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Critique 15

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CRITIQUE AIMS

We live amidst the debris of the defeat of the October Revolution and the implications of this defeat have been inadequately theorised. It is of little use to repeat old formulae buttressed with new statistics or new descriptive terms, when the influence of Stalinism is incorporated in the original formula. Even the most inveterate anti-Stalinist has little by little, consciously and unconsciously, conceded to the all pervasive influence of the "realists", the pessimists and those who would accept second-best. Socialism in one country is the essence of Stalinism and its theorisations have often been sufficiently sophisticated for the origins to be obscured. When clear enough, it has been difficult for socialists, who have often been active for decades, to resist the temptation of discovering the promised land in this or that country or of discovering some aspect of progress that will lead that unfortunate country into the promised land. Even sophisticated and half-hearted apologetics remain apologetics. A critical analysis of our own theories is essential to assist in the formation of an adequate Marxism. The twin dangers of dogmatism and a de-politicised empiricism are the Scylla and Charybdis of a left bereft of an adequate guide to action since the enormous defeats of the twenties. *Critique* does not pretend to have the answers to the problems facing the left nor does it think that it has even the beginning of an answer, but it sets itself only the modest task of recuperating, in certain respects, to the limited degree possible with its resources, that vital Marxism that once existed by providing a forum for those who see the problems in similar terms.

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