

Introduction these  
companies. this poem  
and other works



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## **Introduction**

Pablo Neruda's poem the 'United Fruit Co' is an exploration of the situation in the Latin American countries during the early and the mid 20th century. This follows a wave of imperialism exercised by the multinational corporations established in the Middle American countries. These include the Coca-Cola Company, the Anaconda Mining Company, the Ford Motors and the United Fruit Company. Bucheli argues that United Fruit Company was the American fruit company that had established the most political and economic influence in the so-called 'Banana Republics' (9). This was a term coined by an American writer Henry, to refer to the backward Latin American countries, whose governments had been taken over by dictators, supported by the multinationals from the United States.

The multinationals had influenced the governments of these countries to the extent that the tyrant, who ruled in those days suppressed workers strikes using government bodies such as the military and the police in favor of the companies. The poem 'United Fruit Co' stands out as relevant during those times in a number of ways.

## **Relevance in the Context of the Early to the Mid 20th Century**

Considering the political situations during those times, Pablo Neruda's the 'United Fruit Co' is considered to have been relevant as far as timing is concerned since the people needed the information contained in the poem.

This is the satirical portrayal of the multinationals, who had invaded the countries rather than doing what they had disguised themselves as doing,  
<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-these-companies-this-poem-and-other-works/>

worsening the situation through exploiting the workers, bribing the dictators who were in power during those days and manipulating the decisions of such leaders to their advantage. These companies had established a lot of influence in the region since they rewarded the leaders who went to the extent of sacrificing their people in exchange for favors. A good example is the Banana Massacres where the military opened fire to a group of striking workers from the company, killing an estimated 2000 workers and wounding others. In the poem, Neruda uses the metaphor of the flies to refer to the tyrants who benefited by killing their citizens to gain favors and resources from these dominating companies.

The success of this poem does not fall in that it encouraged the people to take up arms against such companies as the ' United Fruit Co'. In addition, it gives a deeper insight to the reader about the situations of these banana countries under the influence of the tyrants such as Trujillo, Tacho, Martinez, and Ubico, who ruled in those days. Pablo Neruda uses biblical phrases in the poem to satirize the justification that imperialism received in comparison to the corruption and evil deeds committed by these companies. This poem and other works by other artists of the time such as Miguel Angel Asturias and Gabriel Garcia Marquez are responsible for the rise of the rebellions and resistance that resulted in many revolutions in the Latin America. Pablo Neruda's poem is considered timeless as far as the issue it sought to address remains. This includes the issues of Neo-Colonialism and Imperialism, exercised to many developing nations by the developed countries.

## **Relevance / Significance in Today's Context**

The many multi-national corporations established almost in every corner of the world are considered the quintessential representatives of the imperialist governments that they represent.

In these regard, the aspects of these corporations as addressed in Pablo Neruda's poem still hold. These include worker exploitation and the habits of exercising control over decision making organs and promoting corruption in the countries where they establish their businesses rather than improve the economies. These companies are considered the major causes of increased corruption rates in the developing countries.

They do this through influencing a minority of the key decision makers to ensure that they are exempted from taxes and that they get major profits at the expense of the workers who do the real working and at the same time promote poverty in that they deplete the country of its resources. " With the blood thirsty flies, came the Fruit Company, amassed coffee and fruit in ships which put to sea like overloaded trays with the treasures from our sunken lands" ( Neruda line 20). In this lines, Pablo Neruda elaborates the notion held by most developing countries multinational cause commotions in these countries, almost causing civil wars and other political unrests and eventually leaving the countries torn by these and going back with the loot they take from these countries to their nations. This explains most of the perceivable actions of the multi-nationals involved in the mining in mineral rich countries such as the central African country of DRC.

## **Conclusion**

Pablo Neruda's work has a timeless significance as far as the elaboration of the operations of multi-national corporations in the developing countries is concerned. This is because the company names may have changed but their objectives and manners of operation and exercising imperialism still remain the same these days. These companies engage the same strategies that they used in influencing the rulers of those days.

Pablo Neruda's poem ' United Fruit Co' can work with only the name of the company being replaced with another that is operating these days.

Otherwise, it passes for an informative piece of masterwork.

## **Works Cited**

Bucheli, Marcello. Good Dictator, Bad Dictator: United Fruit Company and Economic Nationalism in Central America in the Twentieth Century, 2006.

Web. 16 March 2011.

[http://www.business.uiuc.edu/Working\\_Papers/papers/06?0115.pdf](http://www.business.uiuc.edu/Working_Papers/papers/06?0115.pdf)

Neruda, Pablo.

The United Fruit Co. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.