

Socialist Organiser discussion bulletin

The Common Market: discussion article from SO 56

Socialist Organiser and Greenham Common
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Discussion

COMMON MARKET - A WORKERS' ANSWER

THE WORKERS of Western Europe face as opponent a capitalist class united in the EEC. We face the same bureaucratic EEC apparatus, operating to integrate and homogenise rules, laws and national government policies affecting the workers of ten countries.

Go-it-alone national solutions, such as that which the majority of the British Left proposes, are simply not adequate to the situation: little-Britain socialism is not a possibility.

There is only one alternative to choosing to try to perpetuate the national division of the working class, which is increasingly absurd (and reactionary) in face of the evolution of capitalism in the EEC and the common front of the EEC capitalist states. That alternative is unity of the European workers.

We must appeal to the workers of Europe, and unite with them to hammer out a common workers' programme for a Socialist Europe and for common action in the class struggle now.

The basic ideas which express this belief are these, spelled out for brevity (and, I hope, clarity) in the form of 'yes' and 'no' statements.

NO to the bosses' Market: NO to bosses' Britain. YES to the Socialist United States of Europe.

NO to the reactionary utopia of an independent Britain. **NO** to the delusion that there is or can ever be a purely British solution to the historic decline of British capitalism.

YES to a workers' government to replace Thatcher and begin to reconstruct society in the interests and according to the needs of the workers — a government which will cut through the vested interests of the British ruling class and, as necessary, defy and repudiate the rules, dictates and institutional and constitutional constraints of the IMF and the EEC, etc. This workers' government should appeal to the workers of Europe over the heads of their rulers for a common programme and common action against the capitalist class in the entire EEC.

YES to the economic and social reconstruction of Britain as part of the Socialist United States of Europe.

NO to all variants of — unconditionally reactionary —

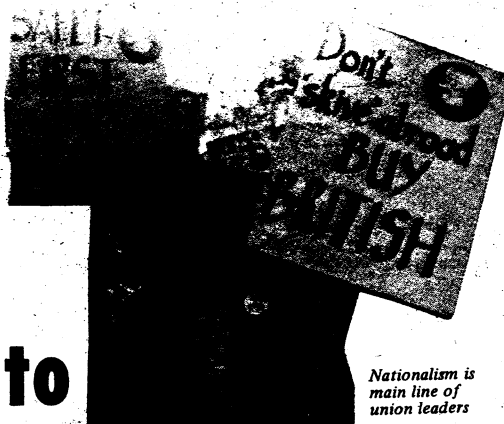
British nationalism, insularity and isolationism; and war on their malignant manifestations in society and especially in the labour movement — on chauvinism, xenophobia, and racism.

NO to import controls — the core of the Left's 'alternative' to the EEC — and to similar reformist ideas which point away from the struggle for socialism, because they necessarily



'Our united Europe can only be a united workers' movement to fight the bosses' EEC and national governments'

CONCLUDING his discussion article on Tony Benn's analysis of 'Britain as a Colony', JOHN O'MAHONY suggests a political platform of ideas and slogans to allow the British labour movement to fight for a socialist alternative both to EEC capitalism and to British capitalism.



Nationalism is main line of union leaders

point away from international working-class unity. These policies are retrogressive and reactionary even within the post-war development of capitalism. YES to the economic and social reconstruction of Europe in the interests of the working class — by way of building on the post-war integration of the West European economy, seizing control of it rather than

seeking to unscramble it. It is neither possible nor desirable to reverse the inadequate steps already taken by the capitalists towards realising one of the prerequisites of socialism — the integration of the European economy. NO to the suicidal British-nationalist policy of pitting worker against worker by seeking an advantage for one section of the European

working class (via import controls) that can only be had at the expense of another.

It is nationalism that blinds the British labour movement to the fact that in socialist working-class terms, pitting Welsh against Ruhr steelworkers (for example) is not seriously different from setting Yorkshire steelworkers to compete with Welsh in

Europe as inside Britain, any advantage thus gained — in living standards or jobs — would be paid for ruinously by a massive destruction of class solidarity without which no overall working-class political action can emerge.

The central concern of socialists is to promote and develop that class solidarity and class identity within and across state bound-

An action programme

AN ACTION programme for the workers of Europe will have to include the following points:

- Internationally-coordinated action to defend jobs through occupations.

- A Europe-wide campaign to eradicate unemployment by winning work-sharing at full pay.

- A Europe-wide workers' movement to beat inflation by the sliding scale of wages. Unite the European labour movement to fight for a price index calculated by workers' organisations as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class.

- Defend all jobs. Open the books of those firms that threaten closure or redundancies, along with those of their suppliers, bankers, linked companies, and branches throughout capitalist Europe.

- Nationalisation without compensation under workers' management, and the beginning of planning and integration in our interest.

- For the trade unions in cars, steel and other industries to prepare for a European workers' government by working out their plans to develop and reorganise their industries throughout Europe. Build and develop international combine committees.

- Immediately, our united Europe can only be a united European workers' movement to fight both the bosses' EEC and the bosses' national governments.

The West European labour movement must develop links with Solidarnosc, the pioneer labour movement of the Stalinist states. At present no real labour movements exist in the Stalinist states apart from

Poland: they were destroyed by the ruling bureaucrats who inhabit their shells.

The West European labour movement should use its strength to support the call from Solidarnosc's recent congress for the creation of real labour movements in the Stalinist states.

The first act of fraternal and sororal solidarity must be to break off all collaboration with the police-state 'trade unions' of the Stalinist states, and to express support for the real — savagely persecuted — trade unionists in the Stalinist states: with, for example, the USSR's 'psychiatric' political prisoner Vladimir Klebanov.

Unity

That is the way to prefigure the unity of all Europe, east and west, which will only be achieved by overthrowing both capitalism and totalitarian bureaucratic rule.

Against the existing institutions of the bosses' EEC, which bring the general irrationalities of capitalism to the level of murderous absurdities, bureaucratically administered (for example, food mountains amidst poverty), we must fight for the creation of Europe-wide democracy and public accountability, at least such as exists in the component parts of the EEC. Equal political rights for all workers in the EEC: full voting rights for immigrant workers.

- For a labour movement campaign to expel all US bases and remove all nuclear weapons from Western Europe.

- For a workers' government in Europe and the Socialist United States of Europe.

aries. We must oppose and fight everything in the labour movement that undercuts it, repudiates it, or works against it.

Delusory

The 'option' of the restoration of Britain's 'independence' is delusory. It necessarily points the British labour movement away from facing up to the fact that no working-class policy today can be a solution to Britain's problems if it does not pose the working class reorganisation of the European economy (at least), and build European working-class unity to achieve it.

YES to the maximum solidarity and organic political

and industrial integration and coordination of the European labour movement, which means mainly collaboration and integration of the labour movement' of the EEC (since, outside of Solidarnosc, there is no labour movement in Eastern Europe).

YES to labour movement unity in Europe, as the prefiguration of the Socialist United States of Europe and the replacement for the EEC. For the elaboration of a common programme of action by the European labour movement — initially by its left wing — for a European workers' government.