the same year, a former editor of the *New Statesman*,

[3] *Arhiv Jugoslavije* (Archives of Yugoslavia, AJ), *Centralni komitet Saveza komunista Jugoslavije* (Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia), 507, *Komisija za međunarodne odnose i veze* (Committee for international relations and connections) IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Zabeleška o razgovoru sa Hugh Gaitskell-om (Hju Gejskel), koji zajedno sa svojom porodicom boravi u Dubrovniku – od 14. avgusta do 10.

the left magazine supportive of the Labour Party, told Yugoslav representatives that Western policy makers resented the lack of Yugoslav criticism of the Soviet decision to explode the hydrogen bomb in 1961, since they saw the latter move as a clear tactic to intimidate the West in negotiations over the fate of Berlin.[4] At the Labour Party Conference in 1961, there was some support for making non-alignment Britain's policy, or at least noting the contribution of the Belgrade conference to world peace, with several resolutions submitted to that effect. The leadership forced a vote only on the first option, winning by more than five votes to one and pointing out that autocracies like Saudi Arabia were involved in the movement.[5]

Despite this, British politicians continued to show understanding for Yugoslav positions in world affairs. Cabinet member Denis Healey mentioned the possibility of a Yugoslav being elected as General Secretary of the United Nations on television,[6] while the rising star of the party and soon to be leader Harold Wilson asked in a meeting with the Yugoslav ambassador whether Yugoslavia would be interested in some form of membership of the European Common Market.[7] Overall, British officials generally understood better the need to encourage so-called 'moderate' participation in the NAM than their US counterparts (Rakove, 2014). Both Conservative and Labour governments encouraged continuing Yugoslav non-alignment and, in the 1970s, strongly supported good EEC-Yugoslavia relations for this reason, as did the German Foreign Minister, who viewed Yugoslavia as a moderate voice against Cuba in the NAM (Zaccaria, 2016, 67, 119, 144). Moreover, the outgoing British ambassador to Belgrade, writing to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, stated in 1980 that he believed that the Yugoslavs were beginning to be disillusioned in the movement following the 1979 Havana Conference. Though he expected them to maintain their non-aligned orientation in the short term, he supposed that economic development might even wean the Yugoslavs off the NAM over the longer term.[8]

Nonetheless, the ambassador noted, although bi-lateral relations between Yugoslavia and Britain remained good, they remained overly reliant on the myths of common struggle during the Second World War. Friction between two countries had emerged during the late 1970s, symbolically over the end of Empire or a key question of the NAM, that is, in relation to the end-game of the white minority regime in Rhodesia in the first instance. It would be important to rectify this by strengthening cultural, educational and commercial links, the ambassador maintained.[9] If bilateral state relations had stalled, relations between the Labour Party and Yugoslavia likewise remained largely cordial, but without particular intensity or depth. Socialist Alliance delegations reported similar trends at the end of the 1960s and at the end of the 1970s. They were greeted in friendly fashion, but no discussions of

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septembra [1961]', [Record of the discussion with Hugh Gaitskell, who with his family is staying in Dubrovnik – from 14 August to 10 September [1961]) pp. 1-6.

[4] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Razgovor sa Kingsli Martinom, bivšim urednikom londonskog Nju Steitsmena' [Conversation with Kingsley Martin, former editor of the New Statesman], pg. 1-2.

[5] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Godišnja konferencija Laburističke partije Velike Britanije, Blackpool, 2-6 oktobra 1961.' [The annual conference of the Labour Party of Great Britain, Blackpool, 2-6 October 1961], pp. 4-6.

[6] Ibid., pg. 4.

[7] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Zabeleška o razgovoru sa Haroldom Wilsonom, ovogodišnjem predsednikom Laburističke partije, na ručku kod ambasadora Price, na dan 14 februara 1962 godine u Londonu' [Record of the discussion with Harold Wilson, this year's president of the Labour Party, at a lunch with Ambassador Prica on 14 February 1962 in London], pp. 2-3.

[8] See paragraph 5 of 'Mr Faquharson (Belgrade) to Lord Carrington, 8 April 1980.', reproduced in Isabelle Tombs and Richard Smith, *The Polish Crisis and Relations with Eastern Europe, 1979-1982, Documents on British Policy Overseas*, Series III, Volume X, London, Routledge, 2017, pp. 26-30.

[9] Paragraph 12 of 'Mr Faquharson (Belgrade) to Lord Carrington, 8 April 1980.', reproduced in Tombs and Smith, *The Polish Crisis and Relations with Eastern Europe*, *op. cit*, pg. 29.

substance occurred.[10] Delegation exchanges occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s but the Yugoslav Communists recorded repeatedly their displeasure with Wilson's reluctance to visit Yugoslavia.[11] Exchanges did occur at lower levels, with, for example, the Fabian Society organising a summer school in Yugoslavia in the 1960s.[12] It seemed briefly that the situation would change significantly in 1977. The Labour Party opened up to the Communist Parties. This is best symbolised by an official invitation to Stane Dolanc, seen by many in the late 1970s as Tito's likely successor, to visit the Labour Party as a delegate of the leadership of the League of Communists, not the Socialist Alliance, as had been the practice before, and to publish a joint statement.[13] Given the Labour Party's domestic difficulties, and divisions between right and left, however, little of substance changed in relations before the party lost power in 1979.

An interesting novelty occurred in relation to the otherwise relative continuity in relation to the Djilas case after the 1950s. This related to the perhaps uncharacteristically frank statement by a representative of the Yugoslav Embassy in conversation with Labour left winger Barbara Castle following the re-arrest of Djilas in 1962 for publishing the autobiographical *Conversations with Stalin* abroad. The Yugoslav Embassy and the Labour Party leadership had already had a diplomatic stand-off about the event, with Gaitskell, Jennie Lee and Sam Watson, all relative veterans of relations between the parties, claiming they had been refused an audience, while the Embassy claimed they could have raised issues at a pre-arranged lunch. Castle felt that the Yugoslav representatives to Britain had made a mistake, and she pointed out that the Americans and Russians tolerate open protests when exchanging deputations. Milan Stojaković responded that that was natural among the big powers, but that the discussion was about a small country defending its independence, which was why it was important to prevent interference in its internal affairs.[14] What was perhaps unusual was that a Yugoslav representative tried to implicitly bring to the attention of a counterpart that the imbalance in power relations between the countries necessitated a more nuanced approach on the part of the Labour Party.

Moreover, evidence from the British press suggests that Yugoslavia's official position did indeed have influence on public opinion, eliciting protests from Labour figures. Writing his 'London Diary' for the *New Statesman*, Richard West, a leading independent journalist, noted that '[a]t the Edinburgh writers' conference two years ago, a man who dared to speak in favour of Djilas was shouted down. The assembled writers and readers cheered the miserable Yugoslav delegate who defended the gaol

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[10] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Izveštaj delegacije SSRNJ o prisustvu 68. konferenciji Laburističke partije Velike Britanije' dated October 1969, pp. 1-7. AJ 507, IX, s/a-330-335, 'Informacija o 78-oj godišnjoj Konferenciji Laburističke partije Velike Britanije' [Information about the 78th annual conference of the Labour Party of Great Britain], dated 24th October 1979, pp. 1-9.

[11] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Laburistička partija Velike Britanije – Informacija povodom dolaska delegacije Laburističke partije Velike Britanije na Deseti kongres SKJ, Predsedništvo SKJ, maj. 1974. Beograd' [Labour Party of Great Britain – Information relating to the visit of a delegation of the Labour Party of Great Britain to the Tenth Congress of the LCY, Presidency of the LCY, May 1974, Belgrade], pg. 11

[12] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Komisiji za međunarodne odnose i veze SSRNJ – mesečni pregled, 11. oktobra, 1961' [To the committee of foreign relations and links of the SSRNJ – monthly review, 11 October 1961], pg. 5.

[13] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Predlog za posetu Staneta Dolanca, sekretara Izvršnog komiteta Predsedništva CK SKJ Laburističkoj partiji Velike Britanije' [Proposal for the visit of Stane Dolanc, secretary of the Executive Committee of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the LCY to the Labour Party of Great Britain] dated 9th March 1977.

[14] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Zabeleška o razgovoru savetnika M. Stojakovića sa Barbarom Castle, clan Nacionalnog izvrnog komiteta Laburisticke partije, na dan 10 maja 1962 u Londonu' [Note of a conversation of counselor M. Stojaković with Barbara Castle, member of the National Executive Commitee of the Labour Party, on 10 May 1962 in London], pp. 2-4.

sentence. Yet real pressure from Britain might well secure Djilas' release' (West, 1964, pg. 594). Indeed, many in the Labour Party leadership continued to raise the issue both publicly and in meetings with Yugoslav state, party and other representatives, but to little effect. Jennie Lee, a leading Labour leftist and wife of the late Bevan, wrote in to the *New Statesman* in response to West's diary to point out that Djilas and Bevan often disagreed but that, in imprisoning Djilas, the Yugoslav authorities were losing face (Lee, 1964, pg. 640). As late as 1982, Labour leader Michael Foot, on visiting Yugoslavia, brought up Djilas in discussion with top Yugoslav officials, continuing the customary exchanges on this topic between both sides.[15] The usual Yugoslav retort was to reprimand the Labour Party's or Socialist International's tolerance of the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia, which had worked alongside the collaborationist Chetnik movement during the Second World War, as occurred on Foot's next visit to Yugoslavia in 1983.[16]

Despite these relative continuities, certain relative novelties also emerged in relations between the Labour Party and Yugoslavia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They both faced new conditions that were transforming the world fundamentally. The slowdown in post-war global growth and the fall in the rate of profit in the core capitalist economies led to what David Harvey argued was a conscious right-wing offensive to restructure the global economy in a way that weakened labour and the indebted countries, and replace the old Keynesian with a new monetarist orthodoxy (Harvey, 2007). Indeed, both the Labour Party, in the 1970s, and the Yugoslav party-state, in the 1980s, ended up reluctantly accepting IMF-designed austerity programmes. This set both parties at odds with the labour population and probably contributed to the Labour Party's electoral oblivion over 18 years and to the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s (Roberts, 2016; Woodward, 1995a; 1995b).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, both the Labour Party and Yugoslav leaderships tried to reinforce the old goals through new methods. The Labour right continued to frustrate any real attempts to question Atlanticism. The Labour Party moved nominally left under Foot and remained nominally left under Kinnock, accepting unilateral atomic disarmament, as well as praising the NAM and Yugoslavia's role in it publicly at Labour Party conference.[17] Yugoslav observers, however, noted that the rhetoric was often left wing but the practice remained right wing and that the party remained deeply divided and in crisis in 1982.[18] The Yugoslav analysis registered a further move to the right in society by the end of 1985 and suspected that there would be a further drift to the right by the new Labour leaders. They appeared resolved to defeat the radical left in the party because they feared that the rightward split in Labour which formed the new Social Democratic Party would risk the party's ability to win majorities unless the party moved back to the centre.[19] The importance of Yugoslavia to a divided and struggling

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[15] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Izveštaj o boravku vodje Laburističke partije Velike Britanije Majkla Futa (od 16. do 20. septembra 1982. godine)' [Report on the stay of the leader of the Labour Party of Great Britain Michael Foot (from 16 to 20 September 1982], pg. 5.

[16] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Zabeleška iz razgovora člana Predsedništva CK SKJ Miljana Radovića sa liderom Laburističke partije Velike Britanije Majklom Futom u Dubrovniku 23.08.1983. godine,' [Note from the conversation of the member of the Presidency of the CC LCY Miljan Radović with the leader of the Labour Party of Great Britain Michael Foot in Dubrovnik 23.08.1983], pp. 2-3.

[17] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Izveštaj o učešću predstavnika CK SKJ dr. D. Stojanovića na 81. godišnjoj konferenciji Laburističke partije Velike Britanije (Blekpul, 27. septembar – 2. oktobar 1982.)' [Report on the participation of the representative of the CC LCY Dr. D. Stojanović in the 81st annual conference of the Labour Party of Great Britain (Blackpool, 27 September – 2 October 1982)], pp. 1-17.

[18] Ibid. 16.

[19] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, 'Izveštaj delegacije SKJ o radu Osamdesetčetvrte godišnje konferencije Laburističke partije održane od 29. septembra do 5. oktobra 1985. godine u Bornutu. (Velika Britanija).' [Report of the LCY delegation about the Eighty-fourth annual conference of the Labour party, held from 29 September to 5 October 1985 in Bournemouth (Great Britain)], pp. 1-8.

Labour party in Britain appeared to be falling in comparison with the levels of interest seen in the preceding decades. The general drift rightward meant Communist parties would no longer be invited to party conferences and return trips could not be guaranteed as funding, officials claimed, was now a major problem.[20]

Yugoslavia, too, found it difficult to respond to new circumstances, and rhetorically moved left, but in practice came to accept the rightward shift globally. Yugoslav officials met with suspicion the Socialist International's move into the Third World in the late 1970s and early 1980s, seeing it as a conscious strategy to defeat the NAM.[21] They were initially more supportive of attempts to bring together the left of social democracy as represented by the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), Eurocommunism led by the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and Britain's Labour Left.[22] Over time, however, this analysis shifted, becoming almost diametrically opposed. The Yugoslav Communists appeared to see the prospects of individual social democratic parties in the short term as dim,[23] but they saw the activities of the Socialist International as moving in the right direction, as a consequence of domestic pressures but also of the need to listen to more actors in the developing world.[24] Some members of the leadership began to voice the notion that Yugoslavia's domestic problems were weakening its global role in the NAM.[25] Others felt that Yugoslav representatives should not be bound by this problem, as other countries were also in crisis. Instead, they should underline that their own programme with the IMF could be seen as a victory for independence unlike other programmes and that Yugoslavia should suggest it as a model for the NAM forcefully.[26] Internal divisions in Yugoslavia from the mid-1980s about how to respond to the crisis, however, were becoming the mirror image of those in the Labour Party, with the difference that Yugoslav divisions began to be refracted increasingly through the national question, as much as by a decisive break with the welfare state (Woodward, 1995b).

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[20] AJ 507, IX, 133/II-272-364, Jože Smole, 'Izveštaj o poseti Velikoj Britaniji i o učešću na simpoziju o Orvelu' [Report on the visit to Great Britain and participation in the symposium on Orwell], dated 24th August 1984, pg. 3.

[21] AJ 507, IX, s/a-336-440, 'Sadašnje stanje i tendencije razvoja zapadno-evropskih socijalističkih i socijaldemokratskih partija' [The current state and tendency of development of the West European socialist and social-democratic parties], dated 21st May 1980, pg. 24.

[22] Ibid. pg. 8. For more on these tendencies, see Di Donato*,* 2015.

[23] AJ 507, IX, s/a-360-363, 'Informacija o petoj sednici CK SKJ za međunarodnu saradnju Saveza komunista Jugoslavije, održanoj 9. marta 1983. godine u Predsjedništvu CK SKJ' [Information about the fifth session of the CC LCY for international relations of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held 9 March 1983 in the Presidency of the CC LCY], esp. pg. 20-1.

[24] AJ 507, IX, s/a- 394-399, 'Informacija o četvrtoj sednici Komisije CK SKJ za međunarodnu saradnju SKJ, održanu zajedno sa Sekcijom za spoljno-politička pitanja i medjunarodne veze SK SSNRJ, 22. decembra 1986. godine' [Information on the fourth session of the Committee of the CC LCY for the international cooperation of the LCY, held together with the section for foreign political questions and international links of the FC SAWPY, 22 December 1986], pp. 1-14.

[25] AJ 507, IX, s/a-360-363, 'Informacija o petoj sednici CK SKJ za međunarodnu saradnju Saveza komunista Jugoslavije, održanoj 9. marta 1983. godine u Predsjedništvu CK SKJ' [Information about the fifth session of the CC LCY for the international cooperation of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held on 9th March 1983 in the Presidency of the CC LCY], esp. pg. 21

[26] See Aleksandar Grličkov's speech in: AJ 507, IX, s/a-360-363,'Neautorizovane magnetofonske beleške sa Četvrte sednice Komisije Predsedništva Centralnog komiteta Saveza komunista Jugoslavije za medjunarodnu saradnju, održane u sredu, 09. februara 1983. godine sa početkom u 9,00 časova.' [Unauthorised taped records of the Fourth session of the Committee of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia for international cooperation, held on Wednesday, 9 February 1983, starting at 9 a.m.], Not paginated.

Continuities and Discontinuities: Labour Party Foreign Policy Debates and the Yugoslav Wars

Yugoslavia did not survive the end of the Cold War, as the various republic leaderships had different visions of exiting the crisis and meeting post-Cold War challenges. If their decision-making was a response to a series of emergencies, however, the policies of the Western powers could be expected to also be subject to a degree of uncertainty. It is therefore unsurprising that the scholarship has produced a variety of interpretations about how the international community could have reacted to the collapse of Yugoslavia. There does seem to be relative agreement, however, that in the period up to 1994, there was a bi-partisan approach to the collapse of Yugoslavia in the UK. Both political parties eschewed decisive military intervention to end the wars at that time. Assessments of why this was the case vary, from the notion that Britain traditionally preferred Serbia and thought that there would be no peace in the Balkans without a strong Serbia (Hodge, 2006, pg. 4) to the argument that British foreign policy makers were driven by a series of complex motivations springing fundamentally from a conservative philosophical realism (Simms, 2001, pg. 6). Whatever the reasons, it does appear that Labour did begin to depart from the bi-partisan consensus on policy. The Labour Shadow Cabinet supported more decisive humanitarian measures and began to argue for more proactive policies in the conflict in Bosnia. It did so by supporting the implementation of a no-fly zone in December 1992 and calling for air strikes in 1993, slightly before the Conservative government did (Schreiner, 2009, 129-148). After becoming Labour leader, Tony Blair spoke in favour of decisive military intervention in May 1995 (Schreiner, 2009, 175-7).

There has been little explanation for this shift, which was not yet decisive. It is certainly the case that there was an overall move rightward in the party and society (Young, 2001). Relations in the party have traditionally been argued to be as important as actual foreign policy events in determining Labour Shadow Cabinet policy before the assumption of power, when external pressures tend to become more important (Vickers, 2000, pg. 34). The run-up to the Kosovo War in this sense appears to be instructive, as is the case of Robin Cook, prominent Labour front bencher in the Shadow Cabinet and then Foreign Secretary from 1997 to 2001. Robin Cook had hailed from the party's left wing but had moved more towards the centre over time. He nonetheless appeared less hawkish in relation to the Balkans than Blair. Cook was still in favour of an arms embargo on all sides in the Bosnian War just a week after the notorious massacre in Srebrenica in 1995 (Schreiner, 2009, 114). On an official visit to Bosnia in July 1997, he appeared to refuse to take sides in disputes relating to the future of the Dayton Peace accords, which had effectively partitioned the country, and re-assured the Bosnian Serb government that Britain would not arrest any more Serbs in the British-controlled area of Bosnia (Schreiner, 2009, 25). Will Bartlett records that Britain remained neutral in debates between Serb and Albanian representatives in Kosovo in 1997 and that Cook himself repeatedly opposed resort to military force in 1998 (Bartlett, 2000, pg. 134-5).

Then, between June 1998 and March 1999, the British position changed to a more interventionist and Atlanticist one. Cook co-chaired the controversial Rambouillet talks, which effectively presented the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with an ultimatum that envisaged NATO forces moving without impediment across its territory, something Belgrade was almost certain to reject (Bartlett, 2000, pg. 136). The comparison with Bosnia became popular at this point to differentiate Labour's policy from the allegedly appeasing one of the Conservatives, and the comparison between Yugoslav President Slobodan Milošević and Adolf Hitler was made by both Cook and Blair. Critics have noted that the claim that this was a humanitarian war were not borne out by NATO indifference to the suffering of the Serbian population in Kosovo (Bartlett, 2000, pp. 137-142). Mark Plythian notes that Cook and Blair also began to more systematically argue that NATO should take on a more interventionist garment in world affairs without United Nations approval where necessary, abandoning the deference

that the Labour Party had generally shown towards the UN until that point (Plythian, 2007, pg. 123). He notes that it is likely that the extent of Blair's victory in 1997, the weakness and division on the party's left, the low ebb of suspicion of the United States in world affairs, and the fact that opposition to the war came from what were seen as the usual suspects who opposed all interventions, combined to explain the apparently almost total triumph of unilateralist Atlanticism in the Labour Party by 1999 (Plythian, 2007, pg. 127).

The swing to the right in the Labour Party had probably reached its zenith by this point. Furthermore, the right would remain dominant for a decade and a half, making it difficult for commentators to predict the possibility of a return of the left. Many, including Plythian, could see that the Iraq War had damaged Blair's wing of the party and British foreign policy significantly (Plythian, 2007, 155). Some have even noted that domestic concerns and divisions were still quite significant for the foreign policies of the party, and indeed a plausible reason in themselves for the Kosovo War. Oliver Daddow has for instance argued that Blair's determination to push for the Kosovo War was motivated by his inability to move decisively on domestic issues and on Europe, prisoner as he was of Gordon Brown's influence in these spheres of policy, so foreign policy gave Blair an easy route to making his mark and building up his personal authority (Daddow, 2009).

Few have however done justice to the left's views during the wars of the 1990s, as the left appeared irrelevant. The left was of course never a fully united faction of the Labour Party, and differences of opinion in relation to the Bosnian and Kosovo Wars have been noted among scholars. The anti-interventionist left tends to be treated in dismissive fashion. Brandon Simms mentions the most famous opponent of intervention, as the 'veteran anti-American' (Simms, 2001, 279). Schreiner tends to give anti-war arguments more space in her work on the Bosnia War. She notices the split between the pro-intervention and anti-intervention left, and notes that left-wingers like Chris Mullin and Ken Livingstone saw parallels between Conservative policy in Bosnia and Conservative appeasement of Hitler in the 1930s, a viewpoint which dovetailed with the kind of rhetoric employed by the party's right wing (Schreiner, 2009, pp. 18-9, 203-4). By contrast, while recounting different left wing reasons for opposition to military intervention, however, she appears to imply that they are backward looking. Of twenty-seven pages that mention Tony Benn or his views, more than half, thirteen, contain the descriptors 'traditional' or 'traditionally' (Schreiner, 2009, pp. 4, 17, 18, 19, 85, 149, 151, 152, 153, 156, 189, 193, 237). Anti-interventionist views are the only ones Schreiner regularly contrasts with critical academic views relating to the conflict in Yugoslavia, particularly the work of Simms, with whom her main difference is that she believes that the Labour front bench did call for air strikes earlier than the Conservatives and that some backbenchers did call for the use of military force (Schreiner, 2009, pg. 56). Her account also claims that when Benn or other left-wingers pointed to Western double standards in the Balkans and, for example, Palestine, it was highly likely that he would oppose intervention if it were to occur in Palestine (Schreiner, 2009, 192).

Such division and treatment of the left continued into the Kosovo War. Plythian notes similar divisions on the left as in Bosnia in an admittedly shorter account but does note that left wing critics of war were widely perceived at the time to be out of touch and as doomsayers who had allegedly been proved wrong in the Falklands and Iraq about how catastrophic foreign interventions would be (Plythian, 2009, 127). Meanwhile, the only reference in an academic publication to the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, the key organisation that tried to put an anti-war message to the public in Britain, wrongly claims that it was set up in 1995 by left and right wing figures 'disinclined to condemn Serbian actions in the conflict' (Gallagher, 2003, pg. 137).

Given the swing back to the left in the Labour Party through the 2010s, however, deeper appreciation of the anti-interventionist left's arguments and activities during its apparent low ebb may reveal the

reasons behind its longer-term resilience. The core of the MPs and activists in the Labour Party who represented the principal movers behind anti-war activities from the 1980s through to the 2000s were indeed representatives of the socialist left. While occasionally right wing Labour MPs, Conservatives or Liberal Democrats played prominent roles, the size and extent of personnel continuity of the socialist left in the anti-war movement, especially from the Socialist Campaign Group, showed that only a particular strand of left politics gave organisational expression and tried to mobilise wider anti-war sentiment. The support of MPs, moreover, was vital for publicity but did not necessarily provide leadership and mobilisation on a day-to-day level. Tony Benn was certainly very important in the anti-war movements related to both the First and Second Gulf Wars, as well as the Bosnian and Kosovo Wars. Yet while he became one of the principal public faces of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, minutes of its founding meeting suggest he was not yet involved. This meeting actually occurred on 26 May 1993, and reveal Alice Mahon MP was the first chair, while Carol Turner of Labour CND played a key organisational role. Present were largely members of the labour movement, both inside the Labour Party but also outside it, including then prominent Communists, like Andrew Murray, who would later play a key role in the Stop the War Coalition, become chief of staff of Unite the Union and get appointed as part time consultant to Jeremy Corbyn's office. Members of religious groups, the Green Party and other peace groups also attended, and apologies were received and invitations sent to even wider groups.[27] The statement drafted and unanimously passed at the meeting deplored the loss of life but opposed military intervention, and a letter based on that statement went to the press, signed by four MPs, including Diane Abbot, Corbyn's Shadow Home Secretary at the time of writing.[28]

The Committee only managed to organise more significant demonstrations and conferences at the time of the 1999 war, by which time it had broadened out to involve members of the Yugoslav diaspora in Britain and far left groups like the Socialist Workers Party. A conference organised after the Kosovo War in June 1999 showed a wide array of left forces across Europe in attendance, from the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland Greece, as well as speakers from the Yugoslav diaspora, the British far left, anti-war activists like Tariq Ali, and prominent Labour MPs, including Jeremy Corbyn.[29] These kinds of activities proved key to setting up alliances that launched the Stop the War Coalition, organiser of the largest political demonstrations in British history against the Iraq War. Benn was the President of the Stop the War Coalition (STWC) from early in its history until his death in 2014. Benn's close associate, and also opponent of the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, Jeremy Corbyn, acted as the Chair of the STWC from 2011 until his election as Labour leader in 2015. In his letter of resignation as Chair of the STWC, Corbyn explicitly acknowledged his victory in the Labour leadership contest had owed 'something to the spirit and struggles of Stop the War since 2001' (Corbyn, 2015).

It is important to note that the views of the anti-interventionist leftists like Benn can also be drawn from their pre-1990s experiences and views, which speak to a deeper set of motivations than knee-jerk anti-Americanism or shallow pro-Serb sentiments. Meeting a Yugoslav representative in 1984, Benn warned that the International Monetary Fund was an instrument in Reagan's hands and that it was purposefully trying to change Yugoslavia's domestic regime.[30] He also stated that he feared for Yugoslavia's international position should there be a worsening of domestic conditions. He asked what the Foreign Office stance was on Yugoslavia, to which the Yugoslav representative responded that

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[27] 'Committee for Peace in the Balkans, Notes of Meeting of Wednesday 12th May 1993', pg. 1, Carol Turner's private archive.
[28] Ibid. pp. 3, 4.
[29] 'Agenda: Consequences of NATO's war on Yugoslavia', Carol Turner's private archive.
[30] *Diplomatski arhiv Saveznog ministarstva za inostrane poslove* (Diplomatic archives of the Federal ministry for foreign affairs, DASMIP), *Politička arhiva* (Political archive, PA), 1984, f-110, 444508, pg. 1.

there they were assuring Yugoslavia of their support. Benn reputedly retorted 'do not trust them'.[31] He also recounted that he had met the left-wing Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou two years earlier and had told him that Greece should shut down US bases on its territory. To Benn's surprise, Papandreou countered that this would meet with Yugoslav displeasure in view of its fear of the East.[32] Benn was indicating that he thought that the US was a greater threat to world peace than the USSR, which did not escape his interlocutor, who explained as a note to the discussion that Benn was actively trying to win the Labour Party to this overall position, not without success in terms of official documents.[33] The Yugoslav representative disagreed with Benn's views.[34] This is unsurprising, given that official circles almost always feared that a direct attack on Yugoslavia would come from the East.

Nonetheless, Benn's views in 1984 shed light on his later role in the anti-interventionist movement in the 1990s. His references to the role of the IMF in destroying Yugoslavia at a rally of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans on 18th September 1995 were therefore likely a reasoned position that drew on his own experiences as a cabinet minister in the 1970s and his assessment of the balance of global forces in the 1980s (Benn, 1995). It can therefore be hypothesised that the Bennite wing of the Labour Party survived and revived in a new fashion in the 2010s on account of a longer-term and deeper understanding of the foreign policies of the British state, as well as its continued involvement in mass movements independent of the Labour Party following the party's rightward shift in the 1990s and 2000s. The left's opposition to policies widely seen in the Labour movement as having failed in the late 2000s and through 2010s led to as dramatic a shift left as the shift to the right hand been in the 1990s and early 2000s. This article therefore contributes to our understanding of the different trajectories of the failed attempt by Benn to win deputy leadership in the years 1979-1982 and Corbyn's successful assumption of Labour leadership in 2015. While the former, as argued, had remained trapped within the Labour Party at a time of the defeats of the Labour movement, the latter came on the back of temporarily unpopular stances that were later more widely appreciated as principled and reasonable.

Conclusions: Understanding the Labour Party Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Having sought to explain the history of British Labour Party foreign policy as one deeply embedded in the party's dual class nature, this article has used Yugoslavia as a case study to argue that the extreme swings to the right and Atlanticism in the 1990s and the left in the 2010s had deeper roots which are visible in embryonic format in earlier periods of British Labour Party history. Yugoslavia proved to be a useful country to study, since it represented the high point of Attlee's and Bevan's different approaches to international affairs, reflecting the more middle class and the more working class leanings of both politicians. Moreover, across different epochs, with the centre of gravity globally moving left or right, Labour's attitudes to Yugoslavia changed accordingly, despite the complexities and idiosyncrasies of their relationship. By the 1990s, Yugoslavia had become a testing ground for the ability of the Atlanticist wing of the British Labour Party to seek Britain's and NATO's independence from Cold War-era institutions like the United Nations which limited imperial power. By contrast, the failures of this attempt, particularly following the Iraq War of 2003, brought into question this entire approach on the same scale as Vietnam had done in the United States from the 1970s onwards. The levels of continuity on the anti-interventionist left from before the 1980s to the 2010s are indicative

[31] Ibid., pg. 2.
[32] Ibid., pg. 2
[33] Ibid., pg. 3
[34] DASMIP, PA, 1984, f-110, 44509.

of the depth of conviction held by those who had to go against the grain in the Yugoslav Wars. That helps to explain Corbyn's success in winning the Labour Party leadership.

It also however helps to explain why, like others on the left before him, Corbyn has made foreign policy compromises to keep the Labour Party together in the hope of attaining a parliamentary majority. He dropped his demand that Britain withdraw from NATO, softened his opposition to Trident and shifted in favour of a Remain vote in the referendum over Britain's membership of the European Union (Riley-Smith, 2015). Even after a successful election campaign in 2017, in which his party won more seats than expected to create a hung parliament, Corbyn appeared to change his stance from the so-called 'People's Brexit' position to support for a 'soft Brexit' after pressure from the Shadow Cabinet and the PLP (Helm, 2017). Whether Corbyn will prove 'a blip on Labour history' as asserted during a row about anti-Semitism in the Labour Party by Dame Margaret Hodge, a key representative of the Labour right, remains to be seen, and depends to some extent on the ability of the two main wings of the Labour Party to learn lessons from their history and adapt them in new circumstances (Withers, 2018).

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