

INTERNAL BULLETIN

NO. 76

Documents from National Committee, October 15

- Implementation of conference decisions (some recommendations from the EC, and some from Kinnell, commissioned by the EC, Not all were discussed by the NC: the NC referred the rest back to the EC).

- Political situation after Brighton LP conference.

Branch circular, including coming events; organisers' meeting report; NC report.

For information: 'Facts, figures and notes on the EEC', document circulated at SO AGM.

Kinnell; 'Imperialism' (notes done for summer school).

See page 1 of branch circular about debts on pooled fare from organisers' meeting. You owe:

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November 1983

IMPLEMENTATION OF CONFERENCE DECISIONS

Wiganisation, and Building the WSL

The EC 3.9.83 decided:

- * To schedule a meeting of branch organisers to discuss plans in detail, branch by branch. (This is now October 23).

- * To start the process of turning outwards with mobilisation for September 17.

- * Kinnell to prepare proposals for education and draft guidelines for contact work.

On contact work, I suggest that the NC looks at some notes I did on this in 1977 and decides what it thinks needs changing.

On education, I suggest that the NC looks at the reading lists done for the I-CL in 1977 and decides what it thinks needs changing.

- * Restructuring of area and branch committees to be an item on agenda of organisers' meeting as above.

- * To initiate discussion on organisational methods and norms (see below under 'Parsons IB 73').

CND

The EC 3.9.83 resolved: "The major practical issue here... is the decision 'to set up a CND Commission'. Everything else hinges on that."

We decided to appoint Kinnell as the EC member to serve on this commission. We also asked Strummer to be the convenor of this commission; she initially agreed but in the last couple of days has said that she cannot do the job.

In the meantime we propose to convene a broad-groups CND commission meeting at the day school on October 29.

Parsons IB 73

The EC 3.9.83 resolved:

1. We regard the decision for "a booklet... containing all the current positions" as including the decisions of the four conferences plus major NC and EC resolutions on general (not ephemeral) matters plus the fusion platform, plus TILC statements. The platform should be published separately; the contents of WSR2 should not be re-published; i.e. the 'booklet' should be interpreted as a folder containing the material. Kinnell to compile the necessary list. We should appeal for volunteers outside the centre to do the typing.

2. The decision to restrict debate in the paper should be interpreted liberally, i.e. as applying to full-scale debates rather than details of articles, letters, etc.

3. We should continue the discussion in the paper on Ireland, Afghanistan, the Scottish Assembly.

4. We should - after Sep.17, and as subordinate to our main outward-looking work - open discussions in the organisation on the Middle East, on imperialism (Anti-Imperialist United Front, etc.) and (as per 'Building WSL' resolution) on party organisation.

5. A proviso to apply to all the internal aspects is that we must first focus resources on getting 'Wiganisation' and 'Building the WSL' underway.

6. Kinnell to prepare a report on commissions (see over).

7. Next League conference to be in approximately 12 months.

Commissions:

The July 26 1981 fusion conference decided for: "Commissions on international work and other areas of work. They will be open to interested members and responsible to the NC. Each commission will have a steering committee of NC members appointed by the NC. Precise details of commissions to be worked out by the incoming NC".

I don't think any more really needs to be said in general about the "frame of reference, organisation and status" of the commissions.

The August 22/23 1981 NC set up some 20 commissions. Most of these never functioned, or at most had one or two meetings. Those that have had some sort of continuing life are, to my knowledge: Australia; youth; women; and, for a period, the gay commission.

On the Australia commission and the youth commission, I see no special problems. The women's commission, as comrades will be aware, had all sorts of internal problems. Fraser was elected convenor of this commission at the July 9 1983 NC but has since withdrawn for personal reasons. Collins has stepped in on some of the work but because of her circumstances is unable to substitute fully. The OSC has put some effort into this area, and is currently planning towards a full women's commission meeting in early November.

The gay commission has obviously suffered from Traven leaving the League and Ellis being out of the country. It is not clear to me that a League gay commission, as a regular item, is necessary in addition to a broad-groups gay commission. A meeting of the latter is scheduled for the October 29 school.

For CND commission, see above.

We have repeatedly tried to activate an Irish commission, but never with much success. It seems necessary, however, to keep trying. The NC has elected Hill as convenor of this commission. The OSC is working on setting up an Irish discussion forum in London, which could be the basis of gathering together a group for this work.

There was a call at the last conference for an unemployed commission. In my view this is unviable financially if for no other reason; it would be better to put some effort into having one of the national organisers getting involved in this work.

It was, I must admit, always my view that there was very limited usefulness in commissions as defined above. Be that as it may, however, the record seems to show that it would be foolish to launch on a new, ambitious list of further commissions.

Bombings

LP leadership

Federalism

The political decisions on these items require only to be noted by the relevant comrades and committees.

On 'federalism', the EC 3.9.83 resolved that "while recognising that a formal position is established, we continue discussion internally and in the paper."

Black work

Unemployed work

The EC 3.9.83 agreed to remit black work to the NC following this one. We had scheduled unemployed work for this NC, but the Southwark comrades responsible for redrafting the document on this work do not have it ready yet. So that should go to the next NC, too.

Oliver/Parsons IB 73

(i.e. the part referred to the NC rather than voted on).

I list some comments/recommendations on the points in this resolution. I hope the NC will agree that these should be discussed in detail at an EC meeting to which Oliver and/or Parsons are invited, with the proviso that the right exists to take any important matter not resolved by the EC to the NC.

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|---|--|
| a.i. Pamphlet on the FI history | Foolish to try to do this until we have had adequate internal discussion on what such a pamphlet would say politically. |
| a.i. Education in WSL on FI | We gave over a lot of the summer extended weekend school to this. I think as regards regular branch education we should first focus on Marxist basics. |
| a.ii. Magazine | Refer to discussion on Glasgow resolution. |
| a.iii. 'Left Press' column in paper | Implemented. |
| a.iv. Draw up balance sheet of international contacts | Refer to long-overdue discussion on general perspectives of international work. |
| a.v. Recruit from solidarity work on Ireland, Iran, Poland, S.Africa; produce pamphlets on these countries. | On Ireland, as noted above, the OSC is working on setting up a regular discussion forum to get together contacts. On other areas, comrades involved in such work can best comment. |
| a.vi. Intervene in international events & conferences | We made an effort for the LO/LCR fete. The recurrent problem is lack of money and central resources. |
| a.vii. At least one full-timer exclusively on international work. | Oliver/Parsons did not raise this when we discussed detailed allocations at the July NC. To be re-raised now it would have to be accompanied by detailed proposals for reallocations or new full-timers. |
| b. Link O. & TU work. | Uncontentious. |
| c. Unresolved differences | All the practical conclusions are in c.iii-vii, the parts voted on. |
| d. More centralisation | We're trying! |

McInnes/Abbott

The EC 3.9.83 decided:

- On the paper and journal, to ask the comrades to put their ideas to the editors;
- On fares, to recommend continuing the present system of subsidies for comrades from Scotland;
- On 'personal experience', to recommend the NC rejects the motion;
- On 'using the programme', to ask for further clarification from the comrades.

I wrote to McInnes in line with this, and received the following reply:

"Programme: The world has been changing in all sorts of ways even since I-CL did its manifesto. This includes new methods of communication and new methods of political activity. Point 2 merely says we should recognise this and open up the discussion. Point 2 suggests we must be more organised in coordinating the push for the demands of our programme, where they differ from reformist strategies. I am convinced that unless we push for our alternatives on the economic

questions we will be drifting into the position of cheer-leaders for existing militancy - without being seen to offer any real alternative. In practice this would require forward planning by fractions and a lot of input by the industrial organiser.

Point 3 makes the same point about the LP. Our tactic in relation to the Lefts leaves us in danger of overemphasising the points in common as opposed to our distinctions. It would quite simply (but I am aware of the work involved) need us to coordinate amendments on economic policy before national and regional Party conferences in order to right this balance.

Point 4 is a practical way of dealing with the questions raising in point 1. To get a bit more clarification about what everyone means by 'the programme' - how to use^{it} and what it comes from etc. - a day school would be a way of bringing together the members and supporters who are not in the various branches which have successfully fused.

5. I was thinking of a pamphlet I could sell with confidence to tenants who have just taken some form of collective action for the first time. This leads on to the other two resolutions.

I would say we need to re-think the relationship between the paper and the journal. If we were to regularise and make better use of the latter as an attractive and readable journal specifically directed towards left activists - we could then free the paper from some of its subject matter which is not specifically tied to any week. (It might have to become an S* journal. I recognise the problems this leads to).

In relation to the paper I am aware that we are up shit creek when it comes to the sort of people referred to overleaf. I am particularly concerned now because our decision to turn towards mass work will be jeopardised by the lack of a paper which is able to fulfill the function.

The questions raised here are not just technical. They relate to our whole orientation. You have been interpreting the combined tool idea very much in the direction of the existing activists, and unless this emphasis changes our conference decision on Wiganisation will be in jeopardy. Hence the need to open up this discussion. Hoping it will be a constructive one. Further questions or ideas from EC members are always welcome.

I should also like to briefly clarify the resolution on personal experience, mainly because one EC member, Collins, interpreted my speech at the conference in a different way to what I intended.

The resolution is not saying we should all look at our navels and bemaon our weaknesses - it is saying we should develop an analysis and methodology - a way of thinking and activism which takes a balanced account of personal experience - together with general perspectives. I.e. what it's like to be black in Southall or to drive trucks all night or be the only woman in a male workforce or be evicted with the whole family.

I am not pretending to offer the answers as to how to relate all this sort of thing together - however I am aware that our problems are often caused where we fail to do so - and that comrades (like R. in Scotland) who have an ability to do so are much more successful than those of us who find it more difficult.

It should not all be left up to the individual's abilities. I am convinced that we have to redevelop our methodology so it includes a more complete awareness of all the factors involved in each situation."

POLITICAL SITUATION AFTER BRINGTON

I would suggest that Carolan's article in the paper is taken as a basis for discussion.

Smith has also done a document on the industrial situation, and will provide photocopies of it to the NC.

Resolution from Smith: see over.

(Smith resolution)

We have to have a clear uncompromising attitude to the centre/right leadership established in the LP under Kinnock. We see him as no different, except more dangerous, than Foot. We would no more place demands on him, or see him as representing anything more progressive, than the Foot leadership.

To the extent that it is necessary to break the illusions of rank and file members who have such illusions in Kinnock it will only be done by this attitude.

Amendment from Kinnell: amend above resolution to read -

We have to have a clear uncompromising attitude to the centre/right leadership established in the LP under Kinnock. It is no more progressive than the Foot leadership, and more dangerous.

All evidence indicates that illusions in Kinnock are widespread among LP activists, even more widespread among TU activists, and more widespread yet again among the Labour-voting or floating-voter working class in general.

We therefore have to apply the same attitude as in general we apply to the LP leadership when we cannot immediately propose its replacement by the left, i.e. combine denunciation with placing demands. This is what we did with the Foot leadership.

For example, we should demand that Kinnock puts his words about campaigning against NHS cuts into action.

Coming events

Saturday November 5: 12.30, Hyde Park.
Grenada solidarity demonstration. As many comrades as possible should attend, especially from London.

Saturday November 5: 5.30pm at 'The Cock', Phoenix Road - League youth commission. Preparatory discussion for youth conference, and review of youth work: forthcoming regional conference; young women's conference; YTS; YCND.

All branches doing youth work should send at least one comrade. Phoenix Rd runs between St Pancras and Euston

stations, parallel to and just north of Euston Road. The details of this meeting have had to be changed slightly because of the Grenada demo.

Sunday November 6: 11.30-5pm at the Keskidee Centre, Gifford St: Socialist Students in NOLS meeting. This too has been shifted slightly because of the Grenada demo. All League students should try to be there. Please bring paper money for 'Socialist Student'.

Saturday November 5 - a Women's Fightback national meeting was scheduled, but it's been postponed. More details later.

Wednesday November 9 - Day of action against Cruise. There has been a call to set up peace camps at each of the 102 US bases in Britain. Youth CND also has plans for some action in London. Watch out for details.

Thursday November 10: Newham 8 trial begins, at Snaresbrook Crown Court, Hollybush Hill, London E11 (near Snaresbrook underground station). The Defence Committee has called for a picket of the court from 9am. All comrades able to attend should do so.

Saturday November 19: 11am to 5.30pm at the Keskidee, Gifford St, London N1: National Committee meeting.

Saturday November 26: Labour Against the Witch-hunt AGM, noon, Camden Town Hall. All sympathisers in the Labour Party should be encouraged to get delegated from Labour Parties or trade union branches.

Saturday November 26: Ireland - Peace Through Democracy conference. 9.30am, Edrich Hall, South Bank Poly, Borough Rd, London SE1. Delegates £3, observers £2, credentials from Box 189, 32 Ivor Place, London NW1. We are involved in the organising committee for this conference, and comrades should get delegates wherever possible.

Saturday November 26- Sunday November 27: Class Fighter conference.

Friday December 2 - Sunday December 4: CND conference.

Finance

New dues assessments: ALL comrades MUST return new dues assessments, on the new rates. Every branch has been written to, and most comrades individually, too.

Any comrade who has not sent in an assessment by NOVEMBER 20 will be FINED, to the extent of 50% of their dues for the period of the delay. E.g. if their dues are £20 a month, and they are a week late, they will be fined £2.50. If they are a month late, they will be fined £10.

Please get the forms in!

Organisers' meeting

Pooled fare

We decided that branches who did not send representatives to the organisers' meeting should pay into the pooled fare. Otherwise there is a 'tax on attendance'.

If your branch was absent, the amount owing will be indicated below. Please send in as soon as possible.

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December international meeting. We have undertaken to send over 2 comrades on December 22-30 to attend the Proletarian Tasks Tendency conference and an international meeting with the PTT and Socialist Fight. Some groups of ex-SWP (US) members are also likely to be present. The cost will be £700+. We already have £200; we have to raise £500. Please send in donations.

Levies: A few comrades have still failed to pay conference and similar levies outstanding, despite repeated reminders. Such levies will in future be 'amalgamated' into dues debts: e.g. if you fail to pay a levy equivalent to a month's dues, you will be considered to be a month in arrears on dues. And comrades 12 weeks or more in arrears on dues are liable to be lapsed from membership.

Debt-collection/fund-raising: The deadline for the debt-collection/fund-raising exercise has been extended to November 30, to give laggard branches a better chance. Plan your fund-raising events now!

New fund targets are being set to run up to the end of January.

Organisers' meeting

We held a national organisers' meeting on Sunday October 23. All but a very few branches were represented.

The introduction to the meeting stressed the need both for tightening internal organisation and such activities as contact work and educationals, and for turning outwards to picket lines, YTS schemes, workplaces, estates, etc. We must break out of routines in which our activity is almost entirely 'going to meetings'.

In the discussion, the following points were made: need for more women branch organisers; even 'useless' contacts are often worth keeping up for limited purposes; possibly we should have regular national organisers' meetings; branches need to meet regularly and intervene more positively in local struggles; the paper should have more simple socialist explanation; branch meetings should regularly contain a political report; area committees should support weak branches; we need to decide what not to do.

Comrade Levy introduced a discussion on paper sales (see branch circular 47). Basingstoke, Leicester, Nottingham, and Coventry volunteered to be pioneer areas in a drive to boost paper sales.

We also briefly discussed finance and youth work. In the afternoon we split up into area groups to discuss each branch's work in detail from the point of view of 'Wiganisation', contact work, branch organisation, paper sales, etc.

Branch questionnaire

One of the points made at the organisers' meeting was the need for branches to meet regularly. Another was the need for better national communications.

With a view to these two points, I'm including a questionnaire to all branches, to be filled in from each branch meeting. If one comrade is given the job of filling the form in as the meeting proceeds, and the organiser posts it off immediately after the meeting, then the time and work involved is minimal.

Internal bulletins

Internal bulletins no. 72 and 74 have appeared recently. Some were distributed last weekend. Further copies of no. 72 are enclosed, and no. 74 will be distributed as soon as we have it at the centre.

The last National Committee

Some of the documentation from the October 15 national committee will be circulated in IB 75, forthcoming.

1. McInnes/Abbott resolutions from conference.

The resolution on the paper and the journal was left on the table pending discussion on the Glasgow resolution on the magazine.

The resolution on fares was overwhelmingly defeated. It was agreed that Ed Parsons should draft a circular on comrades using the cheapest possible methods of transport.

of transport.

The resolution on 'personal experience' was defeated overwhelmingly.

The resolution on 'using our programme' was agreed unanimously with the proviso that there should be a period of written discussion before the school called for.

2. CND commission.

Agreed to ask Strummer to take responsibility for it; Joplin and Kinnell to take responsibility for next month or so when Strummer is unable to do the work because of family circumstances; Steve A. to be assistant convenor.

Agreed to liaise with Socialist Action, Youth CND, Labour CND for run-up to CND conference.

Agreed to direct comrades to the Youth CND and Labour CND contingents on October 22.

3. 'After Brighton'.

We had a discussion on the political situation. Two resolutions were put on our approach vis-a-vis the Kinnock leadership, one from Smith and one from Kinnell (see IB 75), and the Kinnell resolution was passed with 3 votes against.

4. Councillors.

A resolution from Kinnell was carried (see below). The final vote on the resolution as amended was:

For - 9: Carolan, Collins, Fraser, Hill, Joplin, Keith, Kinnell, Lewis, Parkinson.

Against - 5: Jones, McKelvie, Oliver, Parsons, Smith.

Abst - 2: Callaghan, Cunliffe.

The amendments were as follows:

a) From Cunliffe, to delete in point 2, "Revolutionaries standing for council are in a sort of halfway position between that of TU-type representatives and MPs". Carried overwhelmingly.

b) From Hill, in point 9 to change "bad experience" to "experience" and "very, very cautious" to "cautious". Carried, 5 against.

c) From Smith, to delete all references to individual cases. Lost.

Resolution as amended:

1. Generally our experience with sympathiser councillors has not been good. Are the problems only superficial? No: they are deep-rooted - and they are problems of our overall work, not just of whether and when we stand councillors.

2. Historically local government has been a machine for corruption of the labour movement, probably equally important with the trade union bureaucracy. Our perspectives is 'to turn it from a means of deception, which it has been up to now, into a means of emancipation'.

3. From the late '70s there has been a push of the LP left into local government. It has resulted in some useful progressive features. But overall the local government left has failed. It now lacks any fighting strategy against Thatcher's second term. In the coming period the position of revolutionary councillors will probably be much more like that of revolutionary MPs - the isolated voice of principle trying to use a public platform.

4. The case of Islington as an example of the above.

5. The best work done by sympathiser council comrades has been where they have focused on local campaigning in the wards. Paradoxically, this has been done best by comrades on two of the most right-wing Labour councils in London. Other council comrades, however, have disappeared into the council chambers and corridors (Camden!).

6. The charge by sectarians that the council work of our sympathisers is unprincipled is, however, unfounded. (Reply to various smears concerning Islington). The problem is different. For revolutionaries there is no virtue as such in being a councillor, a civic dignitary. It is simply a position where we may be better-placed to promote revolutionary politics. Often, however, the position has made our comrades less effective as revolutionaries, not more so.

7. Our sympathisers became councillors as a result of a fight in the local labour movement: they fought against existing councillors and were finally faced with the choice of replacing those people or appearing as windbags.

That's fine... but it revealed a lack of proper proportion and balance in our work.

The comrades who became councillors were those most heavily integrated into the O. These are not necessarily the ones most integrated into the Marxist organisation: on the contrary. On the basis of an existing lack of integration and proportion in our work (lack of specific Marxist organising work), getting comrades as councillors aggravated that lack of integration and proportion.

8. Another case study: Stoke.

9. Lessons from the experience:

- More stress on singlejack propaganda and political education;
- More stress on our own internal organisation;
- Turn councillors to the wards (link with Wiganisation).

In the meantime we should be cautious about putting up any more comrades as councillors.

Many comrades have discussed how discredited they would be among the broad left if they did not stand for council. I suspect that in many cases this reflects an excessive deference to left public opinion. (Example of lefts in Islington who resisted pressure to stand for council).

Further resolutions were put as follows:

a) From Carolan: that for the broad groups AGM the above outline be written up with sections added on the Tories' attacks, the response, and the Labour left.

- Agreed.

b) From Parsons: that the document be withdrawn from the agenda of the broad groups AGM.

- Lost.

b) From Parsons: 'Within ^{our own organisation} we should have a rigid system of discussing who should stand and under what conditions they should stand. This should operate on a national basis'.

- Agreed.

d) From Parsons: 'We should discuss the programmatic basis on which comrades should stand for selection'.

- Agreed.

5. POEU/BT dispute. There was a brief report and discussion.

6. Palestine. A resolution was put by Jones: 'That the NC condemns those responsible for producing the leaflet at the LMCP conference'. This was lost.

It was agreed to discuss the Middle East further at the next meeting.

A draft perspectives document from Cunliffe was referred to the EC.

FACTS, FIGURES AND NOTES ON THE EEC

A. The productive forces generated by capitalism have long outstripped the nation-state as an economic unit.

This fact was identified by Marxists like Bukharin even before World War 1. It was stressed by Trotsky.

The results: growth of imperialism in late 19th/early 20th century; World War 1.

After World War 1, the capitalist world was unable to find any new equilibrium. After 1929-31, especially, the world in general and Europe in particular split apart into rival trading blocs, based on colonial or semi-colonial empires.

The inter-imperialist rivalries led to World War 2.

Intra-European trade (trade between one European country and another) did not recover to its 1913 level until 1950.

B. Post-war capitalism

Post-war capitalism has been marked by the 'super-imperialism' of the US; by the break-up of the colonial empires; and by the massive expansion of the Stalinist bloc.

West European capitalism was reconstructed under the dominance of the US. In connection with the Marshall Plan of US aid, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (fore-runner of the OECD) was set up in 1948.

The US thus encouraged West European economic integration.

As the US/UK/French control over West German coal and steel was ended, the European Coal and Steel Commission was proposed and eventually set up in April 1951. The UK refused to join: the members of the ECSC were the same countries as became the original six members of the EEC, France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg. The ECSC was to create a 'common market' in coal and steel.

This came at the beginning of rapid growth. Steel production in the EEC Six grew by 114% between 1952 and 1967.

The EEC was set up by the Treaty of Rome in March 1957.

The UK, Denmark, and S.Ireland joined in 1972/3, to create the EEC Nine. Greece joined in 1980/1, making an EEC of ten countries.

C. Aims of the EEC

The capitalist classes of the EEC set themselves four aims:

- * To abolish internal tariffs;
- * To create a customs union. (I.e. not only free trade within the EEC, but common EEC policies towards non-EEC imports, wherever they enter the EEC).
- * Free movement of labour and capital within the EEC;
- * Common policies for transport, industry, energy and agriculture.

There was relatively rapid progress in these respects in the 1960s, when West European capitalism was booming - a stickier development in the crisis-ridden 1970s and '80s.

1962: Common Agricultural Policy begun.

1968: Abolition of internal tariffs and creation of customs union completed. Free movement of labour established.

1968: Mansholt plan for drastic rationalisation of agriculture in the EEC.

1969: EEC sets aim of economic and monetary union.

1971: Common Fisheries Policy begun.

1978: European Monetary System set up: a system of tying EEC currencies to each other. Meant to be a first step to a common monetary system. Not a great success. UK has not joined. System needs constant readjustment unless all countries follow a common economic/monetary policy, which they don't.

Institutions of the EEC: The permanent bureaucracy, headed by the EEC Commission, employing about 9,000 people. It is funded mostly by contributions

from member states, though plans have been proposed to finance it directly from common EEC taxes. The supreme decision-making body is the Council of Ministers. Under the Treaty of Rome it can take majority decisions on certain questions. In practice, since a 1965-6 crisis with France, it does not. I.e. EEC policy is decided by haggling between the member capitalist states.

The European Parliament was directly elected for the first time in June 1979. It has practically no powers. Theoretically it can sack the EEC Commission by a two-thirds vote.

D. Trade and the EEC

	1953	1955	1960	1968	1970	1977	1980	1982	SOURCE
Total EEC trade				38				34	IMF DOT
as % of world trade		32					35		UN SY
Total EEC exports					36	34			UN ITS
as % of world exp.									
Intra-EEC trade									
as % of EEC trade:									
EEC6			35	49					UN ITS
EEC9						51			UN ITS
Intra-EEC trade									
as % of EEC trade:									
EEC9				47	49		51		IMF DOT
Intra-EEC trade									
as % of world trade:									
EEC6	5			8	14				Bairoch
EEC9									UN ITS
Intra-EEC trade									
as % of world trade:						17			UN ITS
EEC9				18			17		IMF DOT
EEC-world trade as									
% of world trade									
not including intra									
EEC trade				24			20		IMF DOT

Percentage of trade of various countries that is with the EEC

	1957	1960	1968	1972	1973	1976	1977	1982
Belgium/Luxemburg	45					71		
Denmark	31					46		
France	23					50		
W. Germany	26					47		
S. Ireland	11					73		
Italy	23					46		
Netherlands	41					64		
UK	15			31		36		43
EEC9			47		53		49	51

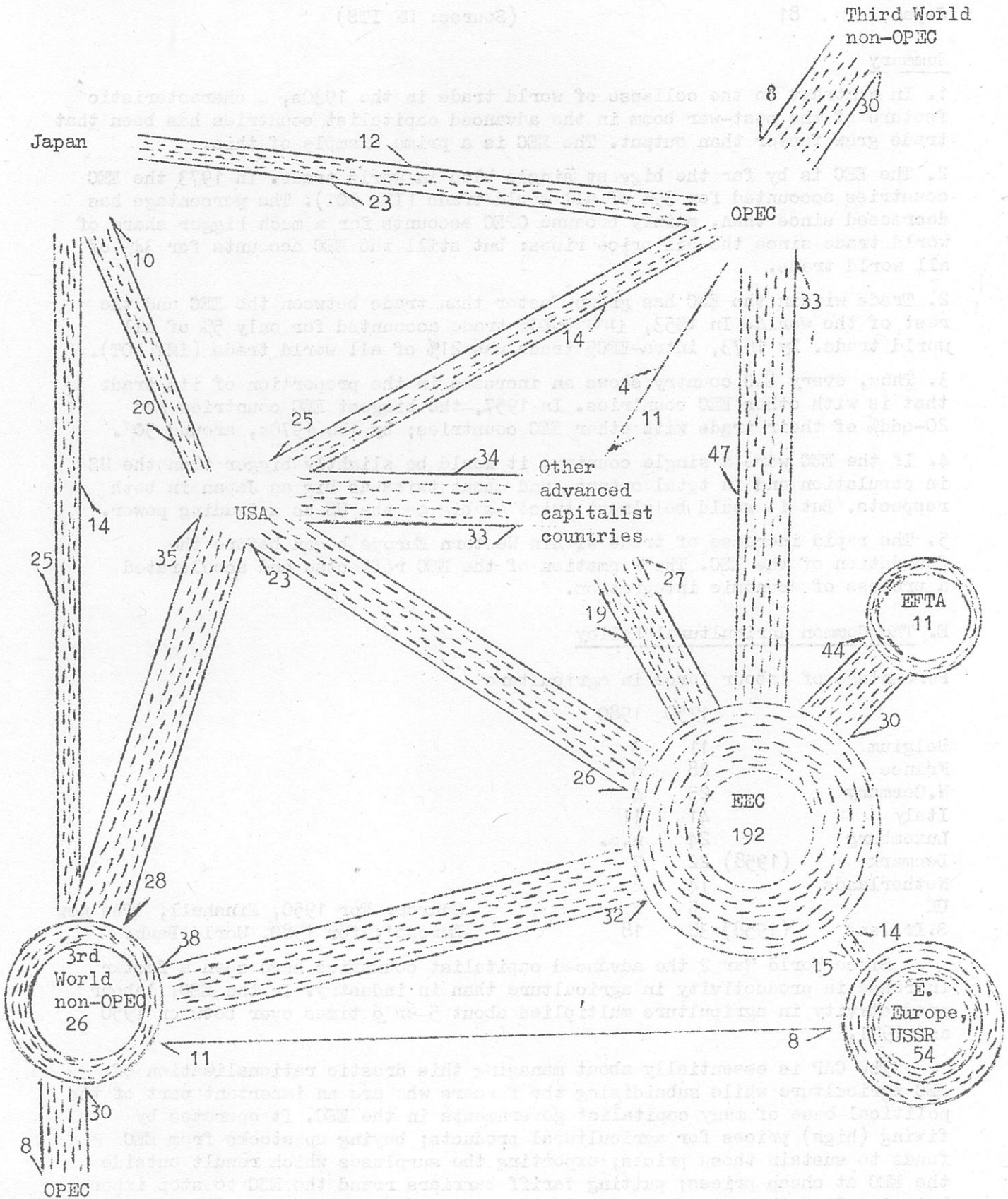
Source: for EEC9 totals, as above; for UK 1972 and 1982, IMF DOT; rest, El-Agraa.

Notes: 'EEC' figures unless otherwise specified mean EEC9, even if referring to before expansion of EEC. 'Trade' generally means average of imports and exports. Sources: IMF DOT = IMF Direction of Trade Statistics; UN SY = UN Statistical Yearbook; UN ITS = UN International Trade Statistics; El-Agraa, 'The economics of the European Community'; Bairoch, 'The economic development of the Third World'.

The network of world trade

Source: constructed from 1977 UN figures.

Figures indicate value of exports in each direction in billions of US dollars. Figures inside the circles representing groups of countries indicate the value of trade within that group. Trade within OPEC is very small. Flows less than \$10 billion have generally been excluded.



Total exports of various groups of countries, 1977. (US \$ billion)

World	1120
EEC	379
OPEC	147
3rd World	136 (non-OPEC)
USA	118
E. Europe	99 (includes USSR)
Japan	81

(Source: UN ITS)

Summary

1. In contrast to the collapse of world trade in the 1930s, a characteristic feature of the post-war boom in the advanced capitalist countries has been that trade grew faster than output. The EEC is a prime example of this.
2. The EEC is by far the biggest single bloc in world trade. In 1973 the EEC countries accounted for 39% of all world trade (IMF DOT). The percentage has decreased since then, mainly because OPEC accounts for a much bigger share of world trade since the oil price rises: but still the EEC accounts for 34% of all world trade.
2. Trade within the EEC has grown faster than trade between the EEC and the rest of the world. In 1953, intra-EEC6 trade accounted for only 5% of all world trade. By 1973, intra-EEC9 trade was 21% of all world trade (IMF DOT).
3. Thus, every EEC country shows an increase in the proportion of its trade that is with other EEC countries. In 1957, the biggest EEC countries had 20-odd% of their trade with other EEC countries; by the 1970s, around 50%.
4. If the EEC were a single country, it would be slightly bigger than the US in population and in total output, and about twice as big as Japan in both respects. But it would be almost twice as big as the US as a trading power.
5. The rapid increase of trade within Western Europe began before the foundation of the EEC. The formation of the EEC reflected and accelerated a process of economic integration.

E. The Common Agricultural Policy

Percentage of labour force in agriculture

	1950	1980
Belgium	11	3
France	28	8
W. Germany	25	4
Italy	41	11
Luxemburg	24	n.a.
Denmark (1958)	22	7
Netherlands	14	6
UK	5	2
S. Ireland (1958)	38	18

Source: For 1950, Minshull, 'The new Europe'; for 1980, World Bank.

Since World War 2 the advanced capitalist countries have seen a faster increase in productivity in agriculture than in industry. In the EEC, labour productivity in agriculture multiplied about 5 or 6 times over between 1950 and 1971.

The CAP is essentially about managing this drastic rationalisation of EEC agriculture while subsidising the farmers who are an important part of the political base of many capitalist governments in the EEC. It operates by fixing (high) prices for agricultural products; buying up stocks from EEC funds to sustain those prices; exporting the surpluses which result outside the EEC at cheap prices; putting tariff barriers round the EEC to stop imports bringing down the prices.

The CAP is by far the biggest drain on EEC funds.

(5.

It produces grotesque results. Surpluses are stockpiled while millions are hungry world-wide. Grain is heavily used as animal feed, though the nutritional value of the meat output is less than that of the grain input. Agricultural producers in the Third World are ruined by the EEC's cheap exports and high barriers to imports.

But the answer to this capitalist irrationality is not 'get Britain out'. Agricultural policies in individual countries like the US are equally irrational. The answer is to work out a socialist agricultural policy combining the interests of the starving or malnourished millions in the Third World, farm workers, small farmers, and the working class, and to fight for it internationally.

F. Other aspects of economic integration

As well as integrating trade, the EEC has also sponsored the development of new roads facilitating trade across national frontiers.

Apart from that, however, economic integration has found serious limits in the conflict of different capitalist national interests.

A common monetary system is a long way off.

Freedom of movement of capital within the EEC is not complete. Figures from the period of the EEC's greatest 'success' (1960-67) show that around 40% of foreign investment by EEC countries was in other EEC countries, and around 25% of foreign investment in EEC countries was by other EEC countries. But there was no clear trend for these percentages to increase* (Source: R G Hawkins, in F Machlup et al, eds, 'International Mobility and Movement of Capital'). 'Cross-frontier mergers' like Dunlop-Pirelli have flopped.

In relation to the 'oil crisis' of 1973-4, there was no unity of action by EEC states. Joint ventures like Concorde and Airbus have had limited success.

G. The US, the EEC, and the crises of the '70s and '80s

As noted above, the US capitalist class supported west-European integration. Possibly the capitalist group which has gained most from the development of the EEC has been the US multinationals.

In 1959 only 16% of the stock of US foreign direct investment was in Europe. By 1968 it was 30%. (Source: Barratt Brown, 'The economics of imperialism').

However, as the EEC has developed it has become a powerful challenger to the dominance of the US in the capitalist world. Witness recent/current disputes between the EEC and the US over steel and agriculture.

Logically, the sharpened inter-imperialist competition of the 1970s and '80s should face the EEC with the options of either flying apart or complete integration. In fact tendencies in both directions have been visible, but the outcome so far has not been dramatic change but slow, faltering movement towards integration.

H. Britain and the EEC

The reasons why Britain did not join the EEC earlier were essentially:

- a) Continuation of trading patterns based on the Empire. In 1957 only 15% of the UK's trade was with the EEC.
- b) Britain's highly developed capitalist agriculture. In 1950 only 5% of the total workforce in the UK was in agriculture, as against 28% in France or 25% in West Germany. Even now farms in Britain are on average much bigger than in other EEC countries. The CAP therefore offered British capitalism much expense and little benefit.

But by 1972, already 31% of Britain's trade was with the EEC. By 1982 it was 43%. Britain's joining the EEC was the institutional reflection and reinforcement of an underlying economic process - decline of the old imperial trading patterns, integration of Britain with western Europe.

*Intra-EEC investment since World War 2 has, however, been high by historical standards. Again, the institutions reflect a fundamental economic process.

Britain was involved in the preparatory discussions for the EEC before 1957. In 1961/3 it applied to join but was vetoed by France. In 1967 it applied again and was vetoed again. In 1970 the application was renewed, and agreement was reached in 1972.

I. What about...?

1. The argument that the Treaty of Rome enforces capitalist free-market economics, therefore socialists must support withdrawal.

The EEC does outlaw import controls within the EEC: that is of great concern to the AES merchants, but not to Marxists. It also outlaws subsidies which would enable the industry of one EEC country to undercut the other EEC countries.

But the socialist answer in steel, for example, is not to demand British government subsidies to keep the British steel industry going at the expense of other EEC countries, but to fight for a workers' plan and common ownership on the necessary scale - i.e. at least EEC-wide.

2. The argument that the EEC is a cold-war institution.

It is true that the OEEC and the ECSC, fore-runners of the EEC, were part of the same chain of events as the creation of NATO in 1949. It is also true that in 1952 a treaty was signed for the creation of a European Defence Community, only to be torpedoed by France refusing to ratify it.

But an analogy between 'withdraw from NATO' and 'withdraw from the EEC' does not exist. Socialists aim to smash up the military organisation of capitalism; we do not aim to smash up the economic organisation of capitalism, but to transform it by establishing the control and ownership of the working class.

If the west European working class forgot about its own class programme and instead devoted itself to trying to break up the economic integration of west European capitalism, that would certainly be to the diplomatic advantage of the USSR. But that would be Stalinist politics - subordination of the working class to the foreign policy of the Kremlin - not socialist.

3. The argument that the EEC is a rich man's club in relation to the 3rd World.

It certainly is. So is the British ruling class. 'Britain out' is no answer.

4. The argument that the EEC strengthens capitalism.

It does, in the sense that it promotes capitalist development. But then Marxists believe that capitalist development is a contradictory process. We do not oppose capitalist development. We oppose capitalism within its development.

Likewise we do not oppose the growth of monopoly capitalism, or new technology, as such. We fight for working class control and ownership over the monopolies, or over the new technology.

The break-up of the EEC would be a blow to the capitalist class. But every minus for the capitalists is not a plus for the working class. The working class has nothing to gain by Europe sliding back into the protectionism of the 1930s.

5. The argument that EEC entry has had adverse economic effects for British workers.

That's true in the sense that EEC entry has led to higher food prices in Britain. But socialists need a class, not a nationalist, attitude to the issue of food prices. The high food prices exist right across the EEC. For this common working-class problem we should propose a common working-class solution: and 'Britain out' isn't that! We should fight for a sliding scale of wages and for a socialist European agricultural policy.

Socialists should argue against workers getting caught up in arguments about what "we" (Britain) "have got from the EEC". In or out of the EEC, our struggle is the class struggle. The main enemy is at home! Our answer to the international integration of capitalism is not vainly to demand a return to national isolation, but to fight for the international integration of the struggle of the working class.

Martin Thomas.

IMPERIALISM

Look at the question from 3 angles.

1. How does capitalist imperialism differ from the imperialism of other modes of production?

All modes of production other than the most primitive have generated imperialism in the general sense of expansion, conquest, domination.

Ruling classes based on nomadic economy have created vast empires (e.g. Genghis Khan). The Roman Empire was based on a slave mode of production. Feudalism saw empires like the Spanish. Asiatic modes of production generated great empires like the Ottoman and the Chinese.

Of the Stalinist USSR, Trotsky wrote: "The driving force behind the Moscow bureaucracy is indubitably the tendency to expand its power, its prestige, its revenues. This is the element of 'imperialism' in the widest sense of the word which was a property in the past of all monarchies, oligarchies, ruling castes, medieval estates and classes."

So what is special about capitalist imperialism? The rest of the notes should begin to answer this. But an important point is conveyed briefly by Immanuel Wallerstein: where pre-capitalist societies generated world empires, capitalism generates a world economy. For the first time it meshes the world into a single economic complex.

2. What were the concerns of the classic Marxist theory of imperialism - Hilferding, Bukharin, Lenin?

Marx and Engels initially saw the expansionist policies of capitalist states as signifying the spread of a relatively progressive mode of production, and thus progressive. They assessed the USA's conquest of western North America, and France's conquest of Algeria, that way; they supported Britain in the Crimean war.

Yet they never closed their eyes to the devastation and the callousness. And in later life they began to modify their attitude.

By the turn of the century the process of nation-state formation in the countries of advanced capitalism was complete. But those capitalist states had seized, divided up, and colonised, the rest of the world.

Progress now meant the creation of new capitalist nation-states in those colonies: i.e. anti-colonialism.

Hilferding, Bukharin, and Lenin started from two major political facts:

- * The colonial division of the world,
- * Increased militarism in the advanced capitalist states, and World War 1.

They undertook to explain these as political expressions of fundamental economic trends in capitalism. For their explanation they looked first at another fact: the rise of monopoly capital, with a handful of huge combines dominating each industry.

(Hilferding and Lenin also put a lot of stress on the rise of finance capital as dominating industry. It seems they were over-generalising from Germany; in any case the features they identified don't hold today; and this does not seem essential to

the theory).

The big capitalist monopolies had outgrown national frontiers. Such was their scale that they had to seek markets, sources of raw materials, and openings for investment, across the world.

With the huge size of individual firms, and the increasing economic role of the state, the capitalist states became closely associated with the monopolies' policies of expansion.

The states had divided the world up amongst themselves. But once the world was completely, or almost completely divided, there was bound to be pressure for re-division. Capital by its nature seeks ceaseless expansion.

World War 1 was about the big capitalist states seeking to grab colonies from each other.

3. What have the concerns been of post-war Marxist writing on imperialism?

The Hilferding/Bukharin/Lenin analysis served the communist and Trotskyist movement to analyse the inter-war period and World War 2.

After World War 2, however, the world clearly changed substantially: US 'super-imperialism'; decolonisation, reflecting the aroused strength of bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalist forces in the colonial world, the US's interest in ending the W. European powers' imperial preserves, and a growth of industry in the colonial world that made direct political control less important economically.

The interest of Marxists shifted to a different question: why does the capitalist world economy generate such huge inequality?

The average income per head in West Germany is about 100 times the average in Bangladesh, according to official figures. There are some reasons to suppose these figures exaggerate and the true ratio of inequality is nearer 40:1. It is still grotesque.

Nothing remotely like this inequality between areas had existed before 1800. And the inequality is increasing.

Why?

The simplest explanation is that countries like West Germany plunder countries like Bangladesh. And that simple idea is at the root of many post-war Marxist theories of imperialism: surplus value, they say, is 'drained' from 'periphery' to 'centre'.

Now this plunder does exist - as it did in all previous forms of imperialism. To focus on it as the explanation is however to miss the point. What is special about capitalist imperialism is that it does not only extract plunder - just as capitalist exploitation of workers is not simple plunder in the same way as serfdom or slavery.

Bukharin and Lenin argued baldly: "Capitalism is growing with the greatest rapidity in the colonies and in overseas countries. Among the latter, new imperialist powers are emerging (eg. Japan)..."

In fact capitalism has grown rapidly in the '3rd World' - much more rapidly than it grew in Western Europe during the period of the rise of capitalism there.

Why the inequality? Uneven and combined development.

Capitalism has a much stronger tendency to spread development across the world, to pull every area into a world economy, than any previous mode of production. But alongside that strong evening-out tendency runs an equally strong tendency to unevenness.

All previous modes of production were based on the land and on relatively stagnant technology. Rapid expansion could only take place 'horizontally' - by the reclamation or conquest of new land. Capitalism, however, can expand 'vertically'. Capitalist expansion in a given area creates, in principle, limitless possibilities for further expansion - a limitless spiral of new markets, new investment, improved infrastructure....

So at the same time as capitalism spreads, its unevenness becomes ever greater.

The former colonies become capitalist. But they become capitalist states that constantly lose out in competition with stronger, richer, more developed, better-provided capitalist states.

Some areas simply get 'abandoned' by the world-wide movements of capital. The bourgeoisie call these 'basket cases', like Bangladesh.

There is also combined development. Capitalist development in the former colonies generally does not proceed through the gradual evolution from urban handicrafts through 'manufacture' to the factory system found in Western Europe. Big factories (or more often, mines and plantations) were implanted in them while meanwhile their handicrafts and petty industries were destroyed by competition from products from the imperialist states.

Moreover, capitalism developed in Western Europe through the bourgeoisie rising up and displacing the landlord class, and after a big rise of productivity in agriculture. Capitalism developed in the colonies usually underneath a political alliance between the native landlord class and imperialism, and amidst ruin and desolation on the land.

In some ex-colonies the landlord classes have been expropriated, or a 'Prussian' capitalist transformation of agriculture has taken place. But agriculture still remains almost everywhere terribly backward and stagnant.

Pre-capitalist empires often could not secure economic domination even when they had political rule. (Example: the Roman empire in the Eastern Mediterranean). Capitalist imperialism, in contrast, generates economic domination and inequality even without any direct political rule.

Direct political domination still exists in patches. To that the answer remains the one prophatically pointed out by Lenin: national liberation, ie. the capitalist development promoted by imperialism turning back on imperialism through the formation of a new nation state.

But the gist and essence of capitalist imperialism is not its residual elements of 'world empire', but its massive reality of 'world economy'. A programme of trying to even out the uneven and combined development, of 'economic independence', is a futile response to that. It can be combatted only on a socialist, internationalist, and working class basis.