

BRENT MARXIST INDUSTRIAL GROUP

THE COMMON MARKET
The Real Issues

THE SOVIET UNION
Socialist State or
Imperialist Superpower

A CONTRIBUTION FROM F.R.A.P.

SPAIN
The Anti-Fascist Struggle

A FACTORY EXPERIENCE

F. Huscroft

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THE MARXIST

THE LIBERATION OF THE PROLETARIAT IS THE TASK OF THE PROLETARIAT ITSELF

The statement that heads this page is an expression of unalterable truth. If we expect, or allow, others to do it for us, we cannot complain when we are betrayed.

How, then, do we begin? Where are the resources that will enable us to build a leadership from within our own ranks and equal to this immense task?

We believe that the potential exists primarily in industry. Workers in industry are constantly in conflict with the employing class. Struggle, in one form or another, is part of their daily existence. Illusions are difficult to maintain and workers quickly learn from experience that justice does not depend upon strength of argument alone, nor on numerical superiority. It has to be fought for and won. Further, in struggle workers accept quite naturally that organisation and discipline are indispensable. As both are also essential ingredients in modern industrial production, workers are already accustomed to their application.

If we cannot build the leadership needed from this source we will not build it anywhere. To start this we must work to form groups of workers within factories, dealing with concrete problems, intimately integrated with their own class and, as a direct consequence, seeking that which will assist them in their own endeavours.

It is here that the connection and interrelation of all things can be seen..... here that the dialectical nature of all development can be demonstrated..... here that the sweeping compass of Marxist-Leninist philosophy may not only be understood but put into practice.

We must recognise that it is not simply a question of forming groups of Marxist-Leninist workers, but primarily of developing Marxist-Leninist workers in the process of working in groups.

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THE COMMON MARKET

Brent Marxist
Industrial Group

The Real Issues

The debate about Britain's membership of the E.E.C. centres around two main points. Its advantage or disadvantages to the British economy. Its effect on national sovereignty. What is really at issue is the benefit to be obtained by the capitalist class and the extent to which membership will limit the ability of that class to take independent decisions.

Whatever economic benefits (if any) may accrue to the mass of the British people from either course is purely incidental.

The public is being wooed with propaganda by both sides, each implying that the biggest economic benefit will be obtained if their advice is followed.

One thing is certain, whether Britain remains in, or withdraws from the E.E.C., the drive to force down living standards will continue unabated, and so will the resistance to it.

There is no alternative for the mass of the people other than a stepping up of the class struggle if they are not to be trampled on by their own capitalist class.

The anti-marketeters do their best to spread the idea that by coming out of the Market, old trading links could be re-established and food prices kept below those applying inside the E.E.C.

The rise in food prices is world wide and not confined to the E.E.C.

New Zealand and Australia, suppliers of cheap lamb, butter and cheese in the past, are in favour of Britain joining the E.E.C. so how can it be expected that they would sell these things at a lower price to a Britain that withdrew from E.E.C. membership?

The increase in the price of sugar is a world trend and nothing to do with membership of the E.E.C.

These same opponents of British membership point to the rising unemployment in the countries within the E.E.C. but conveniently

forget to mention that this is a feature common to all capitalist countries, U.S.A. and Japan included.

The fall in industrial production is taking place in all capitalist countries irrespective of membership of the E.E.C.

The conclusion that any reasonable person would draw from this is that the common factor here is that they are all capitalist states. Whether they are members of a particular trading block is of minor importance.

Both the advocates and the opponents of British membership skate over this obvious fact and continue to draw red herrings across the trail.

They want to avoid the unpleasant truth that capitalism on a world scale is entering into a very deep crisis of overproduction which cannot be overcome by a rearrangement

of trading relationships.

If this is the case, one may ask what is all the argument about E.E.C. membership?

Of course, as its opponents allege, the E.E.C. is an association of states in which monopoly interests rule the roost.

The question which needs to be asked is why should British monopoly capital now choose an association with European monopoly capital in preference to the once so-called "Special Relationship" which it had with United States monopoly capital?

This special relationship was a natural follow on to the line put forward in Churchill's famous Fulton speech in which he called for an alliance against Communism. What he was after was a recognition from the U.S. that British imperialism would be the most reliable ally in its drive for world domination, providing that the "rights" of British imperialism were respected.

Over a number of years it became clear that U.S. imperialism was not only challenging the "reds", it was supporting insurgent movements in the colonial countries in order to oust the old imperialists so that it could take their place as the new master.

Probably the greatest set-back to the concept of the "special relationship" occurred when Britain and France instigated the Israelis into attacking Egypt at the time when Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal.

The U.S. stepped in on the side of Egypt and from that time onwards the influence of Britain and France declined in the Middle East and that of the U.S. increased.

The easing out of British imperialism was

not always as a result of such a confrontation; it was more often as a result of U.S. monopolies gaining freedom of access to what were formerly British preserves.

Competing "on equal terms", the bigger U.S. monopolies with their greater financial and economic resources, pushed out their competitors or reduced their influence. The greater economic influence in these areas led to greater political influence.

Canada, nominally a member of British Commonwealth, has been under strong U.S. economic influence for many years due to the amount of U.S. investment.

In India, "the brightest jewel in the imperial crown", British investment and hence British influence is far behind the American.

Egypt we have already mentioned.

In Australia and New Zealand the same pattern is emerging.

In Britain itself, about 16% of industry is American owned.

The "Special Relationship" was not paying off. Britain became increasingly referred to as the future 49th State. The Americans had to be consulted on trade agreements and monetary changes.

The European capitalist states were also subject to penetration by U.S. monopoly capital and one of the reasons for the creation of the E.E.C. was to prevent it from making further inroads into important sections of European industry.

THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

This meant the creation of a European market, protected by tariffs from "unfair" competition from outside, which would create the conditions for the growth of bigger and more powerful European based monopolies.

This will inevitably lead to the creation of still larger monopolies as the "less efficient" are swallowed up or pushed out by the bigger, "more efficient" ones.

This process is part of the natural development of capitalism, and readers will be able to recall many examples of this occurring in Britain long before any mention was ever made of the Common Market.

To those who object that this will lead to the concentration of economic and political power into fewer hands, we reply that this is the way in which capitalism must develop according to its own internal laws of development, and attempts to arrest it are like spitting against the wind. Mankind can only go forward to socialism, not backwards to pre-monopoly capitalism.

Monopolies develop for the reason that bigger concentrations of capital have greater financial resources available for research, development, and production of new products. Given a large enough market, mass production is more profitable than small scale production, and the more complete the monopoly, the more capable it is of controlling production so as to prevent prices from falling below "economic levels".

It is easy to see that the generally bigger U.S. based monopolies have the edge on the relatively smaller ones based in the European countries and therefore stand a good chance

of ousting them unless the latter are able to protect themselves in some way.

The Treaty of Rome, the basic document upon which the E.E.C. is founded, is partly an attempt to rally idealists who dream of eliminating the threat of war between member states by submerging national interests into a broader European interest.

But behind this idealist front are the big monopolies whose interests demand the creation of a large tariff-free market and unrestricted movement of labour and capital within it.

This will not, as some believe, lead to a weakening of competition between the individual nationally based monopolies. On the contrary, it will lead to intensified competition between them with the most successful coming to the top and the remainder falling by the wayside.

It can be seen that this aspect of the E.E.C. is in contradiction with the common need of the member states to unite against incursions by the two superpowers.

It is argued that as West Germany is already showing itself as having the strongest economy within the E.E.C., Britain, by joining, is merely showing a preference to being dominated by the Germans rather than by the Americans.

This ignores the fact that the industrial potential of Britain is more equal to that of Germany than to that of the U.S., therefore the danger of domination is much less. Further, the conflicting national interests within the E.E.C. provide the basis for an alliance of other member states opposed to such domination if the need should arise.

The opponents of British membership point to the aims outlined in the Treaty of Rome as evidence that a British Government will lose the power to make its own decisions.

If it were ever fully implemented, that would be the case, but unilateral decisions have been taken by several member states when important internal interests were threatened. The latest one at the time of writing is the banning of Italian wine imports by the French Government.

Historical experience shows that the merging of nation states has only been accomplished by the stronger taking over the weaker.

It is extremely unlikely (to put it mildly) that the capitalist class of any member state will willingly surrender all power to a supra-national body.

The use of armed force to accomplish this would lead to the break up of the E.E.C. into warring factions.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE.

The opponents of British membership imply that prior to its membership of the E.E.C., Britain was free from foreign interference in its internal and external affairs.

This is so evidently untrue that they dare not state it openly.

The anti-marketeer's formula for national independence can be summed up in the phrase "establish new trading relationships".

Broadly speaking this means that Britain should enter into trading agreements with countries which require the industrial goods we produce in return for food and raw

materials that we require.

Further, it is implied that these things can be obtained more cheaply by this method.

This is really flying in the face of reality. Most people are becoming aware that the international prices for food, fuel and raw materials are bound to rise as the producers of these commodities break free of their imperialist relationships and demand equitable prices for their products.

The idea that the old types of trading relations can be re-established assumes that those countries will be forever content to forgo industrialisation and remain as suppliers of food and raw materials for the economically developed countries.

All available evidence points to a contrary conclusion as the debates and decisions of the United Nations Committees on the subject show.

It is also noteworthy that these people see the achievement of national independence as being brought simply by changes in the external relationships between Britain and other countries.

This is either naivety or dishonesty.

How can they hope to achieve national independence if they do not take steps to abolish the considerable amount of industry in Britain which is foreign owned.

How can they talk about an independent Britain if its industry is allowed to suffer from chronic under-investment whilst at the same time millions of pounds are invested abroad?

The Bank Rate, which largely determines the

interest to be paid on everything from loans for industry to building society mortgages, is a big factor in raising prices and influencing industrial investment. Yet, this is determined not according to the needs of the people, but by the needs of the City to attract foreign money for its banking operations.

How many of those who are supposed to be concerned with our national independence are proposing steps to deal with this ?

The British People are unduly reliant on food produced abroad, but we could be much more self sufficient if land was taken into public ownership and agriculture planned with this end in mind.

A large proportion of the British economy is geared to the production of goods for export.

This requires the import of large quantities of raw materials simply to be reworked for export to provide profits to the capitalist class.

This makes the British economy unduly sensitive to fluctuations in world trade.

An economy geared to the interests and needs of the British People with exports being limited to paying for the import of things we cannot produce ourselves, is essential for real national independence.

The fact that non of the main protagonists in the Common Market "debate" seriously raise any of these issues is proof that although they may be concerned about many things, the interests of the mass of the British people is not one of them.

THE OPPONENTS OF BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMON MARKET.

Some of them are unable to grasp that the British independence of which they are so proud, and which was made possible by the subjection of others, is no longer possible as the material basis on which it was founded is rapidly disappearing as British imperialism grows steadily weaker. These are the backwoodsmen such as Enoch Powell.

Others realise that British imperialism is no longer the power it used to be, but consider that some of it can be retained by playing second fiddle to the more powerful American imperialism.

Others, mainly on what is generally referred to as "the Left", maintain that Britain's membership of the E.E.C. prevents a British Government from taking an independent line in world affairs, from taking steps to safeguard British interests in its relations with the other E.E.C. countries, and from enacting socialist measures.

But it is only since the British ruling class decided to draw closer to their European counterparts that British foreign policy has become distinguishable from that of the United States in matters where British imperialist interests were not directly involved, and as this is a thing usually desired by the left, what is the argument ?

As for a British Government being inhibited by membership from protecting British national interests, we would point out that in the first place, this being a capitalist state, the national interest and the interests of the capitalist class are taken as being one and the same thing.

In the second place, there is no evidence

that the Treaty of Rome has ever prevented any of the member states from protecting its own "national interests" when the need arose.

As far as the Rome Treaty being used to prevent a British Government from taking what social democrats call socialist measures, such as nationalisation, there are two answers.

If there is popular support for certain measures and the British ruling class considers it politic not to prevent them being carried out, it would be politically unwise for the European capitalist classes to intervene.

The use of economic sanctions or armed force would create an entirely new situation in which the E.E.C., as it now stands, would be destroyed.

The second answer to the same question, which is more in keeping with present day realities, is that nationalisation is necessary to ensure the continued functioning of the capitalist system.

It is extremely unlikely that member states would wish a confrontation with each other on this issue.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

The C.P.G.B., in common with other European Communist parties is one of the most persistent critics of the E.E.C. and amongst the most vocal of the opponents of British membership.

It is certainly not pro-American in its outlook, yet it opposes an economic grouping, one of the intentions of which is to restrict further American economic penetration into

Europe.

The basis for its opposition to the E.E.C. lies in the standpoint it adopts in relation to the role of the superpowers in world affairs.

It regards the antagonism between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union as the expression of a world struggle between capitalism and socialism, with the U.S. occupying the leading position in the capitalist camp, and the Soviet Union at the head of the socialist camp.

According to this line of reasoning, if a country is brought under the influence of the Soviet Union, it constitutes a gain for socialism; conversely, if a country is brought under the influence of the U.S. it represents a strengthening of capitalism on a world scale.

Political and economic developments are evaluated solely on the basis of whether they will strengthen the Soviet Union or the U.S.

Struggles for genuine national independence, free from outside pressures, are, according to this doctrine, a deviation which "weakens the unity of the socialist camp".

This means, in practice as well as theory, that all countries moving towards socialism must accept the Soviet Union as their leader.

This political "theory" also has its economic counterpart, "the international division of labour".

According to this "theory", each country in the Soviet orbit should concentrate on producing those commodities for which it is best suited. "Naturally", the Soviet Union, being

not only the accepted leader, but also the strongest state within the "socialist camp", is cast in the role of final arbiter when deciding the items to be produced in each country.

In case any of the "partners" take steps to extricate themselves from this position, Brezhnev has concocted the theory of Limited Sovereignty.

This gives the Soviet Union the right to take steps, including the use of armed force, to "maintain the unity of the socialist camp"

Although some sections of the C.P.G.B. demurred at the practical application of this policy in Czechoslovakia, that party still accepts the theories on which it was based.

It still regards the antagonism between the two Superpowers as the expression of world struggle between socialism and capitalism.

As a consequence of this world outlook they can only view trade and foreign policy in the light of whether it will take Britain closer to the U.S. or the Soviet Union.

The expansion of long term trade agreements with the Soviet Union are seen as steps towards the longer term objective of drawing the British economy more closely under the influence of Soviet economic planning, thus necessitating a greater element of planning into the British economy, thereby taking us nearer to a socialist Britain, modelled on the lines of the Soviet economy.

Communist Party opposition to British membership of the Common Market on the grounds that it places restrictions on British sovereignty, should be measured against that party's support for the Brezhnev doctrine of

Limited Sovereignty.

The real reason why the C.P.G.B. opposes the E.E.C. is that it makes it more difficult for the Soviet Union to draw the European countries into its economic orbit.

THE SOVIET UNION AS A SUPERPOWER. *

To many people the term Superpower simply describes a state which has huge economic and military resources.

If this were all, we could sooner or later expect China, and maybe India, to join the ranks of the superpowers, because they both have large populations and vast natural resources within their borders.

The fly in the ointment as far as this assumption goes, is that Chinese Government leaders have made it clear in many statements that although the Chinese People are striving hard to industrialise their country and raise living standards, China will never become a Superpower.

This leads to the inquiry, how does one define a superpower ?

The term has arisen as a result of attempts to describe a situation in which the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union have been able by virtue of immense economic, military and political power, to play a dominant role in world affairs.

The U.S. plays this role in the guise of guardian of western values, the freedom of the individual etc.;

The Soviet Union plays it under the banner of assisting the people of the world to achieve socialism.

* Footnote - see article on page 10

But, as the saying goes, one should never judge a book by its cover.

Each of the superpowers, under the cloak of safeguarding peace and living up to the slogans emblazoned on its banners, has used its strength to extend its own sphere of influence.

Each of the superpowers uses its strength to bring under its influence, not only the developing countries, but also the smaller imperialist states.

Although there will be few amongst our readers who would dispute the contention that the U.S.A. is a superpower, there will undoubtedly be some who would take issue with us when we place the Soviet Union in the same category.

This is understandable, particularly amongst those of us who spent the years of our youth strenuously defending the Soviet Union as the bastion of socialism and working class power.

But things change, sometimes for the worst, and the facts show that the Soviet Union conducts its foreign trade and diplomatic relations in much the same way as any other imperialist country.

It conducts trade on the basis of unequal exchange.

It invests capital in other countries in order to join in the exploitation of the workers of those countries.

It follows these up with political, diplomatic and military pressure. The Soviet Union is opposed to the E.E.C. primarily because it is a hindrance to its expansion into Western

Europe, and because it tends to lean more towards the U.S.

The U.S.A. takes an ambivalent attitude towards the E.E.C. This is because on the one hand the E.E.C. places restrictions on the further growth of American monopolies in Europe, but on the other hand it is in the American interest that the European states should join together in an organisation which will also inhibit Soviet expansion.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE E.E.C.

We have already stated our opinion that neither membership of the E.E.C. nor withdrawal from it will confer any economic benefit on the mass of the people.

We would also add that no matter what the outcome of the referendum, the deterioration in the economic situation, (which is coming anyway) will be blamed on those who backed the winning horse.

It will be to the advantage of the ruling class to get the argument centred around this, rather than allow it to get into the deeper water of criticising the capitalist system.

We are in favour of British membership of the E.E.C. for the following reasons.

The biggest threat to world peace and the right of the people of all countries, big and small, to determine the social and economic system which they prefer, are the two superpowers.

Their continued expansion means not only the smothering of aspirations of weaker countries, but also the growing danger of an armed clash between them.

They both make statements about the importance of "detente" and the progress that they are making towards its achievement, but at the same time they are piling up arms.

To support either of these superpowers is to take the side of one imperialist power against another in much the same way as the Social Democrats did in the first World War when the German Social Democrats supported "their" government and the British and French supported "theirs".

The preservation of peace and national independence depends first and foremost on the ability of the people of the world (including the Soviet and American people) to mobilise and unite with all those forces which oppose the expansionist aims of the two superpowers.

This means not only uniting the people of the developing countries which at this point in time constitute the main driving force for world change, not only the working class in the capitalist countries, but also with those sections of the capitalist class in the smaller imperialist states who are opposed to the aims of the superpowers.

These latter are vacillating and unstable allies, but their objective position in the world political situation pushes them into at least partial opposition to the superpowers.

They do not want the Soviet Union to overrun Western Europe; so they cling to the U.S. as an ally, but neither would they like a total U.S. victory, otherwise they would be dominated by the U.S.

As a result of this "middle" position they desire a voice in world affairs, independent of the two superpowers, and this is only

feasible as a body.

The E.E.C. seems to be the most effective one to date.

WHAT ABOUT THE WORKERS?

For the reasons already outlined, the working class must, in its longer term interests, advocate and support policies aimed at halting the expansion of the superpowers.

Those who are inclined to doubt that this is practical politics should remember the events in South East Asia, where small, technologically backward countries have defeated one of the biggest, and from an industrial angle, strongest nations the world has ever seen.

Such victories must rank amongst the most astounding in history. More than anything else they demonstrate the superiority of People's War.

If these small countries can win such victories, why should we lack confidence?

By mobilising the mass of the people throughout the world, the aspirations of the two superpowers can be brought to nothing.

In this, as in all other things, the working class should make the running, not tailing behind the capitalist class, or allowing itself to be diverted by "left" slogans.

The fact that a large section of the British capitalist class also find it is in their interests to oppose the superpowers is to our advantage.

Unity was needed to defeat German, Italian, and Japanese fascism; now unity of a similar

THE SOVIET UNION

Socialist State or Imperialist Superpower?

Brent Marxist
Industrial Group

In the article headed, "The Common Market, The real issues", we argue the case for Britain remaining a member of the E.E.C. The basis of that case is the need for the capitalist states of Europe to defend themselves against economic domination by one or the other of the two super-powers, both of whom are equally engaged in endeavours to expand and exploit.

As expressed in that article, whilst there is little doubt about the role of the U.S., there exists on the Left a reluctance to accept that the U.S.S.R. is pursuing identical goals.

This reluctance persists in spite of a rapidly growing mountain of evidence, and the following is a small selection from that mountain to support our contention. It falls into three sections. The first deals with Russia's attitude towards its partners in the "Committee for Mutual Economic Assistance". The second relates to its involvement in the economic development of the third world or developing countries, and the last deals with its conduct in the U.N. debates on the Law of the Sea.

THE COMMITTEE FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

The C.M.E.A. was formed in 1949 and at present consists of nine member states and one observer country. Its title expresses a very laudible aim but its political formula contains ingredients that cause the practice to fall short of the stated aims.

These are (1) Limited Sovereignty ,

(2) The international Division of Labour

(3) Economic Integration.

(4) Specialisation in Production.

These "principles" have been used to the benefit of the Soviet Union's economy with, little, if any, concern for the other members of the organisation. Through the medium of assistance, loans and direct investment, capital is exported to the members of the C.M.E.A.

By participating in large scale enterprises and projects, the Soviet Union has established a considerable degree of control over industrial production in the member countries. This, allied to a virtual monopoly in the supply of raw materials to those members, has in turn enabled it to develop and exploit markets for its own industrial production.

The overall effect of Soviet policy within the C.E.M.A. has been to prevent the allround development of the members, thus ensuring their dependence upon the Soviet Union.

Bulgaria provides a detailed example. In 1960 she was 83.5% self-sufficient in fuel, but by 1970 that figure had fallen to 40% and is now even lower.

The Soviet Union supplies 75% of Bulgaria's oil, 60% coke, 100% coal, 60 to 80% Iron ore, 75% Iron and Steel, 67% Rolled Steel, and 90% timber.

Further the Soviet-Bulgarian "cooperation" agreement stipulates that 60% of Bulgarian

productive capacity shall be geared to Soviet needs.

Lastly, 95% of the ferrous metallurgical industry; 85% of the non-ferrous metallurgical industry; 70% of the machine building industry; 60% of power and 100% of shipbuilding are equipped with Russian machinery.

This is out-dated, often obsolete and has resulted in a low productivity, high cost, poor quality output, none of which can assist Bulgaria to meet the economic problems besetting it.

In the attempt to meet the consequential debts, Bulgaria is forced to export large quantities of agricultural produce to Russia at prices that are arbitrarily fixed by Russia.

The prices charged by Russia for supplies of fuel and raw materials to member states are frequently higher than those prevailing on the world markets. Such practice as that related above is applied also to, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Hungary. These countries import on average 90% of their oil and oil products from the Soviet Union.

In 1970 East Germany paid the equivalent of 1,200 million marks in convertible currency for 10,000,000 tons of oil from the Soviet Union.

On the world market at that time she would have needed to pay only 600 million marks.

The prices of fuel and other raw materials were fixed in a five-year trade agreement to run from 1971 to the end of 1975. In 1974 the Soviet vice-minister for foreign trade considered it necessary to give an assurance

that this agreement would be honoured in full.

Notwithstanding, the Soviet Union has "adjusted" prices as from January, 1975 and has stated that in future such adjustments will occur annually.

The Hungarians have reported that, as a consequence, the cost of oil and other raw materials imported from the Soviet Union has increased by an average of 52% since the beginning of the year. Oil alone has increased from 16 to 37 roubles a ton.

This is only part of what "Limited Sovereignty", "International Division of Labour" and "Economic Integration" mean in the Russian vocabulary.

The political decisions that have led to the development of a market economy within Russia, have in turn, powered the drive to develop its natural resources at a rate that cannot be sustained by its domestic economic circumstances alone.

Provision was therefore made in the 1971-1975 trade agreement whereby the other member states would assist with finance and manpower through the medium of "economic cooperation" agreements.

The "C.M.E.A. Investment Bank" was set up and a fund of 10,000 million roubles established through long term loans from the members. During 1973-74 the bank disbursed 900 million roubles for the financing of 26 construction projects, two-thirds of this to be spent on projects in the Soviet Union.

In 1972 the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany and Poland for the construction of : -

- 1) A combine to produce 500,000 tons of pulp,
- 2) A heavy-duty lorry plant, and
- 3) The laying of a 750,000 volt transmission cable.

All these were in Russia and involved a capital expenditure of 800 million roubles.

In 1973, with the addition of Czechoslovakia to the above four, an agreement was signed for:-

- 1) The exploitation of the Orenburg natural gas field.
- 2) The laying of a 50 kilometre pipeline,
- 3) The construction of a metallurgical plant and an asbestos ore dressing combine and
- 4) The exploitation of iron ore deposits.

Again, all were in Russia.

Under these and other "economic cooperation" agreements the East European members must supply capital, equipment, or manpower. The need to pay for Soviet supplies provides the motivation.

As a further consequence of its market orientated economy the Soviet Union is obliged to seek assistance from the capitalist states, borrowing 5,000 million dollars from the U.S.; 6,000 million from Japan, and similar sums from France, Britain and Western Germany.

SOME OF THEIR BEST FRIENDS TELL THEM

The growing imposition of unequal trading upon the East European members has produced a reaction in two directions. The first is the expression of discontent in the Press and in statements by leading politicians. Secondly there is the drive to develop trade relations with countries outside the C.E.M.A. Both reflect the need to contain the growing anger,

even revolt, of the people in those states.

With regard to the first-mentioned phenomenon, in 1973 the Polish journal "Foreign Trade" complained that "...up to now the joint owners have seldom shared rationally the benefits gained from the economic activities of the integrated complexes". A nice turn of phrase!

In March of the same year the Bulgarian journal "New Times" published a series of articles regretting the tendency of certain C.M.E.A. countries to "...think only of oneself", and in particular complaining of the ruinously low prices for agricultural produce within the market.

Also in 1973 the Polish paper "Tribuna Ludu" attacked "...economic cooperation wherein the higher a country's economic level the easier it is for it to hold on to its own position in cooperation and to profit more economically".

Displaying a not altogether surprising foresight, at the latter end of 1974 the Bulgarian journal "International Relations" expressed the view that any attempt to alter prices within the C.M.E.A. without regard to the existing circumstances would be "unacceptable".

In January, 1975, the Hungarian journal "Kulgasdasag" argued that any price adjustments within the C.M.E.A. should not inflict losses upon the trading partners.

Subsequent to the increase in prices referred to above, East Germany complained that the increases had "...complicated its struggle against the shifting economic crisis", in addition were announced with the aim of "exerting the utmost endeavours" to increase the production of domestic raw materials e.g.,

tin, oil and lignite.

Similarly Czechoslovakia determined to "do its best" to make greater use of its own national wealth.

The other aspect of the reaction is the attempt to redress the imbalance in trade within the market by developing trade with countries outside the C.M.E.A.

Between 1970-72 Poland's trade with the West increased by 57% whilst its trade with the Soviet Union increased by 19%. In the case of Hungary the respective figures for the period 1968-72 were 84% and 50%.

Similar trends can be observed in Bulgarian, East German and Czechoslovakian trade figures.

Whilst developing its own trade with the West, the Soviet Union has endeavoured to slow the rate of progress of its partners. One somewhat ironical example is a "warning" which points out that "...as East European economy is not so developed, should they emerge upon the world arena alone they would meet political pressures and economic inequality."

Roumania is an example of a country that has resisted the economic pressures exerted by the Soviet Union and, by so doing, provides us with further evidence that such pressures exist.

In a speech on March 28th this year, President Ceausescu made the following points,

"Some people who, with a view to denying or belittling the role of the nation, equate with nationalism efforts for the development and assertion of the nation, subsequently label this so-called

nationalism as anti-communism....Our Party has always denounced the policy of enslaving and dominating other peoples no matter how this policy emerged in the past or emerges at present in the world in whatever form."

THE THIRD WORLD.

One of the methods used by the Soviet Union to bring the developing countries within the orbit of its economic domination is the "joint venture". Under this arrangement, capital and expertise are provided by the Soviet Union whilst the partner provides the labour. These "joint ventures" or, as they could equally well be called, transnational companies, currently exist in twelve of the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The "Soviet-Singapore Shipping Company" is one example, the "West African Automobile and Engineering Company" is another. In the first Russia owns the ships and in the second it owns 60% of the shares along with the chairmanship and key posts on the board of directors.

In Brazil, 200 million dollars have been invested by Russia for the purpose of exploration of the bitumen mines.

The methods employed are illustrated by a report in the "Far Eastern Economic Review" published in Hong Kong. This related how in 1972, when talks were taking place between the Soviet Union and Malaysia for the purpose of setting up a technical cooperation pact, the Russians threatened to increase their use of synthetic rubber, thus reducing the imports of Malaysian natural rubber, as a means of exerting pressure.

In the case of the "West African Automobile

and Engineering Company", the Nigerian paper "Daily Time" reported that, whilst the company was making a huge profit, the salary structure was the lowest in the motor car industry.

Altogether, between 1954-72 the Soviet Union exported to the developing countries capital totalling 13,000 million dollars.

Another example of Soviet "aid" is the Bokaro steel plant in India. Obtaining the contract in 1964 to design and construct the plant in conjunction with an Indian company, the Soviet Union quickly elbowed the Indian company aside and proceeded to monopolise not only the design and construction, but also the supplies of material and equipment and the management of the plant.

At every stage of the construction proposals made by the Indian company were ignored. The Indian paper "Financial Express" reported that the Indian consultant's proposal to utilise maximum indigenous equipment and material had been rejected. Consequently, the cost of imported material and equipment from the Soviet Union had more than doubled.

This extended to the rejection of indigenous refractory bricks on the grounds of their poor appearance, thus increasing the amount of refractory material imported from Russia from 10% to 30%.

In all, 78% of equipment and 82% of components were either imported from Russia or manufactured in factories under Russian control.

The Soviet personnel engaged on the project enjoyed "most favoured nation" treatment. One comment published by an Indian paper

stated that "...the big steel city of Bokaro has now become a Soviet colony worthy of the name."

The original completion date was 1971, now adjusted to 1975. The original cost was estimated at 6,200 million rupees; by 1970 that figure had increased to 7,600 million rupees and was still rising. The plant cost per annual ingot/ton is more than double that of other countries due to the low technological level of the plant.

Difficult though it may be for the Left in Britain to accept the unpleasant reality, there is a very acute awareness of Russia's predatory nature in the world at large.

In the Middle East the two superpowers collude to maintain a state of "no peace - no war" whilst they contend for the advantage that will enable each to establish its economic domination at the expense of the other.

Here too there are many indications that the Soviet Union is recognised as an exploiter of the developing nations.

The Minister for Finance of Kuwait, in an interview published in the paper "Siyassan", stated that Russia realised profits by selling arms to Arab nations at high prices. These profits "...are used to run arms factories by the Soviet Union which raises its technical level by testing its weapons at the expense of the Arab people."

In addition he said that the Soviet Union

"...plundered the Arab countries of their low priced commodities and raw materials and turned these countries into a market for Soviet commodities and a place to obtain hard currencies".

- Iraq contributes to this exposure. Baghdad radio informed the world that the Soviet Union had resold cheap oil from Iraq to third countries at a considerable profit.

The French "Le Monde", in January of this year, published an interview with President Sadat in which he accused Russia of obstructing Egypt's attempts to replace arms lost in the war against Israel and at the same time pressing Egypt for payment of debts incurred in the purchase of arms and equipment.

He said that the Soviet Union had accused him of obstructing the convening of the Geneva Conference which he denied and went on,

"In the field of economy they did not provide us with the means to control the effect of the destructive war imposed upon us by the enemy and the effect of world inflation. Last year we had to pay them 80 million Egyptian pounds for the partial settlement of the debt we incurred in the purchase of arms and equipment. This year we demanded a ten year moratorium...but they turned a deaf ear.

L A W O F T H E S E A .

The growing number of developing countries that have achieved independence constitute a new and vital force on the world scene. In debates at the United Nations General Assembly the countries of the third world clearly define both America and Russia as threats to their economic independence and well-being.

The growing strength and cohesion of this force has necessitated the collusion of the two superpowers in an attempt to meet its challenge.

For our example we refer to the debates

on the Law of the Sea.

Following the initial attempt by Chile and Peru in 1947 to establish an internationally recognised zone of 200 miles from their coast line, there have been three debates in the General Assembly. These took place in 1958-60-74 and on each occasion there was a greater number of countries supporting that demand.

Although contending fiercely for domination on the high seas, in the debating chamber the combined efforts of the two superpowers have been successful in resisting this demand.

It is illuminating to note that whilst the Soviet Union has consistently opposed any attempt by the developing countries to extend their territorial waters beyond 12 miles, yet in May 1956 it unilaterally declared an area of sea to be its "controlled fishing zone", the farthest point of that zone being 400 nautical miles from its coastline.

Another example of the dual standards applied by the Soviet Union is found in the issue of rights to the mineral resources on the continental shelf. This is the relatively shallow area of sea adjacent to a country's coastline. In some cases the sea bed declines sharply and the area is correspondingly small, whilst in others the reverse is true.

Russia has demanded that the limits of the continental shelf shall be set at a depth of 500 metres. The geological formation of its coastline ensures that at places its continental shelf will extend to a distance of 700 to 1,000 miles.

On the other hand we find Russia advocating that where the sharp decline of the sea-bed produces a narrow shelf, the economic zone should not exceed 100 miles.

At the third debate in June, 1974, Russia countered the renewed demand by the developing countries for an economic zone of 200 miles by suggesting a "package deal" settlement. One of the provisions was that any settlement of the claim would be on condition that within the zone there would be "freedom" of passage, navigation, scientific research, etc, etc.

The coastal states would be "granted preferential rights" to fish in their own zone but there would be provision that foreign vessels would be granted licences to fish within that zone.

In the granting of licences, foremost priority would be given to "...states that have borne considerable material and other costs of research, discovery, identification and exploration of living resource stocks or which have been fishing in the area involved.

(Our emphasis).

We are under no illusions that the information contained in this brief article will produce mass conversions.

But in view of the confusion existing as to the ends being pursued by the Soviet Union in its relations with other states, we felt it necessary to devote space for the presentation of some of the evidence showing that the actions of the Soviet Union in many respects follow the same pattern as other imperialist states.

Continued from P9
kind is needed to stop the superpowers.

Before readers begin to accuse us of advocating class collaboration, let us again make the point that was made at the beginning of this article.

The attacks on living standards will continue and the resistance to these attacks will increase.

There can be no unity with the capitalist class on these things, only struggle, a struggle which must eventually lead to the working class taking state power.

This struggle, to be successful, cannot be confined to the economic field; it must be conducted in all fields, including that of foreign policy.

Any foreign policy which is in the interests of the working class must have as its cornerstone, at this point in time, the aim of cementing world unity against the Superpowers.

MONTHLY REVIEW,
AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST MAGAZINE.

ENQUIRIES TO,
R. HANDYSIDE,
21, THEOBALDS ROAD
WC1X 8SL

POLITICS AND MONEY,
AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS.

ENQUIRIES TO,
14, SOUTH HILL
PARK GARDENS.
LONDON, N.W.3.

SPAIN

ASPECTS OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTIONARY ANTI-FASCIST PATRIOTIC STRUGGLE

A Contribution from the
Revolutionary Anti-Fascist
Patriotic Front

I. THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF SPAIN.

"Classes are great groups of men differentiated by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of production, their relations to the means of production (relations endorsed and formulated in large part by laws), the role they play in the social organisation of work, and consequently, the form and proportion in which they receive the part of social wealth they have been allotted." (Lenin: Socialist Ideology and Culture).

The financial and landowning oligarchy, subordinated and bound to Yankee multi-millionaires, is the exclusive owner of political power and the fundamental owner of economic power in our country. It consists of the financial magnates (usually both industrialists and bankers at the same time), the big landowners or latifundists (the concept of latifundia varies from region to region according to the richness and productivity of the land) and the generals of the armed forces and high officials of the state apparatus (in general linked in some way to the landlords and financiers). In the majority of cases, either the financiers are at the same time latifundists and vice versa, or they are linked by family or business ties. In total the financial and landowning oligarchy amounts to some 50,000 to 100,000 individuals ("active" population), and represent 0.5 to 1% of the active population of the country. This ultra-reactionary, anti-national class exploit and oppress all the working people as well as plundering and expropriating the middle bourgeoisie. It exercises exclusive control over the state apparatus. It is a thoroughly reactionary class, an embodiment of the most retrogressive aspect of Spanish society. As the experiences of the Civil War and the long years of terror under Franco's

regime have demonstrated, the oligarchy is prepared to go to any length of crime, killing and cruelty, no matter how horrendous, to ensure that they remain in power. It is irrelevant whether they adopt the label of Vaticanists, Carlists, Monarchists of one stripe or another - they are all held together by class affiliation with the oligarchy.

Within the social base of the pro-imperialist oligarchy are included the repressive forces, generals and officers of the army; other repressive components of the regime, judges, etc; intellectuals directly linked to the pro-Yankee fascist oligarchy in power and spreading its ideological views; the high clergy and the high officials of the state apparatus. Within these sectors there can be individuals who stop supporting the regime, but this can only happen in exceptional cases and does not modify in any sense the role in general played by these sectors.

The rural middle bourgeoisie consists of the rich peasants and rural capitalists; the urban middle bourgeoisie consists of business men and non-monopoly capitalists. The rich peasants and rural capitalists number 50,000 to 100,000 representing 2.3% of the active agrarian population. Businessmen and

non-monopoly capitalists do not possess immense quantities of capital sufficient to allow them to exercise monopoly in any branch of production. They number between 100,000 and 150,000, or 1 to 1.5% of the active urban population. In all the middle bourgeoisie amounts to some 150,000 to 200,000 individuals (active population), accounting for 1 to 2% of the national population.

The middle bourgeoisie is an owner class, living off the exploitation of wage workers. However it does not participate in State power, which is held exclusively by the Yankee-Franco financial and landowning oligarchy. On the contrary, the middle bourgeoisie suffers political oppression and economic plundering by the oligarchy. Nevertheless this does not exclude the middle bourgeoisie from positions within the middle and lower strata of the state apparatus. A part of the rural and urban middle bourgeoisie has already been eliminated by the economic policy of the Yankee-Franco dictatorship, while another sector is near bankruptcy. It is true that there are still sectors that are relatively stable, but this has only been achieved at the cost of converting their companies into intermediaries and subsidiaries to the financial monopolies of the oligarchy, and they are in danger of being liquidated whenever their usefulness to the oligarchy ends. Given this situation, the middle bourgeoisie is in a very unstable position vacillating between revolution and counter-revolution. Its progressive, most oppressed sectors - principally those in the minority nationality regions - may, in certain circumstances, take part in the revolution and accept proletarian leadership, but other sectors will remain neutral, and there will also be some who prefer to tail after Yankee-Franco reaction.

The upper layer of the rural petty bourgeoisie

consists of the middle peasants who basically live off their own work and that of their families on their own land, but also exploit wage labour to some extent. They number 300,000 and represent about 10% of the active agrarian population.

The upper layer of the urban petty bourgeoisie consists of about 300,000 small businessmen and capitalists who themselves work in their small businesses but may employ up to five workers, thus exploiting wage labour to some degree, and about 500,000 low level civil servants and professionals. Some 800,000 people in total, representing 8% of the active urban population.

Altogether the upper layer of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie amount to about 1.2 million people, or 8 to 9% of the active national population. The upper petty bourgeoisie is working and exploited, but at the same time it appropriates to itself a part of the surplus value produced by the working class; that is, it also has an exploiting character, although to a very limited degree. Its main interests coincide with those of the proletariat, above all in the present national-democratic stage of the revolution, but at the same time it has some interests opposed to those of the proletariat. Thus the upper layer of the petty bourgeoisie should be considered an objective ally of the proletariat, for its interests and demands coincide in many points with those of the proletariat itself in the present stage of the revolution.

The lower layer of the rural petty bourgeoisie consists of the smaller peasants, who possess land worked by themselves and their families without exploiting outside labour. There are about 500,000 small peasants, constituting 16% of the active agrarian population. The lower layer of the urban petty

bourgeoisie consists of 400,000 handicraftsmen and shopkeepers who do not exploit outside labour, representing 3% of the active urban population.

In terms of active population, the lower petty bourgeoisie amounts to about 900,000 or 7% of the national total. It is working, exploited and non-exploiting, and its interests fully coincide with those of the proletariat at this stage of the revolution and will also basically coincide in the stage of the socialist revolution.

The differences and contradictions of interest between the lower petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat are of a very secondary level; as the Yankee-Franco dictatorship's oppression and exploitation increase, the contradiction with imperialism and the ruling oligarchy sharpens, bringing the lower petty bourgeoisie closer to the proletariat and encouraging its integration in the ranks of the revolution. It is thus potentially revolutionary, wavering and inconsistent but still a principal force of the revolution.

Students must mostly be considered as a special sector of the petty and middle bourgeoisie. Yankee imperialism, through its domination in Spain, discourages and obstructs development of the country's productive forces, imposing its own patents and production methods, and as a result the country's scientific, technical and cultural development is held back. In addition, American imperialism imposes its own imperialist culture in the Spanish universities with the consent of the pro-Yankee ruling dictatorship.

Then again, on account of its irrational and reactionary character, monopoly capitalism represses all honest intellectual effort and imposes obscurantism. For these reasons,

the majority of Spanish students find that they are subjected to all kinds of barriers and obstacles, first to getting admitted to educational institutions, then to continuing with their education, and finally to obtaining work later on.

As a result, most students are interested in making certain democratic and patriotic demands which oppose them to the ruling oligarchy and its Yankee masters; many of them join the revolution and adopt Marxist-Leninist ideas. Thus in the present stage the majority of students can be incorporated to the revolutionary struggle, though always as wavering elements. They are capable of showing great militant spirit. The importance of this sector in terms of numbers is very substantial, considering that there are more than 300,000 students in higher education. On the other hand, only by linking themselves to the working masses may the advanced elements of this sector be consistently revolutionary.

The rural semi-proletariat consists of about a million poor peasants. The poor peasants cannot earn a living solely working their land and are forced to sell their labour to agricultural enterprises either throughout the year or seasonally. They represent 33% of the active agrarian population.

The urban semi-proletariat is composed of subordinate staff and other workers of modest means. In terms of active population they amount to two-and-a-half million workers, 25% of the active urban population. Altogether, the three-and-a-half million semi-proletarians in the city and the countryside represent 20% of the active national population.

The semi-proletariat is an intermediate layer between the petty bourgeoisie and the

working class; their living and work conditions are in part identical with those of the working class, but in part different and closer to those of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus, the rural proletarians, or poor peasants, have the double aspect of being small owners, on the one hand, and wage workers on the other.

The urban semi-proletarians do not have their own means of production, but are distinguished from workers by not carrying out manual work directly related to production, and consequently do not usually suffer working conditions as hard as those of the proletariat or work in concentrated conditions as do workers. The practical interests of the semi-proletariat are practically the same as those of the working class.

The rural semi-proletarians, or poor peasants, are numerically important in the rural zones, where decisive battles will have to be fought in a people's war. They are vitally interested in the Land Reform, which represents the poor peasant's most longed for victory. Thus they constitute one of the most important sectors of the working people for the triumph of the popular-democratic revolution, and the working class's principal ally in revolutionary struggle, a main force of the revolution.

The rural proletariat is composed of farm workers or rural labourers who have no land and are forced to sell their labour in exchange for a wage. They number approximately a million and represent 33% of the active rural population. About 600,000 of them are hired labourers; the rest are permanent workers who to a great extent suffer semi-feudal forms of exploitation. The urban proletariat consists of 6.2 million factory workers, miners, builders, transport workers and so on.

Including a further million from other sectors of the urban proletariat, they represent 62% of the active urban population.

In our country there are approximately 7.2 million proletarians representing 55% of the active national population and thus the most numerous class. All of the proletariat suffers the implacable exploitation of the ruling financial and landowning oligarchy and Yankee imperialism. There are also sectors of the proletariat exploited by the middle bourgeoisie and the upper layer of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie.

The proletarian class is linked to the most advanced forms of production and is the vanguard of the social revolution and communism. The proletarian class has great capacities for organisation and discipline, and outstanding qualities of heroism, firmness and self-denial. The proletarian struggles not only for its own interests but for the liberation of all labouring classes from the yoke of capitalist exploitation.

The leadership of the popular-democratic and anti-imperialist revolution in its present stage belongs to the proletariat.

It follows from what has been said that the principal class contradiction in present Spanish society is the opposition between, on the one hand, the financial and landowning oligarchy and its Yankee masters, and on the other, the various (popular) classes and sectors; the working class, the semi-proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and certain strata of the middle bourgeoisie.

II. YANKEE DOMINATION OF SPAIN.

Yankee imperialist penetration of our country has been increasing since 1947, in which year the United States, casting off the mask it had worn until then of "ant-fascist democrat", openly adopted the "cold war" policy against socialist countries, leading to the infamous Yankee-Franco agreements of 1953 which consummated the sale of our motherland to U.S. imperialism.

With the complicity of the anti-patriotic ruling oligarchy, U.S. imperialism has now established an extensive network of military bases and installations in Spain, placing us in the position of a country occupied by U.S. armed forces and making it a very important link in its strategy of aggression, domination and war.

The Yankee imperialists have utilised military and economic aid to Franco's fascist regime as a tool for enslaving our country. In exchange for this aid the Franco dictatorship has left the doors wide open to colonialist penetration by American finance capital. Present fascist legislation on foreign capital investments, contained in a long series of laws and decrees beginning in 1959, makes outrageous concessions to financiers in imperialist countries wishing to invest capital in Spain, allowing them virtually complete freedom of investment, reinvestment, withdrawal of investments and repatriation of profits.

Taking full advantage of this anti-national legislation of the Franco regime, Yankee capitalists have the following objectives in introducing capital to our country and taking over control of the most important companies in Spain:-

1. To take advantage of the possibility

our country offers for greater accumulation, concentration and centralisation of capital than can be achieved in the U.S. and other highly developed capitalist countries, but which is fully available in less developed and economically weaker countries such as ours.

2. To control the country's economy and market, by taking over its main firms of monopolistic extension, so as to flood Spain with its own exports and merchandise.

3. To unload onto the backs of our people some of the outcome of the economic crisis, and thus alleviate or postpone its effect on American territory at the expense of our country.

4. To avail itself of important sources of crude materials, such as mercury, uranium, etc., existing in Spain.

5. To use our country as a base for exportation and for guarding its interests in the Middle East, Latin America, North Africa and even Europe.

Yankee domination, besides depriving us of our national independence, has the following consequences for our people.-

1. Ultra-exploitation of the working class and other labouring sectors.
2. Ruin of broad sectors of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie and their proletarianisation.
3. Worsening of the crises of "overproduction, layoffs and forced emigration.
4. Exploitation of the whole country by Yankee investors.

5. Deterioration of the national economy; imbalance between different regions and sectors, and between the cities and the countryside; and structural dependence on the interests and plans of the American economy.

6. Obstruction, very often, of scientific and technical research and development in our country.

In order to consolidate and facilitate their economic domination of our motherland, the Yankee imperialists have had to establish political domination as well. To that end they have been taking over control, bit by bit, of the state apparatus of the Franco regime.

They have placed under their orders two basic parts of the dictatorship's monstrous repressive apparatus: the police - most notably in this respect the killers and torturers in the infamous BPS; and the army. The Franco regime's armed forces and the state apparatus are subordinated directly to the "Hispano-U.S. Consultative Committee Concerning Defense".

The Yankee imperialists are directly and actively involved in all sectors of state administration under the Franco regime, recruit experts in "American administration techniques" and place their own agents in numerous key posts. American imperialism has also basically taken control of Spain's cultural activity; it has imposed its methods and asserted its supremacy in the universities and in education in general, and controls the principal broadcasting and information media.

Given this situation - that the ruling financial and landowning oligarchy has sold(out) our country to Yankee imperialism, making it a country dependent on the U.S. - the Party

of the Spanish working class must raise the national banner against Yankee imperialism, and strive to unite all the people in a broad and powerful Revolutionary Patriotic Front against the U.S. and its lackeys. Our Party must place in the forefront the anti-U.S. patriotic struggle, mobilise the masses mainly with anti-imperialist fighting slogans, and awaken the spirit of patriotic rebellion against Yankee domination.

In the present stage, the Spanish revolution is a popular democratic revolution with an anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist and anti-latifundist content. Its aim is the establishment in power of a popular democratic government led by the working class. The basic means of achieving this aim are; the Party of the proletariat, the Communist Party of Spain (Marxist Leninist); the Revolutionary Anti-fascist Patriotic Front - the F.R.A.P.; and a People's Army.

III. WHAT FORCES SHOULD MAKE UP THE FRONT ?

The worker-peasant alliance is the Revolutionary Antifascist Patriotic Front's undisputable basis: this clarification of the basis of the Front is essential before any examination can be made of the forces eligible to form part of the Front and participate in revolutionary struggle for national independence against the dictatorship. In recent years, numerous groups and organisations of greater or lesser influence have come and gone, that seemingly believed it would be sufficient to denominate themselves "Front" in order to be transformed overnight into a true Front capable of uniting, organising and leading the revolutionary forces of our country.

Basically, these have consisted of certain petty-bourgeois elements and sectors, and

some former members of the revisionist party, who after the betrayal of the party's leadership were sincerely looking for a way to continue the struggle; also involved were elements who, in the face of the rightist Carrillo* clique, were attracted by "left" attitudes and short term solutions.

The formation of a truly united, revolutionary and patriotic Front should be based on the unquestionable basic leading force of the present stage of the Spanish revolution; the working class, and its principal ally, the poor peasantry.

But it is essential, if the working class is to carry out its leading role, to create a united front of the working class with other sectors of workers who are in similar circumstances due to their economic and social conditions. Presently, the revisionist current introduced by the clique of Carrillo and Ibarruri is the main obstacle to achieving working class unity, and the basic cause of its present disunity.

Thus any attempt to form a United Front must be accompanied by intense efforts at exposure and denunciation of the counter-revolutionary, anti-patriotic line represented by revisionism, at both the national and international levels. Failure to understand this indicates that neither the social-pacifist and counter-revolutionary role of modern revisionism, nor the aim and tasks necessary for such a Front, have been clearly grasped.

It is obvious upon denouncing Carrillo's conciliatory, pacifist and opportunist line, that no collaboration with him, tactical or strategic, is possible, since there can be no compromise either with the objectives, or with the forms of struggle set out in this line.

*Secretary-general of the Communist Party

However, some "frontist" sectors have not yet understood this and continue to think of Carrillo and his clique as a force of the left. Of course, this does not refer to honest militants who have not yet broken away from that leadership, but whom we must win over and guide onto the road of unity through revolutionary action in the FRAP.

As for others, such as Trotskyites, the alliance of the working class with the poor peasantry is an issue of decisive importance for the successful development of the struggle, and eventually of people's war. This alliance must be brought about through hard, patient propaganda work, agitation and organisation of the poor peasant masses in the principal rural areas throughout the country.

Only on the basis of a United Front of the working class and other working people and the worker-peasant alliance, can the proletariat carry out within the Front its leading role as the basic force of the revolution in our country. This question of leadership is of vital importance, since it must determine the truly revolutionary character of the Front. It is only on this basis, assured of the proletariat's leadership of the Front, that it is possible to establish within the Front an alliance with sectors of the national bourgeoisie.

Although the participation of this section of the bourgeoisie is secondary, it is nonetheless at times quite important, since not only can it constitute an auxiliary force for the worker-peasant alliance, but may also have the effect of totally isolating the principal enemy, the pro-Yankee oligarchy and its boss, the United States.

In this light, it is clear that to attempt to initiate the formation of a Front based on

petty-bourgeois sectors generally isolated from the working class would be to begin the house with the roof. Naturally this does not exclude the possibility of carrying out joint actions at the same time between our Party and other non-proletarian revolutionary forces.

IV. THE REVOLUTIONARY ANTIFASCIST PATRIOTIC FRONT (F.R.A.P.)

In January, 1971, following the famous Burgos trials, a meeting was held, with various revolutionary patriotic forces represented, to discuss the urgent need for an organisation to unite, coordinate and guide the Spanish people's struggle against fascist dictatorship and American imperialism. The outcome of this meeting was the constitution of the Coordinating Committee for the "Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriota" in which were represented over a dozen organisations of revolutionary patriotic forces.

In its communique following the meeting, the committee declared:-

"Realising that the oppression and exploitation suffered at present by the popular patriotic Spanish masses can be ended only through unity and revolutionary struggle, the signatories of this communique, while rejecting all compromise with any sectors of the oligarchy - all of which are pro-imperialist and enemies of the people, whether or not they are part of the present government - have decided to create the REVOLUTIONARY ANTI-FASCIST PATRIOTIC FRONT (F.R.A.P.)."

The communique also established that the Front would publish a regular organ to be entitled "ACCION", and sincerely called upon all other truly antifascist patriotic forces,

organisations and persons to join and participate in the Coordinating Committee. Finally, it set out the following six points as the basic programme of the F.R.A.P. :-

- 1) Overthrow the fascist dictatorship and expel U.S. imperialism by means of revolutionary struggle.
- 2) Establish a People's Federative Republic guaranteeing the people democratic freedom and the rights of national minorities.
- 3) Nationalise the property of foreign monopolies and confiscate the oligarchy's wealth.
- 4) A thorough Land Reform, based upon confiscating the great latifundia.
- 5) Liquidate the remaining Spanish Colonies.
- 6) Create an army in the service of the people.

After three years of work by the Committee for the Revolutionary Antifascist Patriotic Front, the F.R.A.P. was formally proclaimed on January 6th, 1974, by the declaration of the National Conference called by the Coordinating Committee in which many organisations participated. In the subsequent mass mobilisation, organisation and propaganda work and revolutionary actions carried out by the F.R.A.P. it has rapidly grown in strength and respect among working people.

In the Autumn of 1974, the F.R.A.P. and its organisations, called for, and led, a prolonged Revolutionary General Strike of proportions unprecedented since the days of the Civil War, in which broad sectors of the Spanish people demonstrated their firm opposition to the Franco regime's desperate manoeuvres attempting to prolong the rule of fascism in disguised forms in the face of increasing popular resistance.

Our Party's just line of antifascist unity

Continued P 30

A FACTORY EXPERIENCE

F. Huscroft

In issue No: 20 we published an article entitled "Dialectics and Factory Organisation", in which we related the efforts of workers in a particular factory to establish a trade union organisation and wring formal recognition from the employer.

Faced with considerable opposition the workers pursued their aim with commendable tenacity, despite the usual threats to deal with the "trouble-makers" and even to close the factory.

Eventually they stopped work and persuaded the management to allow a shop steward from a sister factory to attend a meeting within their own factory for the purpose of obtaining advice and assistance where needed.

This was an astonishing precedent in view of the virginal frigidity displayed by the management up to that point in time.

Unfortunately, despite the advice and some initial successes, the all too readily accepted concept of trade union organisation defeated them where the management had failed to do so.

The act of becoming a member, the fact of belonging; this was seen as an end in itself rather than as a means whereby the continuing struggle might be better conducted, leading to further advances.

The management was enabled to recover from the initial set-back and activate their second line of defence. This involved the

channeling of militancy into committees..... Works...Wages...Negotiating...Joint Production...etc. This strengthened the "administrative" aspect of organisation.

Discussion and decisions were taken by these committees in what might be called, and is often contrived to be, an "elevated atmosphere".

A shop steward who has a responsibility towards his or her workmates is accorded an authority by them. The employer uses subtle methods to transmute this authority, freely given by the workers, into a means by which he can exercise indirect control over them.

In these circumstances it requires a strong discipline if a gradual drift away from the shop floor is to be prevented.

To make matters much worse, in the case we are referring to the management was able to persuade several of the more "promising" stewards to become chargehands on the production lines.

The total effect on the members was one of cynical disillusionment. Over the intervening period the organisation has descended to the level of impotence and now serves only to perpetuate a sour anti-union feeling.

However, as our experience shows, defeats are transitional and invaluable if the correct lessons are learnt from those defeats.

It is also our experience that workers have

a great capacity for learning from past mistakes.

SEEN, BUT NOT HEARD.

In contrast, the following is an account of how workers can and will fight on an issue they believe to be right despite the fact that they are confronted with the combined opposition of both employers and shop stewards.

The factory concerned is a small engineering firm in North West London employing about thirty men, mainly skilled machinists and sheet metal workers, and twelve women assembly operators. There are three stewards, two men and one woman.

For ease of reference we will call the women's steward Jean Edwards. She is married, has a family and took on the task of shop steward for reasons that are not uncommon. She has an abiding belief in the need for workers to have some form of organised defence, and no one else would take the job.

Prior to the conflict, her main task had been the collection of union dues and the paying in of them at the Branch meeting. There was one uncommon feature about her that was to become apparent during the course of the following incident. This was a natural acceptance of the fact that the strength of the trade union organisation resides primarily with the members on the shop floor and not with the superstructure.

The account begins midway through 1974 with an application for an all-round increase being submitted to the management. There followed a considerable period of silence.

On several occasions Jean inquired from the

male stewards whether there had been any reply and was told that nothing had been heard.

Just she was on holiday later in the year, the two male stewards informed the women that the claim had been settled and told them of the amount involved.

Already dissatisfied with the absence of any consultation or involvement, the women members said they would await the return of their steward and take the matter up with her.

A UNITED AFFRONT

When Jean returned she called a meeting of the women and it was decided that she should pursue the issue. She first approached the male stewards and asked why she had not been involved, and why there had been no meetings called to discuss the progress of the negotiations.

They told her they did not consider her presence necessary and they considered it a settlement that was fair to everybody.

Jean then asked the management why she had been excluded and was told that, as far as they were concerned, they had acted in a proper manner in negotiating with the two male stewards and they did not consider that there was any justification for complaint.

At a further meeting with the women, Jean related the replies she had received, and they were rejected as unsatisfactory. It was decided that she should continue to press for some satisfaction, particularly with regard to future conduct.

This led to a further meeting with the

management at which the two male stewards were present. They attacked her, claiming that they were the negotiating stewards and that she had no right to "interfere". The management did little more than to lend "moral" support to the male stewards.

Later they continued their attack on Jean on the floor of the workshop. At this the women stopped work and refused to continue until the male stewards left the department.

By this time Jean was feeling shaken and unsure as to what was right, but with such support from the women she could not simply abandon the struggle. So she decided to seek advice, and on her next visit to the Branch, contacted some stewards from a local factory.

They advised her that she was in the right, and that she should take the issue as far as her members would support her. They pointed out that, as the accredited representative, neither management or other stewards had the right to preclude her from negotiations in matters concerning her members.

From this discussion Jean felt her confidence restored and called a meeting of the women the following day. She explained the position and that a decision must now be taken whether to drop the issue or continue, but pointed out that, if they decided to continue, it would be necessary for some demonstration to convince the management that they were serious.

It was decided that Jean and one other member should meet the management and demand an assurance that their steward should be included in any future negotiations on matters concerning them. They would then meet again to decide what they should do in the light of management's reply.

The reply they received was that, having consulted the male stewards, management were persuaded that such a demand was not reasonable and they therefore rejected it.

Jean reported this back to the women and they decided that, as a first step, they would go home for the rest of the day. As some were part time workers, they decided on a suitable time in order that they could return "en masse" the following day.

A B O U T T U R N .

In the meantime, Jean contacted the stewards she had met at the Branch and told them what had been done. After some discussion it was agreed that an attempt must be made to force recognition of the basically untenable position that the management and stewards had adopted.

Accordingly, it was agreed that Jean should suggest registering a failure to agree on returning to work the following morning. This is a procedural device which brings the Divisional Officials into the picture and, in these circumstances, would not only involve the attitude of the management but would also raise very sharply the conduct of the two male stewards.

At a meeting outside the factory the following day, Jean outlined the proposals. The women agreed and also decided that they would all go down to District Office to demonstrate their total support for the steward.

Then they entered the factory somewhat apprehensively, expecting to find that their clock cards had been removed. This proved not to be the case, so Jean and one other member went along to the personnel manager to inform him of their intention.

Afterwards Jean was to express the opinion that she could not be sure whether it was the threat to register a failure to agree that effected the change, or the women's walk-out the previous day. Whatever or both, there was a complete reversal of the management's attitude. They apologised for what they claimed was a complete misunderstanding of the true position, and they were prepared to give any assurance required to the effect that the women's steward would be included in any future negotiations.

"We hope," they said, "that we can settle this matter without involving anyone outside."

Subsequently, one of the male stewards resigned, the other approached Jean on the shop floor and expressed his admiration for the way in which the women had fought and supported her.

Looking back, Jean confessed that she had experienced a considerable degree of nervous tension and also that she had lost some sleep worrying about the right thing to do.

There had been some improvement in the atmosphere as a result of the struggle. The women felt a confidence in their ability to insist on their participation in matters affecting them and the men respected their determination not to be denied it.

How could such an incident occur? It would be of some value towards a better understanding were it possible to analyse the motives of those involved.

Did the employers "use" the male stewards, and if so, what was their purpose? Or did they misread the situation?

Were the male stewards motivated by skilled

elitism....male chauvinism....or just the mercenary fear that if the women obtained a larger increase it would mean less for them?

Whatever the combination of ingredients that produced this episode it is an important if small example illustrating a practical application of priorities in their correct order.

Struggle is primary, organisation secondary. For while unorganised struggle lacks vision - the ability to see the way ahead - organisation without struggle is a living death, an embalmed corpse wherein even the normal processes of decay and rebirth have been arrested, albeit temporarily.

Alongside the slavish worship of Organisation goes an unhealthy attitude towards Unity. This provides the impetus behind the embalming process and the cloak under which it is carried out.

But Unity is no exception to the marxist maxim that change is continuous - motion eternal and universal. Unity, therefore, must also be transitory.

Within unity there must be struggle which in turn leads to unity of a higher order.

Whilst many of those who see Unity and Organisation as ultimate goals do so through a lack of experience, there are those who see Organisation as a vehicle for their personal aggrandisement and Unity as an insurance policy in times of adversity.

It follows that a challenge to either is seen as a threat to their personal ambition.

Whatever the motives of those responsible for the happening related above, their

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14th April 1975.

Dear Comrades,

May I make some simple points about the situation in Ireland, on which the article in your last issue was not clear? I will concentrate on two questions. Who is to blame? and the Provisional I.R.A.

The blame for the current 'political instability' must be laid firmly on the British ruling class which, in 1920, against the will of the majority of the Irish people, corralled a chunk of Ulster and set up the six-county statelet.

It is impossible to reform this statelet to bring civil rights to the tyrannised minority - a third of the population. This was proved after the hopes expressed in the Civil Rights Movement (encouraged by British capitalists) were smashed by the built-in majority - the Ulster bourgeoisie with the Protestant workers whom it had won over by presenting the Catholics as a threat to their material privileges (e.g. at Harland and Woolf's there are only 300-400 Catholics in a workforce of over 10,000) and by conjuring spectres of Papist rule.

The British imperialists responded to the Protestant reaction by using military reinforcements to attempt to smash the minority and also by proposing unworkable 'solutions' within the six-county framework.

It was in this context, the oppression of the Catholics by both the Protestants and the British Army, that the I.R.A. returned to prominence.

We must confront the question of the I.R.A. because they are a bludgeon in imperialist

propaganda.

The first violence of the present crisis was perpetrated by the Stormont Government against Civil Rights marchers in 1968. The first explosions and bombings were the work of the U.V.F. who were attempting to force the concessionary O'Neill out of office by faking I.R.A. violence.

The I.R.A. began to reorganise and rearm only after the invasions of the Bogside and Belfast in 1969, when the local people were defenceless against the burning of their homes. In 1970 many working class people learnt the value of I.R.A. guns. (1)

The Provisionals are anti-imperialist, and their "main activity has been the campaign of bombings and attacks on members of the security forces". (2) The Provisional leadership "do not approve the killings of Protestants as a general rule...The Provisionals always insist that their enemy is the British Army."(2)

The great majority of sectarian murders have been the work of Protestants. This is well-documented. (3)

It is open to question whether the Provisionals can provide the kind of leadership that would lead Ireland into genuine national independence. But we should not let propaganda against them lead us into a repetition of the aftermath of the Birmingham bombings, or prevent us from recognising that British imperial involvement is the principal contradiction facing the Irish people today.

Like the many democratic people in the USA who oppose imperialist involvement in Indo-China, we too can be a significant force undercutting imperialism from within. And this

of course is part and parcel of the struggle for socialism in England.

Yours fraternally,

Liz Curtis.

- (1) Liam de Paor, Divided Ulster, Penguin, 1970.
- (2) Martin Dillon and Denis Lehane, Political Murder in Northern Ireland, Penguin 1973.
- (3) Guardian, 25.10.74, 10.2.75.
Times, 14.4.75, and (2) above.

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in a united front is a clear expression of the just mass line summed up in the slogan "From the masses to the masses". Only our Party, as the vanguard of the proletariat, and as such of all the antifascist struggle, formulates and puts into practice this line

of true revolutionary character. Thus the proclamation of the F.R.A.P., the focus of this line of unity, represents a great step forward along the revolutionary road of the liberation of the Spanish people.

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attitude towards the women involved cannot fail to have been changed. All other aspects aside, this was a down-to-earth example of women taking up a challenge to their right to equal status and beating it into the ground like a tent peg.

No wishy-washy middle class "Women's Lib" twaddle, but an issue and performance that any "mere male" would be pleased to have been associated with.
