

STRENGTHEN UNITED ACTION

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REPORT OF ACTIVITY OF THE W.F.T.U. AND THE TASKS ARISING FOR THE TRADE UNIONS IN STRENGTHENING UNITED ACTION OF THE WORKERS IN THE FIGHT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR LIVING STANDARDS AND IN DEFENCE OF PEACE

Dear Brothers,

The creation of the World Federation of Trade Unions in 1945 marked a new and important stage in the history of the international working class movement.

This new stage was characterised by organic trade union unity on the international level. This was the first positive aspect of this new situation in trade union life.

At that time, it was clear to all that the trade union organisations had achieved international organic trade union unity through the united action and the fight of the mass of the workers during the historic period of the war of the peoples against Hitlerite fascism and Japanese imperialism.

This new stage in the history of the international working class movement confirmed an unchanging principle, namely, that everywhere, under all circumstances of social life, the united action of the workers and their trade unions always precedes organic trade union unity.

*** The W.F.T.U. did not come into being suddenly. It was not created spontaneously. The creative act of 1945, pressed forward by the will of tens of millions of workers, was deeply rooted in the entire history of the working class movement.**

Traces of the origins of the W.F.T.U. are to be found in every period of the long struggle of the workers for the unity of their forces in every country and for the bringing together of these forces at the international level.

Unity and the bringing together of these forces were, and still remain, necessary in order to give greater effectiveness to the opposition of the workers to the abuses, injustices, and shameful inhuman exploitation which are at the heart of the capitalist system.

Organic trade union unity did not come about in 1945 as if by magic. It was the result of an ardent struggle waged for decades to remove all the obstacles placed in the way of international working class solidarity, fraternal understanding and mutual aid between the workers of all countries, by the enemies of this solidarity, understanding and mutual aid.

Who was it, up till that point, who had always inspired the ardent struggle for unity? It was the most class-conscious section of the workers, the section most determined for action. It was the progressive trade union organisations who took the lead in trade union activities directed towards united action of the

workers of the whole world. These trade union organisations rallied behind the banner of working class internationalism.

* The historic event of 1945—the creation of the W.F.T.U. took on considerable importance as the outcome of patient and persistent work to strengthen the means of action of the workers in all countries. Its effect was to raise the level of confidence in themselves, which the workers need.

To achieve this aim, it was necessary to defeat the groups within some trade union organisations which were opposed to unity.

But one thing was achieved: at the close of the second world war, men and women workers had created their single democratic international trade union organisation for unity—the W.F.T.U.

A programme of economic and social action and for the defence of peace and democratic rights of the peoples had been unanimously adopted in October, 1945, in Paris, at the first World Trade Union Congress.

This programme was our common law. It remains at the base of all the activities of the W.F.T.U., eight years after its adoption.

The Second World Trade Union Congress in Milan, in 1949, had the task of drawing the conclusions from the development of the international situation since 1945. This development was marked by the offensive of international reaction against the organisations of the working class and against the rights won by the workers.

The second Congress took note of the splitting action carried out by a section of those who had created the W.F.T.U. with us, in 1945. It severely and justly condemned them. It had confidence in the workers of the whole world for whom and among whom the W.F.T.U. was going to carry forward its activities.

Now we are meeting at the Third World Trade Union Congress. For the first time in the history of the trade union movement, an international congress has been prepared on the basis of broad, democratic discussion among the workers and their trade unions.

Our great international trade union gathering is taking place at a time when it is important for every trade union organisation to declare its aims.

Our international trade union assembly had become a necessity for the workers and their trade unions.

The moment is ripe for a responsible meeting like ours to make an examination of the present state of the economic, social and political problems which either arose at the end of the second world war or were increased by that war, or which have arisen since that time. The moment is also ripe for a reply to be given to the following question:

* **How far have the trade union organisations of the world gone in the achievement of their respective programmes?**

This Congress will give a clear answer.

I.—THE IMPORTANT CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The situation in the autumn of 1953 is different from that of the summer of 1949, when we were meeting at the Second World Trade Union Congress.

1949 was the year of the international trade union split, carried out by the leaders of the C.I.O. of the United States and the British T.U.C., in agreement with the leaders of the A.F.L., for the accomplishment of this despicable task. In 1947 and 1948 very serious trade union splits, provoked by the same elements, took place in France, Cuba and Italy.

This was the time of the intensive preparations for the cold war and the political and military preparations for hot war.

We know what repercussions they had on active trade union life.

Intense propaganda was carried out to impose, in every field, the principles and the policy of discrimination desired by the U.S. masters.

President Truman declared that the U.S.A. had received the historic and divine mission of leading the world.

This same lying propaganda kept the people in a state of fear. The danger of world war was imminent. To deceive the people still further, there was talk about the threat of possible aggression by the U.S.S.R. directed against the Western countries. The most crude lies and the most fantastic stories were told so as to conceal the fundamental truth that the policy of the U.S.S.R. is a policy based solely on peace between the peoples.

Today, this truth is understood by the overwhelming majority of the people. But the truth had become enemy No. 1 to those who, at that time, feared it more than anything else. From Washington they launched their notorious so-called campaign of "truth". In this way, they thought that they could more easily and fraudulently hide it from the people.

At the same time, the big American industrial and financial monopolies nursed the illusion that through the cold war and the preparations for the hot war, it would be possible to some extent to avoid economic depression.

Every argument was used to maintain the illusion that with an increase in the production of armaments and so-called American economic aid, it would be possible to maintain a very high level of full employment and to guarantee a tolerable standard of living to the majority of the people.

It must be said that this illusion was not widespread among the workers. But, by means of corruption and heavy financial subsidies, this illusion had a certain amount of success among the small and middle bourgeoisie in many countries.

This section of the population cherished the illusion that it could satisfy its own social and economic needs within the confines of the adventurous policy of the American monopolies and their allies, or their foreign subsidiaries.

In Europe, moreover, a large section of the big bourgeoisie has been won for this policy of American financial and economic aid solely to be able to take part more easily in the cold war against the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies.

All the plans of this big bourgeoisie were guided by the idea of imminent and inevitable war, and were based on the search for constantly higher profits. This big bourgeoisie lived in the anticipation that it would not have to declare the aggressive war, which it described in advance as "defensive" and could thus attempt insolently to mislead the people, whose sound and honest opinion and judgment it feared.

The events in Korea in 1950 made all these groups still busier in the search for an alibi. The majority in U.N.O. agreed to furnish this alibi.

Four years have passed. From month to month these illusions have crumbled. They are increasingly giving away to disillusion among those who allowed themselves to be taken in.

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Among the bourgeoisie of the Western countries there are many who have the feeling that they have been deceived, or at least placed in a ridiculous and uncomfortable position by their dear American friends. They no longer use the word international co-operation in speaking about their relations with the U.S.A.

We are now seeing an internal crisis in the Atlantic alliance and the open manifestation of contradictions within this bloc of states, which said that they wanted to save Western civilisation from political chaos and economic disorder. These states are becoming more engulfed in these two dangers every day.

We are now witnessing the growth of the feeling of moral and political revolt of the mass of the people, and even important sections of the bourgeoisie, against the economic and political domination of American businessmen in the world.

The determination to break free from the grip of the American monopolies is growing everywhere where this grip exists. The policy of the representatives of the American monopolies has become intolerable to many who came to terms with it in 1949. These American groups and their servants are creating in the world the present anti-Americanism which would astonish more than one decent and honest U.S. citizen, if he had the opportunity to see this in Asia, Europe, Africa or Latin America, by mixing, other than as a tourist, with the ordinary people.

With the armistice in Korea and the controversial, highly argumentative negotiations to which it gave rise, as a result of

the warlike attitude of Syngman Rhee, two new factors have arisen to assist the judgment of the people.

* Firstly, Syngman Rhee clearly stands out as the one who carried out the aggression in 1950 with the agreement of the American general staff. In 1953, he still wants to conquer North Korea by force of arms and he states this again after the armistice. This is what he tried to do in June 1950.

Today, everyone knows the reason.

* Secondly, the Korean armistice is causing much thought among the people. Through it, the people have a clearer understanding of the way outstanding international questions between the Great Powers must be solved. It shows that neither the cold nor the hot war, nor aggression, can settle questions in dispute between the nations.

On the contrary, the disputes become sharper and more complicated to the detriment of the peoples, but also to the political detriment of the aggressors and the war-minded individuals whose policy has been checked.

Let this lesson be remembered.

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1948-1949 was also the period of insistent propaganda in support of the programme of technical assistance to the underdeveloped countries, such as President Truman's Point Four.

The evangelical terms of this propaganda sought to make people forget the political and financial benefit organised in this way. The strategists of the cold war believed that by speaking about technical support they would appease the normal political demands of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. To give technical support to the systems of these countries politically and economically dependent on the imperialist powers does not eliminate the most obvious political reality; these peoples condemn the colonial system under whatever name it presents itself; they are rising against it.

Today a colonial territory or a dependent country is less and less a tranquil reserve of men and material goods for the war-mongers or the monopoly capitalists. It is inevitably growing into a disturbed and restless area. The right of the people to self-determination is the keen aspiration of the colonial and dependent peoples. It is also the most appealing and most enthusiastic demand of the subjugated peoples. It establishes the link between the struggles of the oppressed peoples and those of the mass of the people of the oppressor countries against every kind of colonial scheme.

The present events in Indo-China, North Africa and the Middle East were certainly no part of the imperialists' programme. They caused them without foreseeing them.

The imperialists cannot claim this situation as a sign of strength; nor that these profound changes in the lives and activities of these peoples will permit a long continuation of blind imperialist domination.

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Other changes have taken place since 1948-1949, first in the application of the Marshall Plan on a European scale and then in its application to other continents.

This programme of economic aid was not a philanthropic act on the part of American businessmen. It was a good investment from which they expected substantial financial, political and military profit.

The Marshall panacea was supposed to spread prosperity in the countries whose governments had tied themselves to this vast operation to camouflage the world hegemony of the American millionaires.

In this period, the aim was to weaken the militancy of the working class, peasantry and intellectuals in favour of progress and social justice for which they longed and fought. The plan was aimed at demonstrating the futility of trade union demands, and worse still the futility of moves and actions by the workers and their trade unions to satisfy their vital needs.

Everything was to be automatically solved through the transfer of the happiness and the happy life "made in U.S.A." to the homes and families of the peoples of Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. The formula was: wait, don't move, don't demand anything, everything will come in good time.

Right then, what has happened?

II.—RECORD OF THE MARSHALL POLICY, RECORD OF POVERTY FOR THE WORKERS

HIGHER COST OF LIVING

We can take stock in 1953 of this Marshall policy. We were told that in four years, at the most, it was going to bring about an increase in the peoples' living standards. Let us see the facts.

By referring to the monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the U.N., which reproduces the official government indices, we get an indication of the minimum rise in the cost of living for a certain number of countries.

These indices are obtained by combining the price indices for food, clothing, housing and other vital necessities.

Taking 1948 as the base (1948=100), we find in 1953 the following increases:

Europe		Asia and Oceania	
Denmark	23%	Australia	77%
Austria	99%	India	18%
Finland	57%	New Zealand	32%
France	45%	Japan	56%
Italy	17%		
Norway	35%		
Great Britain	31%		
America		Africa	
Argentina	198%	French West Africa ..	71%
Brazil	64%	French Equatorial Africa	143%
Canada	19%	Union of South Africa	29%
Chile	125%	Northern Rhodesia ..	37%
Mexico	41%	Tanganyika	42%
U.S.A.	11%	Anglo-Egyptian Sudan	42%

We should remember that it is the indices supplied by the governments which enable us to arrive at this conclusion, that American hegemony, wherever it is exerted, expresses itself in a marked increase in the cost of living.

We asked: "What has happened?" The reply is clear: the cost of living has increased.

HIGHER TAXES

The Marshall policy was to assist in balancing the state budgets, in putting public finance on a sound basis and relieving the tax burdens borne by the people. Let us look at the facts. What has happened?

It was not possible for long to camouflage the Marshall Plan as a purely economic act. The governments had openly to reveal its real significance in the programme of all-out militarisation undertaken under the leadership of the U.S.A. The armaments drive, the increase in the size of the armed forces, did not only result in a limitation of the production of civilian industry, but it also led to an increase in public expenditure in a period where the state becomes the main purchaser in order to satisfy its military requirements.

This all-out militarisation has produced a considerable increase in taxation.

Thus, in the U.S.A., taxes are now 12 times higher than in 1937-1938. In France, the tax index stands at 260 and in Great Britain 200 as compared with 1938 (1938=100), taking into account the decline in the purchasing power of national currency.

According to American governmental sources,

—In the U.S.A., taxes absorb	28.1%	of the national income
—In France	31.4%	" "
—In Great Britain	33.4%	" "

This data by itself is by no means favourable to the Marshall case, in the name of which the leaders of the C.I.O. of the U.S.A. and the British T.U.C. carried out the split within the W.F.T.U. in 1949.

The tax burdens do not increase the well-being of the people. But this is not all.

It is common knowledge that indirect taxation is a tax on the poor. It is the most unjust tax of all, for it weighs more heavily on the low family budget of the poor than on the opulent budget of the rich man's house.

Indirect taxation has, however, assumed unprecedented proportions to the total taxation received in a large number of countries during the last four years.

The percentage of indirect taxation as a whole works out as follows:

U.S.A.	39%	Belgium	54%
Great Britain	44%	Holland	49.1%
France	75%	Denmark	62%
Western Germany	60.3%	Norway	79%

Clearly, these are unmistakable signs of a deterioration in the living conditions of the poorest section of the people, the working masses.

We asked, what has happened? The reply is plain: the taxation burden has increased, taxes are extorting still more from the needy and poor people.

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LACK OF FULL EMPLOYMENT, MORE UNEMPLOYMENT

Let us now look at the policy of full employment, a particular sample of Marshall propaganda. What have we found?

The protagonists of the Marshall Plan claimed that it would inevitably wipe out unemployment. The facts have proved the opposite.

In the 12 main countries of Western Europe, the official number of totally unemployed was 2,959,000 in 1948. In April 1953, it was 4,300,000, that is, 45 per cent. more as a result of Marshall methods.

We question government figures on the number of unemployed. But we will not question the 45 per cent. minimum increase in the number of unemployed during the period of the Marshall Plan. This is a result of so-called American aid to Europe.

This development is not only confined to Western Europe. In Australia, Canada, Japan and India, for example, the number of totally unemployed rose by 100 per cent. between 1948 and April, 1953, according to official statistics.

The growth in the number of unemployed is irrefutable proof of the permanent and weakened inability of the capitalist system to use to full capacity the productive apparatus it has available. This was true in 1948-1949. It is even more true in 1953.

The U.N. Economic Commission for Europe showed that in 1950 and 1951 the tractor industry of the seven main producer countries of Western Europe worked at 65 per cent. of its productive capacity. The same U.N. body forecast that in 1956 only 47 per cent. of the productive capacity of rolling mills would be used in the countries of the Schuman Plan, 33 per cent. in Austria, and 72 per cent. in Great Britain. In Italy, 40 per cent. of the productive capacity of the ship-building yards is used, 55 per cent. of that of the machine tools industry, 15 per cent. of the rail material industry, 80 per cent. of iron and steel, 75 per cent. of fertilisers and 70 per cent. of sugar.

This is the real meaning of this policy of full employment which the advocates of the Marshall Plan and of the Schuman Plan have announced with incredible and vain assurance during the last five years.

The second fundamental aspect of the development of unemployment from which the agricultural population of the under-developed countries as a whole suffer.

The agricultural wage-earners of these countries, like the small peasants, work three, four or five months a year. The Indian jute workers only work for three months in the year. The Cuban sugar workers work four months in the year, the Thailand agricultural workers only receive pay during six months of the year; half the agricultural population of Pakistan is without regular or permanent employment. The Burmese peasants on the average work five months a year.

Consequently, in the under-developed countries, the actual number of unemployed runs into tens of millions, 50 million in India, 15 million in Indonesia, a million in Iran. In the West Indies 25 per cent. of the working population of Puerto Rico and Jamaica are without jobs.

We ask the question, what have we found? The reply is categoric: **there is no policy of full employment and there are many more unemployed than five years ago.**

This is a terrible indictment of those who carried out the trade union split with the aim of applying the Marshall Plan as they pleased.

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THE SUPER-EXPLOITATION OF THE WORKERS AND INCREASED CAPITALIST PROFITS

The Marshall Plan was presented to the workers as a form of social progress, through which security of work and remunerative employment would be guaranteed to the wage-earners.

In fact, what precisely was the case?
Let us look at things as they are.

With the growth of U.S. investments and financial subsidies, goes the organisation in many countries of campaigns to safeguard these investments.

American businessmen are seeking new guarantees for returns on this enormous capital. It has to bring in returns and big returns, to its owners. . . .

The campaign for productivity launched on a vast scale during the last few years, is in reality a campaign to allow American capital invested abroad to produce larger profits.

This campaign is enthusiastically supported by the employers of the other capitalist countries with the aim of sharing in its benefits.

It is not a matter of increasing the production of consumer goods or improving the well-being of the people. The point, above all, is to guarantee the growth of profits through production in which priority is granted to programmes of armaments manufacture.

In its report on the world social situation, the Secretariat of the U.N. made the following remark:

"... more than half the population of the world is still living at levels which deny them a reasonable freedom from preventable disease; a diet adequate to physical well-being; a dwelling that meets basic human needs; the education necessary for improvement and development; and conditions of work that are technically efficient, economically rewarding and socially satisfactory."

Is not this a severe condemnation of the capitalist economic system which is responsible for such a social situation?

What the U.N. report does not specify is that there is a deterioration in these already appalling social conditions.

The World Federation of Trade Unions can point to the main forms of this deterioration which primarily hits the workers, men and women, young and old, a deterioration which has a name—capitalist super-exploitation.

This super-exploitation, in fact, takes on specific forms against which the workers react and fight continually. Its main forms are the following:

- methods of payment in which the basic wage is a secondary factor in relation to the total wage;
- regressive systems of payment for time and quantities of work over and above the established basis and norms;
- increasing intensity of work through production times and work speeds which submit the workers to exhausting efforts, physical and mental;
- reduction in the size of work-teams with the insistence on the same amount of work;
- unilateral revision and general and systematic violation of social legislation and labour agreements won by the workers after long and hard years of struggle.

The consequence of this super-exploitation is a considerable growth in the number of industrial accidents and occupational diseases.

Here are some examples:

In Great Britain, in June, 1953, 56,400 industrial accidents and 848,500 cases of occupational diseases were recorded, that is 4,000 accidents and 79,000 sickness cases more than during the corresponding month of 1952.

In Italy, the picture of the crimes of the capitalist system shows that the situation there is also becoming worse.

	Accidents	of which fatal accidents
1949	422,000	1,993
1950	491,000	1,956
1951	540,000	2,311
1952 (1st 6 months)	264,000	2,226

In France, during every hour of work, one worker is killed, four maimed, and 1,000 injured.

In the United States, the annual number of fatal accidents is going up and has been more than 15,000 since 1950.

For every million tons of coal produced, 67 miners were killed or injured in 1951, 74 in 1952.

And in some capitalist countries, in Belgium for example, the annual number of accidents in the mines is greater than the number of miners, which shows many miners are victims of several accidents during the years.

The workers know how and why these accidents and sicknesses are on the increase. A loose scaffolding, an unprotected belt or mould, steam and dust not disposed of, dangerous products handled without protection, and a hundred other such causes, have one common characteristic: that the employer has not installed safety devices. Why? Because by doing so he would have reduced the amount of his profits and because the life and health of the workers count less to him than the swelling of his returns.

The workers also know that inhuman speed-up exhausts them and makes them more susceptible to accidents and disease against which they are not protected.

It is against this that the workers, and with them the World Federation of Trade Unions, are campaigning.

The W.F.T.U. is not opposed to technical progress and to rational and organised increase in productivity which relieves the burden of the workers and improves the material situation of the whole of the people.

But, under capitalism, that is not the question involved. Under the cover of productivity, the monopolies are concerned to increase their profits to the maximum. For this, while they use the resources of technical progress in a partial and anarchic way, their concern is to achieve the complete utilisation of the physical strength of the workers. The aim is to introduce methods of increased exploitation contrary to the interests of the

workers and the people as a whole, and solely benefiting the employers.

*** Wherever the drive for maximum profits does not require it, the monopolies do not instal machinery and do not carry out a rationalisation of the methods of work, but on the contrary use the most primitive methods of production and even return to the most out-moded methods, thus turning back the clock of technical development.**

This is true for the bulk of the industrial and agricultural production of the under-developed countries where the methods of production remain at an archaic level and where the working conditions are appalling, since the trusts obtain maximum profits by keeping down wages to the lowest level and by increasing working hours to the greatest possible extent.

This also applies to the more developed capitalist countries, for example, the countries of Western Europe, where the employers in textile and other industries are increasingly re-introducing domestic work because this gives them larger profits.

At the same time as working conditions are declining and because they are declining, the amount of profit is growing.

In the United States, the following table shows the increase in profits:

1939	..	..	6.5	thousand	million	dollars
1945	..	..	19.7	"	"	"
1949	..	..	27.1	"	"	"
1950	..	..	39.6	"	"	"
1951	..	..	42.9	"	"	"
1952	..	..	40.9	"	"	"
1953 (1st 6 months)			23.0	"	"	"

Thus the amount of annual profits of the United States monopolies is about equal to the income of 600 million inhabitants of South-East Asia.

These enormous profits come from the super-exploitation of the workers of the United States and other capitalist countries. The return on American capital invested abroad almost trebled from 1945-1951.

The rate of profit of the General Motors trust was 19 per cent. in 1952 in the United States and 94 per cent. abroad.

The Anaconda copper trust in 1950 made 840 dollars profits on every American worker and 1,997 dollars on every worker in the other countries where its subsidiaries operate.

In the same year the Standard Oil trust made 3,036 dollars profit per worker employed in the United States and 13,950 dollars per worker employed in Venezuela.

Profits have considerably risen in the other capitalist countries. In Great Britain, they went up from 2.5 to 3.8 thousand million pounds from 1949 to 1952.

In Italy, profits on the average have trebled in the same period. The profits of the Montecatini monopoly (chemicals) have gone up from 1,631 million lira in 1947 to 7,979 million in 1952.

In France, the index of profits of 760 large companies in 1952 was 530 as compared with 1947 (1947=100). 63 North African companies, which made a profit of 1,277,000,000 francs in 1947, pushed up their profits to 10,962,000,000 in 1952. 53 Central African and Madagascan colonial companies, which made 1,452 million francs profit in 1947, increased them to 6,141 million in 1952.

These are the declared net profits and we can therefore assume that, with the disguised profits, these companies which exploit the colonial workers and peoples, have drawn still larger profits from the work of these peoples.

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THE RICH GET RICHER AND THE POOR GET POORER

Finally, the so-called economic aid sponsored by the American monopolies was to create an era of such prosperity that real wages were to grow like mushrooms in the morning dew.

The sole role of the trade unions was to be that of a chorus acclaiming the wonderful things. How did things turn out?

The development of events in the capitalist countries has shown that the governments and employers have made desperate attempts to keep the purchasing power of wages at a low level.

The workers have defended their wages and have often prevented the bourgeoisie from achieving its ends. The number of strikes and mass demonstrations has reached record figures.

In the United States, the purchasing power of average hourly wages fell by about 5 per cent. from 1949 to 1952. The workers, by big strikes in the main industries, have had to shatter the policy of wage-freeze laid down by the American government at the time of the Korean war.

They have thus prevented an even more serious decline in their real wages.

Whereas real wages in the United States have fallen by 5 per cent. during the same period industrial production has gone up by 24 per cent. and capitalist profits by 51 per cent.

In Great Britain, the official government index of the cost of living—strongly criticised at the recent Congress of the T.U.C.—has risen by 23 per cent. from 1949 to 1952 and the price index for foodstuffs, which is closer to reality, by 26 per cent. In the same period, the average hourly wage has gone up by 22 per cent. If the drop in real wages is no greater, then this is due to the important wage movements which have taken place during this period, especially the movement which secured between November 1950 and June 1951, weekly wage increases of 8 to 20 shillings for more than five million workers, defeating the wage-freeze ordered

by the government and approved by the leaders of the British T.U.C.

In this country, where real wages have also fallen, during the same period production has risen by 16 per cent. and capitalist profits by 40 per cent.

In France, the rise in the cost of living from 1949 to 1952 was 45 per cent. and the purchasing power of wages has seriously fallen. Between September 1950 and 1951, the workers by their actions and strikes for their demands managed to force an average wage increase of 36 per cent. This approximately made good the increase in prices which had taken place at this time. But since September 1951, prices have again risen by nearly 20 per cent. and real wages have dropped by about 15 per cent.

Since the introduction of the Marshall Plan in France, the purchasing power of wages has gone down on the average by 30 per cent. Production has increased by nearly 35 per cent. and the profits of the big capitalist companies by 460 per cent.

In Italy, prices went up by about 20 per cent. from 1949 to 1953; the living standards of the mass of the people have been seriously affected by widespread and growing unemployment. However, through a ceaseless mass struggle, the Italian workers have succeeded in winning wage increases which compensate for the increase in prices. The main actions, successful because of their unity, have been the great strikes organised on a national level for the sliding scale in 1951; for a 15 per cent. increase in 1952; and, starting with the strikes in the chemical industry in July 1953 up to the recent general strike in September 1953, the great united movement for the abolition of the zonal wage differentials and for wage increases.

*** Nevertheless, it is a fact that in the face of the wretched living standards of the working class and the attacks on the purchasing power of wages, production from 1949 to 1952 rose by a third and profits went up more than three times.**

In Brazil, the average wage increased by 16 per cent. from 1949 to 1952 as a result of the strikes in which more than 360,000 workers took part in 1951, and more than 410,000 in 1952, while more than a million other workers acted for an increase in wages. But the official index of the cost of living rose by 35 per cent. in the same period.

This fall in real wages took place while American private investments, which exceeded 230 million dollars in 1943, rose to more than 600 million in 1950 and more than 750 million in 1952 when the profits extracted from the Brazilian people rose to the neighbourhood of 100 million dollars.

The vigorous action taken by the 300,000 workers in the textile industry in Sao Paulo. and the 100,000 Brazilian workers in the maritime and river navigation companies and shipyards, is readily understood. Their strikes this year, for an increase in their wages, have consolidated the unity of the workers and increased their confidence in themselves.

In Japan, the Korean war brought about a rapid increase in prices (more than 60 per cent. from 1950 to 1952), a considerable increase in taxes, a 6 per cent. drop in real wages, and an even larger drop for all the state workers, who are denied many trade union rights.

At the same time, the mass of profits doubled with the most marked increases in the iron, steel, aluminium and chemical industries. The big strikes of the Japanese workers in 1951 and 1952, those of the miners, electrical and steel workers, those of the workers at the bases and in the workshops of the American occupation forces, succeeded in preventing a still sharper decline in living standards.

The examples and the facts taken from these six countries with regard to wages, production and profits, allow a general assessment to be made of the causes of the great social conflicts which convulse the decaying capitalist world.

We ask the question: **how did things turn out?** The reply speaks for itself: **they have developed in the direction of making the rich richer and the poor poorer.**

The workers have produced more, they have in many cases worked longer and yet, in the last analysis, the value of their wages was lower than before.

The workers have hit back at the stepping up of capitalist exploitation by extending their struggles.

The initiators and propagandists of the Marshall Plan predicted the contrary. Nor did they foresee that the W.F.T.U., in all the heroic struggles of the working class, would be capable of raising still higher the blazing banner of working class internationalism.

This is what the W.F.T.U. has done from 1949 to 1953.

III.—THE PROGRESS OF THE WORKERS' STRUGGLES FOR THEIR DEMANDS AND THE IRRESISTIBLE UPSURGE OF THEIR UNITY IN ACTION

The Executive Bureau, the Executive Committee and the General Council of the W.F.T.U. entered on a thorough analysis, during the years 1950, 1951 and 1952, of the progress of the workers' struggles for their demands during that period.

This analysis has enabled us to set out two characteristic and essential aspects of these struggles as they mounted in an irresistible upsurge of unity in action.

First: The workers are taking the offensive in reply to the sharpening of capitalist exploitation. Strikes and all other forms of mass action and demonstration have increased in number.

Movements for the workers' demands are not found only in a few countries here and there. They cover all the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries.

This reply by the workers seeks, and very often succeeds, in securing power and effect through the broadest unity of action; working class solidarity becomes more living and more active: in these magnificent new struggles, the international working class provides itself with new methods of action and substantially raises the level of its class consciousness.

Second: Whether or not they belong to a trade union organisation affiliated to the W.F.T.U. whenever the workers enter upon any action, the necessities of their struggles and the creation of conditions favourable for their success, invariably lead the workers to act in accordance with the W.F.T.U. programme. The workers fight a united battle around the fundamental essence of the programme of the W.F.T.U. by the ways and methods that the W.F.T.U. constantly advises.

During the first nine months of 1953, the workers and their trade union organisations added still further to the already long and eloquent list of the proofs of their will to struggle.

In 1953, the facts confirm the estimate made by the W.F.T.U. during previous years of the united and militant character of the struggles of the world proletariat.

In this connection, we should like to state once again that even in the U.S.A., where a whole body of special strike-breaking legislation has been introduced, and held up by the American imperialists as a model to the governments of the countries it controls, the number of strikes and strikers has risen steeply over the last few years.

According to official figures it is established that the number of strikes in the U.S.A. was as follows:

Year	Number of strikes
1948	3,419
1949	3,606
1950	4,843
1951	3,910
1952	4,950

On the basis of the same official statistics, the increase in the number of workers who struck is as follows:

Year	Number of strikers
1948	1,960,000
1949	3,030,000
1950	2,410,000
1951	2,220,000
1952	over 3,500,000

So the American workers are boldly and constantly acting against capitalist exploitation, in spite of the daily efforts of the

chief leaders of the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. to confuse the outlook in the struggle and weaken them by endless compromise and bargaining with an employing class avid for profits and domination.

This Congress is being held at a time when the workers are sharpening their offensive and broadening their unity of action against poverty and those responsible for it.

It can be noted as a symptom that at the time of the general 24-hour strike in Italian industry, on September 25, this year, all the foreign press and wireless programmes spoke of a trade union offensive. The newspaper "Le Monde," the evening paper of the big French national bourgeoisie, headed its editorial that day, "Trade Union Offensive."

Following the Brazilian strikes, the magnificent and enthusiastic battles of the Indian workers, especially in Calcutta, the August strikes in France and the electrical workers' strike in Britain, the strikes in Italy show that there was a trade union offensive by the workers.

*** The most outstanding thing is the breadth of these movements and their international repercussions. The pointed lesson is that wherever the workers and their unions are united, the success of their struggle is assured.**

That is what tens of millions of workers are seeing more and more plainly.

The mass strikes in Brazil, particularly in the textile industry, have shown the extent of human poverty in the under-developed countries. As with Brazil, the Indian strikes showed the great fighting spirit of the workers against the exploitation from which they suffer. The strikes in Great Britain prove that the British workers want to recover their vanishing living standards and see no other way which promises to do this except trade union activity more linked with the daily life of the masses and paying more attention to their daily needs.

The August strikes in France show the bankruptcy of those who for so long extolled the wage freeze and the virtues of the Marshall Plan. The strikes in the public services, the Post Office, transport, the mines, gas, electricity and other groups of French industry, show that the French C.G.T. is the trade union organisation which retains the confidence of the vast majority of French workers. These strikes made as clear as daylight an essential principle :

Workers engaged in struggle must always retain the control and direction of their own strikes.

They proved the sinister role of the leaders of the Christian national trade union centre and the so-called "Force Ouvriere", controlled by Monsieur Bidault's bourgeois political party and Irving Brown, the European representative of the A.F.L. and the State Department.

The August strikes in France are the heralds of further united actions, and of movements at once deeper and more decisive towards bringing the changes which the French workers and people want.

The Italian strikes are something more than token strikes. They are model strikes. What is happening is a continuous fight by the Italian workers, fraternally united for higher wages, for full employment and for the struggle against the evil effects of the European Steel and Coal Community on Italian national industry. It is a fight for the respect for trade union rights.

These strikes condemn the policy of ruin, the policy which the governments, the employers and the American monopolies are imposing on many countries.

Just as in Britain and France, so in Italy too, workers in the unions affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U. have, by their actions, become public witnesses against this disastrous policy of liquidating national industries, of economic and social bankruptcy and of poverty in the homes of the workers.

The W.F.T.U. and the workers' trade union organisations affiliated to it are no longer the only people to accuse and act. Here we have a splendid change for the better.

We are very glad to see it. Events have proved us right. Our common struggle will bring us victory.

This victory will be won, by extolling first the grandeur of the struggles of yesterday, by calling on the workers for even greater unity in their actions of today and by giving for tomorrow an even bolder direction to their united action and to the rallying of the working people in every country and on an international scale.

These changes have come about, but one can say that the reactionary governments, the employers and the splitters have joined together all their forces to try to prevent them.

They have not been able to put the brake on the progress of the workers' struggle and their growing unity.

The enormous resources of propaganda, bribery and disruption which were set to work have not been able to prevent the birth of this vast movement of the world's workers.

The I.C.F.T.U. was created in 1949 in order to make a diversion and deepen the split. The A.F.L. and C.I.O. leaders had cast it in a murky role—that of fighting against the workers' opposition to American political and economic overlordship.

They assigned to the I.C.F.T.U. the role of strikebreaker. They gave it the mission of standing with the aggressors against the Korean people, with the French imperialists who are making war in Viet Nam, with the revivers of a vengeful Nazi army in Western Germany, against the safety of the peoples.

But today it is with the I.C.F.T.U. that the American overlordship is creating conflicts, raising contradictions and provoking rivalries.

This diversionary organisation is incapable of damming up the current of unity which flows from the factories and other

work-places and reaches numerous meetings of trade unions not affiliated to the W.F.T.U.

It cannot prevent the trade unions affiliated to it from taking part in common actions with the unions affiliated to the W.F.T.U., in order to win the common demands of the workers.

* Why have these changes taken place? Because the W.F.T.U., the organisation of unity and of action, has never for a moment paused in its earnest fight to consolidate and unite the forces of the workers struggling for bread, peace and freedom.

Why have they come about? Because in 1948 we refused the false dilemma which the breakaway union leaders wanted to impose on us when they asked us:

either to support the Marshall Plan and on that condition preserve international trade union unity in the W.F.T.U.;
or else not to approve or support the Marshall Plan and so make a division in the W.F.T.U.

We refused to accept this impossible dilemma. It was born elsewhere than in the ranks of the working class. It involved making the unity, and even the existence of the W.F.T.U., depend on a capitalist scheme of political and military hegemony.

We placed our trust in the workers of all the world.

The W.F.T.U. is inseparably involved in their struggles.

That is why, in speaking of the record of bankruptcy and poverty associated with the Marshall policy, and the sufferings of the workers under this policy, we speak at the same time of a splendid record of united struggles by the working people for the improvement of their living conditions and against the disastrous results of the war economy.

IV.—THE EXEMPLARY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIALIST CAMP

The fact that the representatives of the trade unions in the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries, and the representatives of the trade unions in the countries of Socialism, the countries where the workers have won State control, meet together in the W.F.T.U., gives our trade union organization its universal, world character.

No other international trade union organisation can consequently play the same role as the W.F.T.U. as the spokesman of the workers throughout the world.

Moreover, no other organisation is able to speak as effectively as the W.F.T.U. of the contrasts between the development of the economic and social situation in the capitalist countries and the development in those countries that have started along the happy, joyful path of Socialism.

No other international trade union organisation is able to undertake, as does the W.F.T.U., the exchange between all countries of extensive well-documented experience of trade union work.

What are some of the true facts that the members of the W.F.T.U. have been able to establish during the eight years since the W.F.T.U. was set up, thanks to the mutual exchange of trade union experiences?

They have seen the continuous growth and progress in the economic and social spheres in the U.S.S.R., in China since the setting up of the Chinese People's Republic, and in the People's Democracies since they broke away from the world capitalist system.

Alongside the impoverishment of the mass of the people in the countries still within the world capitalist system with its super-exploitation, which this report and our Congress will clearly demonstrate, there is a constant improvement and a growing satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the people in the U.S.S.R., in China and in the People's Democracies.

We think it is not only the members of the W.F.T.U. who have seen these obvious facts. Huge numbers of workers, who are not affiliated to the W.F.T.U., see and note these facts.

The workers see that these truths can no longer be hidden by the ruling classes from the peoples enslaved by them. They understand the purpose of the campaigns thought up by the employers and bourgeois governments—campaigns even more stupid than in the past, to try to belittle the significance and the eloquent testimony of the economic and social achievements of the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies.

For a long time the employers and the bourgeoisie ruling in the capitalist countries denied not only the constructive powers of our Soviet brothers but even the very existence of the new and higher economic and social achievements in their country.

Today they can no longer maintain this position. So they try to disparage these achievements, or to question their usefulness.

Some of them, who cannot provide a mere desk and an ordinary class-room for tens of thousands of children, find the new Moscow University too imposing, too monumental, too beautiful. They are in an embarrassing situation.

Others, who take more than a quarter of a century to dig a 20-mile canal and build a lock, are of the opinion that the construction of the Volga-Don Canal with all its navigation system and hydro-electric stations in less than five years was an undertaking on a too vast scale, and that it must have been rather a headache for the engineers, and extremely tiring for the workers.

Yesterday's scoffers today find themselves in such a ridiculous position.

And others, finally, bought journalists, trade union leaders without conscience or scruples, or avowed propagandists of fascist methods, gossip emptily about the role of the trade unions in countries where, as in the Soviet Union, these trade unions themselves in fact run the whole system of Social Insurance, where their activity is concentrated continuously on the daily needs of the people, on their real interests and their human aspirations.

* The workers in the capitalist countries can see that the places where there is the greatest trade union progress, the greatest (and the most constant) trade union activity, and the increasing growth of trade union membership, are in the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies.

The splendid instructive examples offered fraternally by our brothers of the All Union Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions, strengthen the authority of the World Federation of Trade Unions and inspire with enthusiasm every form of democratic mass trade union work throughout the world.

Perhaps some of those who, in their attacks against international trade union unity, particularly take to task the Soviet trade unions, would care to remember their past statements?

At the World Trade Union Conference in London in February 1945, Arthur Deakin began his report on the Furtherance of the Allied War Effort against Hitlerism and Fascism with the words :

"It is appropriate that I should feel some satisfaction in speaking on this subject . . . particularly having regard to the fact that the British T.U.C. . . . in 1941 took a decision to establish contact with the Central Council of Trade Unions in the U.S.S.R., and I would say at once, Mr. Chairman, that that contact has been extremely valuable in securing the purpose that this Conference now has under consideration."

It is true that contact with the Soviet trade unions was **extremely valuable** in securing the aims of the struggle against fascism and Hitlerism. It is still true in 1953.

It is true that this contact is **extremely valuable** for the workers of the capitalist and colonial countries, in learning the meaning and content of the great economic and social achievements in the Soviet Union.

We have not wished to lose this **extremely valuable contact**, as did the leaders of the British T.U.C. When we speak of the differences between, on the one hand, the anarchic, convulsive, irregular and inhuman character of the workings of the capitalist system, and on the other hand, of the method of ordered, balanced organisation of socialist production, a method which ensures the satisfaction of the constantly rising material and cultural requirements of men, women and children in Soviet society, we are speaking of facts that have been verified.

This obvious superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist system has become even greater during the period from the 2nd World Trade Union Congress to the 3rd World Trade Union Congress.

Let us look at the table of the development of industrial production in the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France, from 1929 (1929 = 100) to the first quarter of 1953 :

Country	1929	1939	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953 1st qtr.
U.S.S.R.	100	552	463	571	721	870	1082	1260	1430	1515
U.S.A.	100	99	155	170	175	160	182	200	199	215
G. Britain	100	123	112	121	135	144	157	160	157	166
France	100	80	63	74	85	92	92	104	109	108

It emerges clearly from this table that only war, or war preparations, made possible increases of industrial production in the capitalist countries. These increases were limited and temporary. If this development of production is examined according to the branches of industry, it can be seen that the increase has taken place only in direct or indirect military production. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is powerfully, regularly and methodically increasing its production in all sections of industry.

Increased production in the Soviet Union is devoted to raising the living standards of the whole of the population.

The increase in the volume of goods placed at the disposal of the people has, in particular, permitted a series of price reductions in the Soviet Union, in contrast with the situation in the capitalist countries, where the search for maximum profits results in price increases, thus making worse the material situation of the mass of the people. When price reductions take place in these countries they are the result of large-scale speculative manipulations. They are connected with the large raw materials markets. They last for only a short time. And the upwards race of wholesale and retail prices inevitably starts again.

On the one side then, the consumers' interests are looked after through organised price reductions. On the other side there is the increase of capitalist exploitation, the workers are robbed, both as producers and as consumers.

The table showing respectively the decreases and rises in the prices of bread, meat, butter, milk and sugar in the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France, from 1947 to 1952, conclusively proves this assertion:

	U.S.S.R.	U.S.A.	Gt. Britain	France
	% minus	% plus	% plus	% plus
Bread	.. 61	28	90	108
Meat	.. 58	26	35	88
Butter	.. 63	4	125	92
Milk	.. 28	18	30	74
Sugar	.. 51	6	133	276

Since 1952 the contrast has become even greater. The price reductions in April 1953 in the Soviet Union brought the percentage reduction from 1947 to 1953 to 65 per cent. for bread, 66 per cent. for meat, 67 per cent. for butter, and 56 per cent. for sugar. The prices of foodstuffs have slightly risen in France and the United States, and by about 10 per cent. in Great Britain.

General and important price reductions also took place last September in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and in the German Democratic Republic.

The composition of the State budgets offers another telling point of comparison between the two systems:

	Soviet Union	United States
Military expenditure ..	20.8%	87% (including the service of the debt and pensions for the last war).
Social expenditure ..	26.3%	3.7%
Development of the economy ..	43.9%	2 %
Other expenditure ..	9.0%	7 %

The State budget of the Soviet Union shows a surplus; while that of the United States, as in almost all cases in the capitalist countries, is in deficit.

Since the 2nd World Trade Union Congress, a tremendous historically significant event has taken place. In October 1949, just over four years ago, the Chinese people, having defeated their Kuomintang oppressors and the foreign allies of the Kuomintang, set up the Chinese People's Republic.

This event has meant a considerable strengthening of the progressive and peace-loving forces of the whole world. It has permitted a great growth in the trade union organisations of China. Starting in 1949 with under 3 million members, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions now organises more than 10 million members.

*** The considerable successes won in the building of the new life in People's China must be considered as one of the fundamental aspects of international political, economic and cultural life in recent years.**

In the main industries, production increased from 2 to 10 times between 1949 and 1952, and in the same period, wages have increased by between 60 and 120 per cent. Agrarian reform has given land to 420 million peasants. There are more than 50 million pupils in the primary schools. 3.9 million in the secondary schools, and 202,000 students in the universities. The passing of the law on Labour Insurance in 1951 solved the terrible problems that formerly confronted the workers—illness, accidents, disablement. Unemployment has been done away with.

Our brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union, People's China and the People's Democracies have added these great successes and these great achievements to the list of victories won by the workers throughout the world against capitalist and colonialist oppression.

The great economic and cultural development in these countries, an achievement of the workers themselves, consolidates the mighty invincible forces of the supporters of peace throughout the world.

This exemplary economic and cultural progress in the camp of Socialism terrifies Mr. Foster Dulles. A few days ago he was the guest of honour at the Annual Congress of the A.F.L. Once again he urged the trade union leaders of the A.F.L. to join the anti-Soviet, anti-democratic crusade.

This is a very strange way for a Foreign Minister to prepare for international negotiations. We know he is the best specialist in matters of aggression. Events in Korea in 1950 proved that.

But if Foster Dulles takes so much trouble and so many pains in order to intrigue against peace, does this not prove to the workers and to the peoples that his anti-Soviet rage comes from the fact that the Soviet people have disappointed him and exposed his lies, by continuing speedily, calmly, vigilantly and confidently along the shining road of creative work, towards the success of this superior form of human society?

The W.F.T.U., on behalf of the workers of the whole world, warmly welcomes the great successes already achieved by the workers of the countries of the camp of Socialism and true democracy.

V.—A NEW ASPECT OF THE STRUGGLES OF THE WORKERS ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL—THE DEFENCE OF SOCIAL SECURITY

One of the most important measures taken by the W.F.T.U. in defence of the economic and social demands of the workers was the organisation of the International Conference for the Defence, Improvement and Extension of Social Insurance and Social Security. It was held from March 2—6, 1953, with 269 delegates from 59 countries present.

The general worsening of living conditions, and the keeping of millions of human beings at an extremely low standard of living, make more necessary than ever the introduction of comprehensive systems of Social Security in all countries, and led the Executive Bureau of the W.F.T.U. to press forward with the organisation of this Conference.

For hundreds of millions of human beings, life means poverty, hunger and insecurity.

To understand the reasons for the struggle of the exploited peoples against the poverty in which they are kept by their exploiters, what more eloquent plea could we find than the pictures of real life in many countries that were given to the International Conference on Social Security?

Out of the 24 countries of Africa for which information exists, 5 countries have an average of one doctor for more than 50,000 inhabitants, 12 countries have one doctor for between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, 4 countries have one doctor for between 5,000 and 10,000 inhabitants, 3 countries have one doctor for between 2,000 and 5,000 inhabitants. The information of the U.N. services from which these figures are drawn does not make clear that very often these doctors are at the disposal only of the inhabitants of European origin.

There are even more typical examples.

In the Gold Coast, in Africa, there are 27 doctors for 5 million inhabitants, that is one doctor for 181,185 people.

In the part of Indo-China under French control the proportion is one doctor for 70,500 people. In Malaya the proportion is one doctor for 60,000 people. In Indonesia the average is one doctor for 60,000 people. In some regions of this country there is one doctor for over 400,000 inhabitants.

In Morocco there is one doctor and 75 policemen for every 45,000 of the population.

In Ceylon there is one nurse and one midwife for every 25,000 people, one chemist for every 9,400 and two hospital beds per 1,000 people.

The workers, and the overwhelming majority of the population of the colonial, semi-colonial and under-developed countries are an easy prey to illness. They are exploited, kept down and humiliated by the colonialists and feudalists.

The monopoly capitalists draw enormous profits from their colonial enterprises. The plundering of the peoples of these countries ranges from the profit made every day from their work, to bitter opposition to essential social services.

We must rally the forces of the international trade union movement with greater energy and persistency to condemn these crimes against the elementary rights of all human beings. The campaign of the W.F.T.U. for help and solidarity for the struggles of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples must be extended to all aspects of this struggle, including the struggle for Social Security.

For this reason we can usefully analyse the work of the International Conference on Social Security from the point of view of the permanent objectives of the W.F.T.U., its aims and its day-to-day activities.

Trade Unions of all points of view and all affiliations, doctors, specialists on social questions, government social security workers, representatives of organisations of pensioners, unemployed, women, disabled persons and others, were associated with the preparatory work and took part in the Conference itself.

The Conference represented an international exchange of views of an entirely new breadth and character. Deliberately avoiding exchanges of opinion on juridical questions limited to specialist circles, which had been the characteristic of international meetings in this sphere until then, the Conference in Vienna directed its work above all towards the problems of action for social security.

*** We exposed the threats hanging over the social gains of the workers in the capitalist countries, and the dire poverty of hundreds of millions of men and women in the colonial and under-developed countries, to whom any right to social security is refused.**

The remarkable progress made by social security, administered by trade unions, in the Soviet Union, People's China, the People's Democracies and the German Democratic Republic, stimulate the action of the trade unions and the workers in the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The International Conference summed up the experiences of the workers, and all people who stand for progress, in the capitalist countries, in their fight for improved social security.

It was of outstanding importance for the workers and trade union organisations of the under-developed countries and colonial territories, who played an active part in the preparation and holding of the Conference, and in implementing its decisions. From it they drew experience and new strength to secure the establishment of social security wherever it does not exist, that is—in the majority of these countries or territories.

Since the Conference, fresh steps have been taken which show the profound effects it had. Permanent action committees have been set up, for example, in Mexico, Jamaica, and Ceylon. National conferences have been held in Tunisia, Cyprus, Brazil, and Trinidad. Others are in process of preparation, in Bolivia and India.

The programme of action for social security that was unanimously adopted is now being used by trade union organisations, affiliated and un-affiliated to the W.F.T.U. Trade union meetings and congresses are taking inspiration from it to formulate the programme of demands of the workers. Mass movements and strikes have taken place to achieve the aims contained in the programme of the Conference.

We must not stop half way.

We have specified the demands of the workers and defined social security as "a fundamental social right, guaranteed by law to all human beings who work for their living, to their families, and to those who are temporarily or permanently unable to work."

The decision to organise in 1954 three continental conferences, in Asia, Latin America and Africa, has already been favourably welcomed by a number of trade union congresses and national and local conferences on social security. Trade Unions must take an active part in organising these conferences. They

will guarantee their success if they follow the concrete lead for unity of the International Conference in Vienna.

The W.F.T.U. will fulfil its pledges to the representatives of tens of millions of workers who came together on its initiative. It will give its complete support to the International Sponsoring Committee which the Conference decided to set up.

This Sponsoring Committee, as its name indicates, should first and foremost be a broad Action Committee, carrying forward the action already begun.

VI.—THE W.F.T.U. AND U.N.O.

The W.F.T.U. has taken part in nearly 120 meetings of the various bodies of the United Nations and the Specialised Agencies. The essential aim of the W.F.T.U. representatives has been to defend the immediate economic interests of the workers, to contribute to economic and social progress, and to defend peace, national sovereignty and democratic rights.

Despite the attacks in the past four years on the W.F.T.U. and on its consultative status within U.N.O., we find today—and the enemies of the W.F.T.U. within the United Nations also see this—that its contributions and proposals are attracting great attention and much support. The reactionary elements within the Economic and Social Council have not been able to stifle the voice of the W.F.T.U.

Its authority in the U.N. is due to the fact that with more than 80 million members, the W.F.T.U. is the most representative trade union organisation. Its authority arises from its insistence in speaking in the name of all workers without any national, racial or political discrimination and whether or not they are members of the W.F.T.U.

Since February 1947, we have carried on in U.N.O. a stubborn fight on the question of trade union rights. Within the Economic and Social Council and before the General Assembly of the United Nations, we have exposed the most flagrant cases of violation of trade union rights in more than 30 countries. We are asking again that the Economic and Social Council should abandon the procedure of examination which it now follows in the field of trade union rights. It must adopt an attitude more in line with the immediate needs and rights of the workers, and based on respect of the principles contained in the U.N. Charter.

The W.F.T.U. has shown in U.N.O. and elsewhere that the I.L.O. in Geneva, which is now responsible for dealing with reports on violations of trade union rights, has not taken effective action to defend trade union rights. On the contrary, it has justified

by fallacious legal arguments the anti-working class and anti-democratic action of which the employers and capitalist governments are guilty. The findings of the I.L.O. are an encouragement to reaction. Within the I.L.O., the W.F.T.U. is subject to a scandalous discriminatory policy against itself and its affiliated National Centres.

As long as the I.L.O. maintains its present anti-democratic methods, it will continue to meet with indifference on the part of the workers, and will continue to act more in line with reaction than with social progress.

We must tirelessly and relentlessly defend trade union rights in the U.N. The national Trade Union Centres should in this connection give more assistance to the W.F.T.U., so as to co-ordinate all our national and international activities in support of the rights of the workers.

Since the 10th session of the Economic and Social Council, in February 1950 in New York, the W.F.T.U. has unceasingly carried out vigorous activity in the U.N. against racial discrimination. It was the W.F.T.U. which proposed that the Council include in its agenda the question of "discriminatory measures of an economic and social nature practised against workers for reasons of race and colour".

Our reports, speeches and proposals for decisions were made concrete by the large number of cases of racial discrimination in the capitalist and colonial countries which we condemned. We are fighting against racial discrimination in the field of wages, employment, housing, social legislation, trade union rights and forced labour. The contributions of the W.F.T.U. have prevented this question from being hushed up at the U.N.

The clarity of the detailed accusation submitted by the W.F.T.U. has been one of the obstacles to the attempts of the colonial powers within the Council to abolish the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The activities of this working body of U.N.O. were practically paralysed in 1950 and 1951. The W.F.T.U. has directly approached the Secretariat of the United Nations in order that this Sub-Commission be restored with all its powers. The fight against racial and social discrimination cannot be reconciled with a policy of silence.

A decision along these lines was taken at the end of 1951 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since then the W.F.T.U. delegations, both in the Sub-Commission and in the Economic and Social Council, itself, have succeeded in giving a more positive and realistic character to the work they perform.

At the 12th Session of the Economic and Social Council in Santiago, Chile, in February 1951, the W.F.T.U. submitted to the government representatives proof of the decline in the living standards of the workers in the capitalist and colonial countries as a result of the all-out militarisation of the economy. In the conclusion to its report the W.F.T.U. proposed a 33 per cent. cut in military expenditure and the use of the sums thus released

for work in the general interest, for economic and social development and for raising the living standards of the people.

Only the governments of the Soviet Union and Poland gave their support to the proposals of the W.F.T.U. The U.S. Government opposed them with a bitterness which bears witness to its interest in increasing the armament burden for countries which, thereby, are inevitably becoming debtors to the American monopolists.

But the value and the political cohesion of the W.F.T.U. proposals were confirmed, if it is borne in mind that the Economic and Social Council at its 16th Session in July 1953 decided to include in its agenda the question of rearmament and its repercussions on workers' employment.

It would have been desirable if the majority of governments within the Council had not waited two years, a period marked by a wide-spread deterioration in the living conditions of the workers in many countries, to deal with this vital question. It would have been preferable for the Council to have accepted the proposals of the W.F.T.U. earlier. Such a change is the result of the world-wide campaign of the peoples for peace and also a consequence of the many struggles of the workers who, faced with the deterioration in their living conditions, have condemned the dire effects of the policy of excessive armament.

If the split had not been brought about in the international trade union movement, it is certain that its authority in U.N.O. and the results of its contributions would be more substantial today.

*** The action of the W.F.T.U. within the Economic and Social Council does not please the reactionary forces who are for ever plotting to divert the U.N. from its functions.**

This is the reason that the U.S. Government and some of its satellites have wanted to prevent the W.F.T.U. from exercising its rights within the United Nations. They wanted to pursue the policy of gagging, as though it were possible for anyone to silence the powerful voice of the workers of the world.

The reactionary governments wanted to limit the rights of non-governmental organisations, especially of the W.F.T.U., to proposing the inclusion of set questions in the agenda of the meetings of the Economic and Social Council and to submitting reports and documents to the Council.

This attack was not followed by the effect anticipated by its authors. The steps taken by the W.F.T.U. broke through the procedural barriers. On social security for example, the Economic and Social Council not only decided to hear the W.F.T.U. but it also asked it for documents and reports supporting its proposals.

Thus, three special documents, with particular reference to the work of the International Social Security Conference, were submitted by the W.F.T.U. from April to June 1953, at the request of the U.N. Secretariat.

The second threat to the rights of the W.F.T.U. in U.N.O.

comes from Governments, always the same Governments, who, contrary to their pledges, refuse W.F.T.U. delegates entry to their country where U.N. meetings are being held. The United States Government has used such methods which are obviously disloyal to the United Nations.

The Secretariat of the United Nations, together with almost all the member States of the Council, considers unacceptable the attitude of the United States Government which is contrary to the international agreements it has signed.

A reactionary attack on the rights of the W.F.T.U. and the workers it represents, is identical with direct interference by a State against the normal functioning of U.N.O. and its bodies.

In the nature of things the defence of the rights of the W.F.T.U. at U.N.O. is the defence of the United Nations Charter and U.N.O. itself. It is gratifying to note that the Secretariat of U.N.O. now realises this.

The attempts to divert U.N.O. from the functions for which it was founded are the work of governments who want to impart a reactionary character to the march of history.

The revisionists of the United Nations Charter are the wreckers of international co-operation and the peaceful co-existence of States.

The U.N. Charter does not need to be revised but to be respected and applied.

*** The U.N. Charter needs to be defended by the peoples. But U.N.O. must defend itself by putting an end to the causes of its weaknesses and of its defects in functioning. It must be based on the desires of the peoples, and not neglect, as has been the tendency, the great force of the organised workers.**

The absence of the representatives of the government of the Chinese People's Republic within U.N.O. is an intolerable moral slight to the Chinese people. It is especially a political and functional blow aimed at the United Nations by those who keep the puppet delegates of the Kuomintang in the place which rightfully belongs to the Chinese people, four years after the creation of the Chinese People's Republic.

The W.F.T.U. demands, together with all supporters of peace throughout the world, that a rapid end be put to this international scandal.

VII.—THE NEED TO DEFEND, CONSOLIDATE AND EXTEND TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND TO ENSURE DEMOCRACY THROUGHOUT THE TRADE UNIONS

The capitalist governments, in face of the increased strength of the workers' movements, are to a growing extent abandoning even the most formal elements of bourgeois democracy. They are increasingly having recourse to more reactionary and anti-democratic methods than in the past. They use fascist-type measures against the workers. Anti-trade union and anti-democratic laws are passed.

The attacks on trade union rights are part of the general policy of reaction.

The number of trade unionists in the world is growing continually in spite of these anti-democratic, anti-working class obstructions.

What is noteworthy is that the trade unions are exerting an increasingly important influence on the great mass of the workers, and in national life. They have an increasingly significant social role. They constitute a real pole of attraction and unity for the mass of the workers.

The more the workers take part in trade union activity in the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries, and the more they guide the activity of their unions in a progressive direction, the more they raise the level of their collective and mass action.

The employers and governments are worried by this. They want to seize the unions for their own benefit, to make use of them in their policy and to lead them astray.

Where they cannot manage this, they try to destroy the unions which resist them, or to set arbitrary limits on their rights and impede their functioning.

We have not attached enough importance to a whole series of attacks on trade union rights including those on the W.F.T.U., which have taken place in many countries. Obstructions to the trade unions still exist. The repeated violations of trade union rights must not be examined in isolation when they appear in France, Italy, Cuba, Venezuela, Morocco, Tunisia, Japan, Greece, etc.

The repression of trade unions and democracy in many countries is only a particular expression of the export of American government and employers' methods against the workers. The Taft-Hartley Act is a regulation to be exported from Washington like dollars and like the lists of prohibited products in international trade, as it suits the pleasure and the interests of the American monopolies.

This repression has not had the effect of blunting the militancy of the workers. In periods of sharpening class struggle the workers always devise new methods of struggle. They give birth, by new experiences, to new forces for the proletariat.

Thus in many countries where attacks on trade union rights

are going on and where active workers are imprisoned, we need to examine the essential lessons to be drawn. This is the case with the methods employed by the French C.G.T., during the last year, to defend its main leaders charged by the French Government,

Throughout this action there was a fruitful combination of mass action and legal approaches. The reactionary plot against the French working class crumpled under this double pressure, as a result of the correct defence activity which was conducted at both these levels and which was turned into serious offensive action against reactionary and pro-fascist intrigues.

This method needs to be spread. We recommend it wherever it is necessary.

The international trade union movement must pay greater attention to the defence of trade union rights in colonial countries.

The present conferences of workers in French Central Africa show that the imperialists do not lightly abandon their attacks against the democratic rights of the workers, particularly when they are being forced to retreat under mass pressure.

In November 1951, the General Council of the W.F.T.U. protested against the absence of a Labour Code for the French Overseas territories.

This decision was of further help, admittedly in principle, to the workers of French Central Africa in support of a democratic Labour Code aimed at abolishing forced labour and speeding up the application of social legislation on behalf of the workers of these countries. It was mainly a matter of guaranteeing the right to strike, and to meet, and the regular functioning of trade union organisations.

Since 1945, this Labour Code had been merely a draft. The resolution of the General Council said:

"The General Council of the W.F.T.U. appeals to all African trade union organisations to support and continue to put forward this major demand."

This is precisely what our African brothers did. From October 6—8, 1952, they organised an African Inter-Trade Union Conference on a unity basis.

After a great day of demands on October 25, a 24-hour strike took place on November 3, 1952, reaching large proportions in the territories of Western and Central French Africa. The French Parliament, on November 23, passed a Labour Code for the French Overseas Territories which was a beginning in satisfying the essential demands put forward by the African workers.

What did we say to our African brothers at the session of the W.F.T.U. Executive Committee in February 1953?

This Code has not made the colonial system disappear. It is a new bourgeois law which on paper allows certain new advantages to the African workers. The sabotage of the application of this law by the imperialists is to be foreseen. For this

reason the African trade union organisations must prepare to struggle for its enforcement and the control of its enforcement.

What is happening at present in these territories?

Systematic repression launched by the imperialist administration is hitting scores of trade union militants in the Sudan, and the Niger. The imperialists want the courts to sentence active trade unionists and thus prevent them from legally exercising their trade union rights.

The imperialists—employers and administration—want to prevent the immediate enforcement of the full Labour Code. They want to smash the unity of the workers and create favourable conditions for the revision of the Labour Code.

The Third World Trade Union Congress will declare itself at one with the fight of our brothers in French Central Africa.

But what additional lessons must we draw from these facts?

Firstly, under no circumstances and irrespective of the further legislation which the working class wrests from the imperialists, must our international trade union movement in any way lessen its categorical condemnation of, and its firm struggle against, the colonial system.

The existence of the bourgeois laws adopted in the metropolitan countries which are known to be the object of systematic sabotage on the part of the imperialists living in the colonial territories, leads the metropolitan governments and the colonial administration to violate their own legislation.

Consequently, the fight of the workers must be developed both against colonial exploitation in all its forms and against the very principle, and for the enforcement and respect of social legislation gained during previous struggles.

Thus the defence of trade union rights will once again closely merge with the fight for the democratic rights of the peoples.

We have spoken about the large number of strikes which have taken place within the last few years in spite of repression.

Development of strikes for immediate and vital demands is a means through which the workers demonstrate their ability to fight effectively in defence of their trade union rights.

The right to strike must be fiercely defended but the strike is not the only means of action. To obtain the recognition of trade union rights in labour agreements, the election of workers' delegates at the place of work and the right to display trade union notices in the factories are also other means of defending trade union rights. The trade union struggle by consistently maintaining a high degree of indispensable militancy among the masses protects the workers' trade union rights and their unions against the attacks of all their enemies.

We have seen how by maintaining this militancy it was possible for the workers in the big Ford factory in Detroit in the U.S.A. to resume the leadership of their union and to drive back the reactionary trade union leadership which had been un-

democratically set up by Walter Reuther with the connivance of the employer.

This is also a correct way to defend trade union rights because it safeguards the democratic functioning of the trade union.

Therefore, we need to stimulate, develop and create this militancy everywhere. This is the main task of our organisation, the W.F.T.U., the T.U.I.'s, National Centres, national unions and local unions.

*** The organisation of a vast international campaign against encroachments on trade union rights, a real co-ordinated mass movement on an international level, combined with the action of the W.F.T.U. within the U.N.O. on this very question becomes an act of solidarity and necessary mutual aid and a desirable expression of our determination to see an end to the violation of trade union and democratic rights.**

Has our international trade union movement a reserve of forces capable of widening and improving the organisation of international solidarity?

Have we used all the methods of action which are represented by the combination of real, material and moral forces to be found within and around the W.F.T.U.? Certainly not.

Everyone here, every trade union organisation represented at this Congress, must ask themselves the following questions:

(1) Am I sufficiently and effectively helping to raise the level of international solidarity, in view of the present conditions of the fight of the international working class in defence of its trade union organisations?

(2) Am I giving enough help to the work of the W.F.T.U., in order to make it into the militant and active trade union organisation required by present circumstances?

To reply objectively to these two questions is to prepare the conditions for a substantial development in our future activities. The trade unions must pay sufficient attention to the previous decision of the W.F.T.U. on these vital and decisive issues for the future of our international working class movement.

We have had a tendency to deal with the various cases of violation of trade union rights, encroachment on democratic rights and on national sovereignty in too superficial a manner. This has led us sometimes to take bureaucratic and purely rhetorical decisions. In other instances our brothers have only seen the national aspect of the problem which is, however, more far-reaching.

In any event, can we allow the reactionary attacks on our working class movement in any country to take us unawares?

We must not, and cannot, allow this. To know how to hit back in every case will result in the future in far-reaching and new successes over the enemies of the working class and the opponents of our international trade union movement.

*** To do this we must first of all eliminate the tendency to take only the easy or most convenient path. This hankering**

after the easy way out can be found in the method employed to express our protests and our demands.

Even when these protests are made in time, they are too often expressed in too general terms. The use of stereotyped phrases often seems to satisfy active workers.

Let us therefore avoid speaking about the defence of trade union rights in general. Do not let us be satisfied with taking a stand in favour of democratic rights by expressing generalities on these rights. It is not enough to deal with the problems of action which the safeguarding of national sovereignty raises by means of general slogans on this matter.

In every case we must constantly refer to the facts. This is the best way to eliminate the use of these phrases which can be applied to anything and be used about anything. By referring to the facts, by analysing them with intelligence and by stating them with objectivity, we can more easily reach clearer conclusions and point out the correct perspectives on the basis of which we can then work out our line of conduct and action.

The role and methods of action of the trade unions are to a large extent to explain to the workers what the bourgeoisie does not want them to know and to make clear to them what the bourgeoisie wants to make complicated and obscure.

It is a living form of democracy which must prevail in all trade unions as a means of vigorous self-defence against the violation of trade union and democratic rights.

Whenever we succeed in giving the workers the opportunity to fully understand by themselves the events around them, they are always better able to influence these events to their advantage. This is clear proof of our unshakable confidence in the working class.

This makes it an obligation, which in the present period has become a necessity for the trade union leaders, to be really capable of carrying out this work of analysis, and these explanatory tasks, and to take the initiative and lead the mass actions which must ceaselessly be the method of action sought to achieve our present and subsequent tasks.

VIII.—THE IMPORTANCE OF WELL-DIRECTED TRADE UNION WORK ON THE QUESTION OF WAGES AND AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

The tasks of the trade unions on the question of wages arise naturally from the powers given by the workers to their unions. When they set up a trade union or join it, if it exists already, the

workers do not do this, generally speaking, for ideological reasons. They come together in trade unions first and foremost to defend their economic and social interests, to improve their living conditions, and to struggle against social injustice and exploitation by the employers.

The role of the trade union is to struggle for the economic and social demands of its members and of the whole of the workers whom it must unceasingly represent, by constantly remaining in direct contact with them.

The position of the trade unions on the question of wages must be an active militant one. In this way the workers can be rallied in order to struggle for the winning of ever higher real wages.

Trade union activity should be relentless against discrimination or discrimination between men and women workers, or between young and adult workers.

Trade unions must not be satisfied with a token stand on the formula "equal pay for equal work." In some countries where this principle has been embodied in law or in labour contracts, discrimination is continuing against women workers and young workers.

It is well known that in France, for example, women workers in industry and trade receive wages on an average 8 per cent. below those of men. This wage gap is 20 per cent. in Finland, 30 per cent. in Italy, 35 per cent. in Great Britain, 30-40 per cent. in Sweden, and 40 per cent. in Western Germany and Switzerland. When the W.F.T.U. delegation visited Japan in 1947 we noted discriminatory rates of over 60 per cent. according to age and sex.

The trade unions must show themselves more active in exposing and above all in eliminating, wage discrimination.

In the present period, the successive large increases in prices and the cost of living are the direct consequence of the capitalist policy of seeking maximum profits in all sections of production and trade, and of militarisation of the economy.

Even if, thanks to the action of the peoples in support of peace, continuous and real relaxation of international tension is coming about, it must be admitted that the employers, businessmen of the big bourgeoisie and the big landowners will seek to preserve in an economy which has become eventually less militarised, the large profits they have made these last few years. They will seek means of increasing these profits, since their regime and their system are based on the law of maximum profits.

The trade union organisations and the workers will in these conditions adopt the best tactics of struggle for the improvement of wages.

In all circumstances the demand for increased wages should be permanently included in the trade unions' programme of action.

This programme must not present the demand as an exhibition piece. The programme of the trade union is a programme of action. It points out the methods of action to use in order to

obtain the increase demanded. The studying of means of action, and the organisation and preparation of these means by a trade union, are as important as the working out and the raising of the demand.

The trade union calls the workers to mass action while exposing the stupid policy of wage-freezing and the false theory of equality of sacrifice, and the equally unacceptable theory of the wage and price spiral.

The W.F.T.U. categorically rejects these deceptive, demagogical theories which conceal the wish to capitulate in the face of the exploiters of the mass of the workers. Their aim is the blunting of the fighting spirit of the trade unions and the preventing of united action by the workers.

The wages struggle is inevitable and permanent. Talk of "equality of sacrifice" is illusory under a regime which is based on social inequality and discrimination in social rights, in a regime in which the ruling class, greedy for profits and social privileges, is in power through its open or concealed direct representatives.

The trade union organisation which struggles boldly for increased wages will strengthen the workers' struggle by showing the effects on consumer prices of the increased taxation imposed for the purpose of financing enormous military expenditure. The trade unions will show that the considerable profits made to the detriment of the majority of the consumers by the monopolist trusts are one of the causes of the high cost of living and unbearable burden of taxes.

It is obvious that the struggle of the trade unions for increased wages cannot be isolated from an active stand by these trade unions on the problems of increased prices and the cost of living.

*** In the present period the struggle for increased wages, for a real reduction of prices, and the lowering of taxes in the countries where inflation is becoming most apparent, is a very popular form of struggle against capitalist super-exploitation, and against the militarisation of the economy and its consequences.**

The mistake that the trade unions must not make is to neglect one of these forms of action while undertaking the other.

Increased prices and a higher cost living are in fact affecting the living conditions of other sections of the population than the wage earners. It is important that the struggle for raising the level of wages should be given a popular character. It should interest the majority of the population in the struggles for demands, in the inevitable strikes of the wage-earning workers.

*** It is important then, to know how to prepare these strikes. They cannot be improvised. In this preparation, it is essential to win wide sympathy and support from the whole of the population for the workers and their demands. This is indispensable above all among rural populations.**

In this way a double aim can be achieved:

- (1) Success in the struggle for the demands of the workers;
- (2) The widening of mass public opposition to the employers' and governments' policy of social regression.

Can it be said that all the trade union organisations, whether or not affiliated to the W.F.T.U., are taking into consideration these tactical questions for the preparation and carrying out of movements for demands?

It is within the powers of the W.F.T.U. to recommend the study of the correct method to prepare struggles for demands.

Similar tactics should be used in the activity of the trade unions against increased unemployment, and in defence of the unemployed.

*** The throwing of workers out of work, completely or partially, is a form of lowering wages by decreasing the amount of wages distributed.**

Unemployment is a sign of the lowering of the average level of living conditions of the people, and of the increase of under-consumption by the workers.

Here too, the trade unions must not act in isolation. They must not isolate the struggle for the demands of the unemployed, the struggles of the workers still at work, or discourage interest by other sections of the population in the movement of the unemployed workers.

Complete or partial unemployment in the enterprises has considerably grown in recent years. In the majority of capitalist countries unemployment affects particularly the textile, clothing, footwear, food, furniture and building industries.

The dismissal of workers, the closing down of factories, the reduction of working hours below the normal level—these take place above all in processing industries which produce goods for non-military use and mass consumer goods.

In the capitalist world tens of millions are out of work, deprived of the means of existence, and living in poverty. Millions of workers still employed are living in dread of meeting a similar fate.

The majority of them do not belong, or no longer belong, to a trade union organisation. Others are members of trade unions affiliated to the W.F.T.U., and still others are members of trade unions affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U., the leaders of which bear a heavy responsibility for this state of poverty, through the support they have given to the Marshall policy of their governments.

The existence of unemployment is favourable to a policy of social regression by the governments which engineer the increase of this threat so as to impose a frequent reduction in the real wages of the workers remaining employed, or to prevent wage increases.

The history of the international working class movement teaches us that, in order to attain their objectives, the fascist

groupings can use a demagogical language towards the unemployed so as to use them as a mass to be manoeuvred between the organisation of the workers and the democratic forces.

Can it be said that the leading bodies of the W.F.T.U., the administrative committees of the Trade Departments, all the leaderships of the affiliated trade union organisations, and the supporters of the W.F.T.U. in other trade unions, have always given the necessary importance to the various aspects of the problem of wages and unemployment during recent years?

We cannot reply completely in the affirmative.

We are convinced that the trade unions must go farther ahead in extending the struggles for increased wages. The actions will be the better for not having a sporadic character, but a permanent, regular form. They can permit wide mass unity in many countries where the level of mass action still needs to be raised.

The methods of organising this mass action will depend for the questions of detail on the situation obtaining in each country. But they will take shape according to a general guiding policy valid for all the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries.

*** This line of action constitutes the winning of an ever larger wage as the price of the labour power of the wage earner.**

To understand the meaning of this line of action, is to recognise that the question of the defence of wages is not a subordinate or momentary function of the trade unions.

Qualities and faults in trade union work do not arise from the fact that trade union leadership has given too much importance to the question of wages in comparison with other questions.

Furthermore, these qualities or faults in trade union activity are the consequence of the good or bad way in which the trade union leadership tackles the question of wages, methods of action—whether or not adequate—which are adopted in this connection, and of the correct or false policy according to which the struggle of the workers is organised.

A trade union organisation has therefore everything to gain by appearing before the working people as an organisation which is active and militant for the purpose of the raising of the level of their wages. It has everything to gain from uniting the masses in the wages struggle against the reactionary governments and the exploiting employers.

Frequently inadequate preparations of this activity, and a lack of understanding on the part of the trade union leadership of the immediate needs of the whole of the workers, harm the effectiveness of their own work. They do not make success easier.

In Pakistan, for example, in the textile industry and in transport our brothers did not undertake actions, including strikes, for any but the lowest paid categories of workers. These are the most numerous; they are the mass of the people. But this method led to the breaking of the front of struggle within the factories

and the workshops. All the workers did not feel they had direct interest in the action undertaken by the trade union.

We could give other examples.

These examples prove that in a large number of circumstances the way to avoid two reefs must be known.

- (1) The narrowing of the front of struggle by failure to maintain the interest of, and diverting action undertaken by, groups of workers for whom no demand is being put forward.
- (2) Levelling out of demands, and failing to recognise normal rules of payment according to skill, also leads in fact to breaking the united front of struggle.

* In many countries, where relatively young trade union organisations are pursuing their activity, they must, to a greater extent, combine their activity for wage increases with action to obtain real collective labour agreements. In countries where the guaranteed minimum wage has not still legally been obtained, the trade unions must be particularly active in approaching the public authorities despite the employers to win this just demand.

Far from harming action for demands, struggle along these lines can be consolidated, can be made more permanent and popular, as is proved by the activities of the Italian C.G.I.L. and the French C.G.T. in this connection.

Let us stress again that the struggles for better wages or in connection with unemployment must not be organised apart from the masses. At the beginning of each movement for demands, for wages, for full employment, for the vital needs of the unemployed, trade union action must develop with the organised support of the whole of the working class, the peasantry, the intellectuals, and also the progressive elements of the nation.

Too many strikes for wages, too many struggles for the rights of the unemployed have taken place in many countries without this essential linking up. Frequently this organisational weakness is the basic cause of the incomplete success, or the lack of any real success, of the trade unions.

Too often the absence of such an understanding of better conditions of struggle plays into the hands of the governments and the employers.

We must also know how, in given cases, to make strikes and other mass demonstrations of the workers known internationally as they need to be.

In many cases this method has won results from the governments and the employers, by compelling them to abandon positions that they thought solid.

The international solidarity expressed by the W.F.T.U., and protected under the banner of the W.F.T.U., is always an important contribution to the struggle of the workers; it never hinders it.

Future developments in the political and economic situation will more and more raise the problems of methods of action. At the present time already it seems that some trade union organisations are finding themselves at a loss in face of the growing number of unemployed in their branch of industry, and they are hesitating on the methods to be used.

The trade unions can no longer confine themselves to the traditional programmes of action which date from the beginning of trade union activity in capitalist society.

The trade unions enrich their programmes by the results of experience. The trade unions must make efforts to complete their programmes and to give their activity an even more solid basis.

How should they do this? Let us look further at this question of unemployment.

Many trade unions see trade union action in relation to unemployment solely from the angle of demanding allowances partially compensating for lost wages.

The demand for these allowances is correct. Trade union activity, however, should not be limited to this. This would be narrowing the rôle of the trade union and its field of activity. This would reduce the possible content of the front of struggle merely to the unemployed concerned directly with the demand and fighting for it in isolation.

In the present period of social regression and economic chaos—the period of contradiction when the ruling classes find it no longer possible to direct and organise properly the economic life of their countries, it is essential for every trade union organisation to be able to make public programmes which aim at keeping running industrial and agricultural enterprises, which are being threatened with liquidation, and which also aim at preserving the national economy from ruin and collapse.

The working class and its trade unions will take the lead and will inspire the mass movements for the defence and extension of national industry, and in many countries for the achievement of popular programmes of agrarian reform, for the distribution of land and opportunity to work to millions of unemployed agricultural workers.

*** These new activities, by enriching the ability of the trade union organisations to work, will place them in a popular social position, nationally unassailable, and superior to that of the decadent ruling class.**

These programmes of work cannot aim at patching up either capitalist economy or colonial economy.

They must be drawn up in such a way that the possibility of distributing work to the greatest number of workers can be clearly seen in relation to the vital economic needs of the population—the working class, peasantry, the intellectuals, the middle classes.

In this way the rift which separates the interests of the reactionary ruling classes from the interests of the majority of the people will be made even deeper.

In this way, in this activity, and in the struggle to implement these programmes of work, the level of these struggles will rise, if they are based on a correct policy.

Many national trade union organisations, whether or not affiliated to the W.F.T.U., have not arrived at this stage in the direction or the organisation of their activity.

This Congress should urge them to do so.

The leadership of the Trade Unions Internationals (Trade Departments of the W.F.T.U.) and the trade unions which participate in their activities, must understand what a tremendous field of activity they have before them in this connection.

IX.—THE FIGHT FOR PEACE, THE DECISIVE TASK FOR ALL TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS

The mass of the workers, by developing their action both in the economic field for immediate demands and in the field of opposition to war measures (super-rearmament, militarisation, etc.) are making more difficult the application of the aggressive plans. The achievement of these plans has been considerably impeded.

Although a well-organised struggle of an economic character can produce important effects in slowing down the carrying out of the aggressive plans of the imperialists, it should not, however, be concluded from this that this is the sole field in which the action of the trade unions in support of peace should develop.

There are other actions which can be taken. The trade unions should not hesitate to take this path. In defending peace, the working class is not acting alone. It is not only the working class which is interested in the defence of peace, other sections of the people have the same interests.

The task of the working class is to be the driving force of this broad united front of men and women from every walk of life, who, throughout the world, want to defend peace and are defending it effectively. The world movement of the supporters of peace brings into being this alliance of the working class with the other sections of the people.

But can we say that the unions and their members are everywhere actually and effectively taking part in the work of the world peace movement, and helping to drive forward its activities?

We must answer: no, for there are countries where the trade unions and the peace movement have no contact with each other.

We do not approve, for example, the attitude of the leaders of the Swedish T.U.C., who refused to give the support of their trade union organisation to the Swedish peace movement. We know that the leaders of the Swedish T.U.C., supporters of the somewhat neutralist policy of this country, are voting for warlike resolutions in the meetings of the I.C.F.T.U. This helps to explain this attitude.

But what can we say and think of the many trade union organisations in Latin America and South-East Asia, identifying themselves with the World Federation of Trade Unions, which still hold themselves aloof from the activities of the World Council of Peace or the national peace movements connected with this Council?

There is no doubt that this indicates a lack of understanding among the trade union leaders of the important role of the trade unions and an under-estimation of the tremendous services which the World Council of Peace is rendering to the peoples of all countries.

Perhaps, in Latin America, the first organisers of the national movements for peace emphasised solely the role of personalities, in order to give a necessary and broad content to the composition of the movement? Perhaps they have not sufficiently sought the support of the trade unions, which, as mass organisations, can give a broad popular range to the peace movement?

It is time to decide to eliminate such weaknesses, now that we are examining the tasks arising for the trade unions in defence of peace, and the best means to rally the workers so that they defend it to the last.

This does not mean that the movement for peace and the trade union organisations must merge.

Just as we do not ask certain social groups and certain important leading personalities which take part in the world peace movement to submerge their personality and to disappear in the movement, so we do not ask the trade unions, the workers or groups of workers, whether affiliated or not to the W.F.T.U., to lose their identity in the peace movement.

***This means that the trade unions must be able to develop their own activity, on their own initiative, in support of peace and in the name of broad masses of men and women workers.**

But what should we do when the trade union organisations are divided and, as a result, when there is only weak trade union participation in the general fight of the peoples for peace?

The best educated and more clear-minded progressive trade unionists must carry out extensive work of persuasion and information among all trade unionists. They must also, and above all, speak with the masses, and convince them, wherever it is necessary, so as to invite them to take part in the peace movement.

It is the duty of the World Federation of Trade Unions to help the trade union organisations to make clear the role of the

trade unions in the fight for peace. As the W.F.T.U. Constitution lays down, not only must we fight against war, but also against its causes.

This means that the trade unions, by fighting against monopoly capitalism, and against imperialism, thereby wage the fight against everything which endangers peace.

Thus the workers' trade unions can very easily connect the general fight in support of peace on the basis of the programme of the World Council of Peace with the particular struggle against the reactionary forces and the social system which bears war within it.

But the trade union movement would hamper the essential broadening of the front of struggle for peace if it demanded from those who do not act directly on the basis of these fundamental principles of the W.F.T.U., that as a pre-condition to an agreement of all workers with a view to common action for peace, they should first of all say where they stand with regard to the fundamental causes of war.

At the present time the trade unions must take part in the campaign in support of negotiation. But this campaign cannot be vague, idyllic and academic.

We must discuss and act in relation to facts, and use the useful lessons they give us.

The development of the international situation in recent months, and the discussions on the application of the armistice agreement in Korea and the situation in Germany, have taught us the following lesson :

We must be perfectly clear when we talk of negotiations. There, can, in fact, be honest negotiations and false negotiations.

Would it be true negotiation if one of the parties came to negotiate with the idea that no agreement is possible with the other, or even with the intention of absolutely imposing his opinions on the other negotiator? That is the opposite of negotiation. It is downright dictation.

That is the present position of the American Government. Used to negotiating on such a basis with many western governments, it foresees similar negotiations on the German question, or on other questions, with the Soviet Government. This, to begin with, is an error of judgment on its part. But in addition, the American Government intends to make these negotiations fail so as to be able to start up again more intensively its lying, anti-Soviet propaganda, to stir up hatred between peoples, and continue the cold war.

It wishes in fact to destroy the idea of possible negotiation in the minds of the people, and to substitute for it the idea of resorting to force. What is involved is a huge operation aimed at distorting public opinion, which is at present opposed to the policy of force, and to dictation by the Washington Government.

If we look closely at the state of the Korean question at the moment, it can be clearly seen that the peoples must be con-

stantly vigilant, so as to prevent the violation of the armistice and to compel just peace negotiations in Korea and Asia.

Negotiated agreement between countries has nothing in common with an imposed agreement. Our trade union organisations must everywhere explain these matters during the indispensable campaign of clarification in support of peace.

We must explain them in the factories, in the shops, in the offices; everywhere, in the workers' families, in the towns and in the countryside. Public opinion must take shape on the basis of this essential work of explanation. Well-informed people are in a better position to put a barrier in the way of the activity of the warmongers.

If we take into account, after the elections in Western Germany, the way in which the question of the remilitarisation of Germany is now raised, we must reach the conclusion that the danger of war is growing. This is an essential question.

The peoples who are neighbours of Germany feel it instinctively. The ratification of the Bonn and Paris agreements constitutes a grave threat of war. The trade unions must not remain indifferent; they must make a stand. We know that in Western Germany millions of workers, members of the D.G.B., affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U., by voting against Adenauer, also voted against the Bonn and Paris agreements.

We must be able to organise a single international front of the workers and their trade unions, so that they can wage a common struggle with the aim of preventing the ratification of the Bonn and Paris agreements.

* This Congress should address a solemn appeal to all workers and trade unions in the countries of Europe, urging them to unite their efforts so as to prevent this increase in the danger of war.

After reviving and putting back into position the Hitlerite forces and war leaders, the American government, by signing the recent agreements with Franco, Hitler's ally, has made more clear the fascist threat that hangs over the peoples and the democratic organisations of the workers.

We must react and unite in action all the democratic forces determined resolutely to oppose war and fascism. The forces of the people for peace and democracy are greater than those of the warmongers and the grave-diggers of democracy.

It would be rendering a tremendous service to the cause of peace if the workers and their trade unions, in the various countries of Europe, from their different standpoints effectively opposed the aims of revenge of the habitual militarists of Western Germany. In each of Germany's neighbour countries mass resistance must be increased against this remilitarisation. It is necessary to intervene with Members of Parliament, with the Parliaments and with the Governments so that they renounce it.

Within this Congress, the trade union delegations from non-European countries must understand how decisive a factor for

preserving world peace is the winning of success by the peoples in Europe in preventing the setting up again of the traditional German aggressive army.

More than 40 per cent. of the population of Western Germany and the overwhelming majority of the population of the German Democratic Republic constitute the strong opposition of the majority of the German people to German remilitarisation, and to the policy of war and revenge, and thus immediately, to the Bonn and Paris agreements.

Let us give our help and effective international solidarity to the West German workers, socialists, communists, catholics, protestants, atheists, who are our greatest hope of preventing the revanchist Bonn government clique again starting the bloody adventures of Hitlerism.

The Third World Trade Union Congress, while welcoming as a victory for the peoples the signing of the armistice in Korea, must loudly and firmly demand the ending of the colonial war that the French Government has been waging for seven years in Viet-Nam.

Everywhere the voice of the peoples must be raised to demand the ending of the colonial war in Viet-Nam.

* This Congress should decide to organise an international day of struggle for the ending of the colonial war in Viet-Nam, and of active solidarity in support of the Viet-Nam people.

* This would at the same time be defending the cause of peace, in carrying out our further tasks, in coming out once again in solidarity with the peoples struggling for their national sovereignty.

* The international trade union movement must give its unconditional support to the peoples who, as in Morocco and Tunisia, are demanding and struggling for their national independence, and are undergoing brutal imperialist repression.

The struggle for peace will be consolidated by pledging the trade unions to be more active in support of economic and social exchanges between the nations.

With regard to economic exchanges, we are convinced that the Trade Unions Internationals (Trade Departments of the W.F.T.U.), can make a very important contribution to the activities that the national trade union organisations must develop for the resumption of trade relations between East and West.

The Trade Unions Internationals must abandon discussion on general themes; they must work out programmes of action in this respect, from a more concrete angle, and particularly in relation to the countries suffering most from unemployment.

We know, for example, that the governments in London and Paris have just refused to apply the trade agreements recently signed in Peking by British and French delegations. This is a question of pursuing a policy of discrimination in direct opposition to a normal policy of peace.

Popular protest is not enough against these unacceptable

refusals. Our trade union organisations should be more active on this question.

* The question of trade agreements is not, it is true, the speciality of the trade unions, and we are not asking that it should become so. We are asking simply that the trade unions take greater interest, and that they exert greater pressure to defeat the discriminatory policy and the attitudes that are hostile to the development of international trade.

Large delegations of workers and trade unionists have during the past four years gone from and to many countries. Generally speaking the governments of the western countries are opposed to the exchange of delegations and reciprocal activity.

It has been a great success for our struggle for peace to see so many delegations visit the Soviet Union, People's China and the People's Democracies.

* But we must obtain the ending of those discriminatory measures which prevent similar delegations coming in turn from these countries to visit the countries from which the delegations came.

The same applies to the organisation of workers' Congresses. It is a very easy task for us to organise a trade union congress or a conference in the socialist countries. There are no obstacles to overcome, no restrictions, no opposition. But on the other hand, certain governments of the countries of western Europe and elsewhere continue to place obstructions in the way of organising such demonstrations in their countries.

We can note that during the past year or so, congresses of doctors, archaeologists, physicists and architects have been permitted in the western countries, and that the necessary entry visas have been granted to the representatives of the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Democracies. That is good. We applaud these developments of professional contacts.

Why are restrictions and bans reserved now for workers? Why are entry visas to the western countries also refused to workers of certain capitalist countries who want to travel from one of these countries to another?

* We must put an end to these discriminations which hit only the working class. It must be possible to hold international workers' congresses and conferences for the metal, building and textile workers, and other branches of industry, in the same way as it is now possible for scientists, artists, or writers.

We must struggle to win our rights that are being challenged. It is not only a question here of trade union rights, but also of peace itself.

* We demand for workers of all trades a fundamental right—that of being able to have normal, friendly relations between them on an international level, and that their trade

unions should be able to develop these relations unhindered, so as to strengthen friendship and solidarity between the peoples.

There are solid bases for the settlement of all outstanding international questions.

In a conference between the great powers, at the highest level, that of the heads of governments, among other questions that should be tackled is the important question of an agreement for a progressive reduction of armaments and of the heavy cost which these armaments mean for the peoples. There should also be a declaration in favour of the banning of atomic weapons and other means of mass extermination.

* The Third World Trade Union Congress will give its strong and warm support to these proposals for peace among the peoples, and the security of the whole of humanity.

X.—TO ACHIEVE UNITY OF ACTION AMONG THE WORKERS AND PAVE THE WAY FOR TRADE UNION UNITY IS THE BASIC TASK OF THE W.F.T.U.

The lesson most plainly to be drawn from the last four years of trade union work is that the essential condition for success in the workers' struggles is their unity.

The W.F.T.U. has never made any secret of the fact that unity is the goal at which it aims. We do not intend to make it any more secret in future. Our aims are clear; they can be stated more or less as follows.

Our fight for unity should lead to:

a single trade union in each enterprise;

a single national trade union federation in each industry or occupation;

a single National Centre for all the trade unions in any one country;

a single world trade union organisation.

For us the question of unity is not one which changes according to circumstances. It is not a major point one day, and a minor one the next. It is not kept for certain occasions. Our pronouncements and our activities for unity spring from a fundamental principle. It is the principle that in every way and for every cause the unity of the workers is basically indispensable.

We do not play with the question of unity. This is a serious, a capital question, which must not be treated lightly or be used as a subject for subsidiary demonstrations by trade unions.

That means that not only our words but our actions must be devoted to unity. This must be true of every militant unionist and every group of workers who profess to support the policy of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Being strongly in favour of unity does not mean being mildly opposed to the enemies of unity. On the contrary, it means opposing them intelligently, consistently, and so as to bring unity nearer, not allow the divisions in the trade union movement to harden permanently.

We know that it is fundamentally from the workers' unity of action, and the close connection of the trade unions with the mass of the people, that trade union unity will arise and be consolidated.

In order to obtain real, fruitful work for unity in and by the trade unions, the following principles must be put into practice :

to display a spirit of initiative, to develop this spirit of initiative among the working people, to learn from them their real potentialities for action, to keep in permanent touch with them so that the trade union action is a real part of the activities of the whole people, not just the work of a minority;

to show our intentions of eliminating sectarianism and opportunism, not only in more or less theoretical speeches and writings on methods of trade union action, but in our daily actions and in the facts themselves;

to make the democratic functioning of the trade unions effective, to fight for trade union democracy when it is violated, to organise collective work within the trade union leadership;

to regard the trade union organisation as a non-party organisation, the mass organisation of all workers, and not narrow down its organisational forms and methods in order to force it incorrectly into the role which belongs to the political vanguard of the working class;

to organise and develop an organisational composition of the trade unions which will make for unity, by the democratic choice of trade union leadership in which the politically organised and the non-party workers, those with a religious belief and those without, must all be represented;

to attach greater importance to questions of trade union recruitment, and to invite the unorganised workers to join in mass actions so as to prepare the way for their joining a union;

to unmask before the workers' eyes every manoeuvre designed to prevent them from uniting; to undertake for this purpose, the task of informing, explaining and convincing the workers on a wide scale who are still influenced by the splitters; to maintain a constant, high political level in the arguments used to point out the real motives behind the attitude of the splitters, and the aims

they are pursuing; to avoid the pitfall of violent language which the splitters will put in our way so as to make conditions more difficult for unity; to avoid the setting of one group of workers against another which at present is the favourite tactic of those who would divide the working class.

The World Federation of Trade Unions proposed unity of action to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions in 1951.

We did not make vague proposals, but concrete ones. We told them that the workers look to their trade unions for help and support at a time when their living and working conditions are constantly growing worse and more shameful.

This undoubtedly represented the well-founded opinion of the overwhelming bulk of the workers, trade unionists or not.

The International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions answered us in somewhat vague terms, from which we could not tell precisely whether or not this organisation was really concerned about the question of peace or of the immediate action of the workers for their economic demands.

The leaders of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions replied to our letter of July 1951 with insults.

We wrote to this organisation again in December 1951, then in April 1953. Its leaders did not reply directly to the W.F.T.U. They published press statements equally remarkable for their untruthfulness and their vulgarity. We realise what some of the I.C.F.T.U. leaders want; they would like to draw us into a contest of abuse, personal animosity and strong language. They know they could always draw a certain advantage from these spicy polemics by getting them put on the agenda of trade union organisations so that it would no longer be a matter of unity of action or trade union unity, but simply of wrangling among the workers, mostly in terms of insult.

Their aim is to foster division; they would be only too pleased if we played into their hands. But we have other ideas.

The W.F.T.U. has not played, and has no intention of playing, the game of the splitters in the working class ranks.

These gentry like, for instance, George Meany, President of the A.F.L., or Walter Reuther, President of the C.I.O., are doing their utmost to divert the trade union movement in certain countries. They set themselves up as champions of anti-communism and against the Soviet Union. That is their chief mission.

We are not concerned with these gentry for their own sakes. What does concern us is to prevent them from sowing hatred, dissension and corruption in the international working class. We are striving to prevent the members of their own unions, and the unions they control financially in the U.S.A. and elsewhere, from falling victims to the propaganda of hatred which they are spreading.

We point out in another section that they are becoming more and more irksome to the members of the trade union organisations affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U., an organisation which they dominate and control.

The organ of the British National Union of Railwaymen, remarked in August this year that this capitulation to American dictation seen in the recent I.C.F.T.U. Congress is not surprising (Meany was criticising the British T.U.C.), because "many of the unions forming the I.C.F.T.U. have been actively sponsored and supported by the Americans".

The same journal says that the atmosphere now pervading the I.C.F.T.U. is "a false atmosphere of patron and stooges".

What does this mean? This is something new inside the I.C.F.T.U.

It means that those who were misled about the W.F.T.U. five years ago can now see the facts more and more plainly. We know that many trade union organisations, and consequently many workers, are members of the I.C.F.T.U. without ever having been consulted about their membership since 1949.

This is our business; we must take particular notice of these workers, and it is with them that we achieve unity of action. This unity of action must be extended in order to march with greater resolution, and in every part of the world, towards trade union unity.

We do not examine the questions of united action by the workers and organic trade union unity in general. We must examine them in the way that they arise in each country. But we know that there are some general principles valid for all countries.

* It is at the base, in the united action of the workers, within the enterprises, that the best elements for the formation of organisational unity are to be found, for its consolidation at all levels, up to the top of the trade union movement.

The question of unity is not merely a question of policy, it is also a question of organisation. Work for unity should be correctly oriented, and also of necessity organised. The factory trade union organisations should play a role of prime importance in this respect.

* Wherever trade union work is not yet organised on the basis of activity suitable for the factory trade union organisations, local or regional trade union branches, it is essential to advance quickly towards this form of organisation, so as to be able to quickly further the united action of the workers and the question of trade union unity.

United action by the workers must be based on precise aims. It can and must be practised also between separate trade union organisations from the bottom to the top of trade union levels.

Long experience in many countries has shown that in order to organise real united action, the trade unions must put forward

clear, precise and achievable objectives, often limited in time, to those who are called on to act in common, and to the different organisations to which they belong when there is a trade union split.

* United action between different trade unions presupposes a common programme, even if this programme contains only a single demand. The common programme of united action is not necessarily the complete reproduction of the special programme of the trade union organisation affiliated to the W.F.T.U.

* It is during the growth of united action that wider, more complete agreement becomes possible. These agreements can then become complete understandings between trade unions which had been opposed in the past, and which, during the development of their joint action, can help to bring about organic trade union unity.

In some countries, the work of the splitters has had such harmful effects that united action is often not possible at certain levels of trade union organisation. But there is nothing to prove that this will not be possible tomorrow.

Thus, in France, for example, united action has not yet been possible between the Trade Union Confederations, because of the systematic opposition of the leaders of the Force Ouvriere and the French Confederation of Christian Workers. But there is nothing to prove that this will not be possible tomorrow, above all, since despite this fact, united action in the factories and the places of work is progressing seriously.

On the other hand, in Italy, the C.G.I.L. and the two other national trade union centres decided last month to organise and to lead the limited general strike on the question of wages and dismissals.

This last example shows that it is therefore possible to achieve united action at the highest national level, between national trade union organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. and the I.C.F.T.U. This destroys the arguments put forward by the leaders of the I.C.F.T.U. that it is not possible to achieve agreement on united action between organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. and those affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U.

What is possible in Italy must become so elsewhere.

Organic trade union unity has been achieved by establishing a single national trade union centre in Guatemala and in Chile, as a result of a period of fruitful united action between all the trade union organisations which have set up National Centres.

In India, great efforts have to be made to achieve united action among the national organisations. Already in the States of this country, this united action has been achieved, while in large trade sections, as among the railwaymen, the bank and insurance employees, trade union unity has brought about a single National Federation.

In Indonesia, united action is taking place and negotiations

are progressing favourably towards organic trade union unity on a national level. At this Congress four Indonesian trade union centres are represented. This shows that the trade union centre affiliated to the W.F.T.U. and the others, who have met fraternally in Vienna, will vigorously press forward the important work of unity, initiated by the working people of that country.

In North Africa, in Tunisia, united action between the U.S.T.T. (affiliated to the W.F.T.U.) and the U.G.T.T. affiliated to the I.C.F.T.U., has not yet come about on a national level, but is frequently achieved in many industries and areas; while in French Central Africa united action has been achieved on many occasions, from the bottom to the top, between organisations in the territory which belong to the C.G.T. and the W.F.T.U., independent organisations and those which belong to the Force Ouvriere and the I.C.F.T.U., as well as the Christian trade unions.

By taking into account the special national trade union situations and the progress of the idea of united action, *the decisions of this Congress will make still easier the making of contact, from the bottom to the top, between the trade union organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U. and the Christian trade unions' organisation at the same time that the Congress will call on the workers to strengthen united action at their places of work.*

We know in some countries, Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries for example, the question of international trade union united action presupposes the establishment of contact between the national trade union organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. and the national trade union centres of those countries.

It is desirable that relations of this kind, wherever they were broken five years ago, be resumed. Those of our trade union organisations which take the initiative will have done good work in support of unity, even if, at the beginning, their initiative does not bring entirely satisfactory results.

We believe that contacts can be resumed and that discussions can take place between national trade union organisations with different affiliations, on questions of negotiation as a means of defending peace and as a current practice for relations between States.

Discussions can also take place between them on exchanges of information on trade union activity for questions of Social Security and Wages. Fruitful discussions and exchanges of opinions could take place on the resumption of the development of international trade wherever it has been restricted.

The Conference of Workers of the Scandinavian Countries which was held in Oslo last year, submitted a resolution to the W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U. and the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, urging these three international organisations to undertake joint action in support of peace.

In the British trade unions resolutions have at the present

time been adopted by a number of them urging the setting up of relations between the W.F.T.U. and the I.C.F.T.U.

Trade union organisations in Japan, not affiliated to the W.F.T.U., have asked us for our advice on the re-grouping of the trade union organisations throughout the country.

The World Federation of Trade Unions pays great attention to the opinions of the workers and their trade unions.

Can we go towards an international consultative conference of all the trade union organisations in all countries? This question is often posed in the following way:

Governments have a meeting once a year at the U.N.; why could the national trade union centres also not meet periodically, without compromising their present international affiliations, whether to the W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U. or the I.C.C.T.U.

* There is no doubt that, to the extent that such international meetings could take place with a view to enabling the trade union organisations to give greater service to the cause of peace and social progress, the trade union organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. and the W.F.T.U. itself, could only encourage them.

On what basis could the discussion at such international meetings take place? In our opinion, on the basis of the immediate, vital needs of the peoples, and on their ardent desire for peace.

The improvement of living standards, measures to be taken to check unemployment, the defence, improvement and extension of social security, the development of international trade as a means of peaceful, friendly relations and co-operation between the peoples—these are some of the subjects on which discussion, to begin with, and common action, could take place between all the trade union organisations honestly wishing to serve social progress and peace.

These are the main lines of the trade union policy for unity which should be known to all.

If the trade union organisations of all affiliations were to meet and would agree to clarify together their particular joint contribution to the cause of peace between the peoples, it is certain that the repercussions will be considerable in all countries. It is certain that the preservation of peace would be strengthened. It is certain that the governments of the world would hear the voice of the workers and would respect it.

It is certain that the whole of humanity would recognise that the men and women trade unionists of the whole world were giving a healthy and stirring example to the human race.

This is the aim that must be achieved.

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The Third World Trade Union Congress will take big steps in this direction.

splendid task of building a society where the most precious capital is men, women and children.

The workers of the whole world will overcome every obstacle which tries to prevent them from uniting and proclaiming their community of interests.

Because they belong to the same class they take part in the same battles in constantly rising numbers.

In the capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries these class brothers and sisters will further improve the work of their unions for **bread, peace, liberty, national independence and democracy.**

They will link their hands even more with the strong hands of their brothers and sisters in the Soviet Union, People's China and the People's Democracies.

Let us march boldly forward, brothers, to fresh victories. Let us have faith in our future success, and watchfulness in our daily struggles.

Together we created the World Federation of Trade Unions eight years ago, to put a fresh weapon into the hands of the workers of every country, to make possible new successes for them and to forge new victories.

Let us raise aloft the banner of international solidarity and hold it firmly in our strong workers' hands.

Let us everywhere extol the invincible might of the World Federation of Trade Unions as the arm of international working class action.

The irresistible tide of the workers' unity is rising throughout the world to sweep away poverty and defend peace. Let us speed this movement of unity and give it new strength.

Let us hurl back the splitters and crush their sinister endeavours aimed at injuring the workers and profiting only the exploiters.

Let us enter with joy and enthusiasm on this new stage in the magnificent history of the international working class movement.

That is the best way, for the workers to say at the top of their voices :

"Long live the World Federation of Trade Unions, champion of the unity of men and women workers of the entire world!"

It will without doubt get in touch with the national trade union organisations, the trade union branches and the workers who are not affiliated to the W.F.T.U.

It will tell them that the tasks for unity will not be the work only of the members of the W.F.T.U., but the work of all, and that all of us together will be able to prevent a handful of trade union figures from harming the great, noble cause of unity between the workers.

Nothing will be able to resist the current of unity which will arise from this Congress and which will have an even greater grip on the working people and their trade union organisations.

XI.—INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY— THE BASIS OF ALL ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

Dear Brothers,

The present Congress, I am certain, is going to lead to further and very substantial progress in drawing together the workers in every country, and in unifying their trade union forces upon the right path.

This Congress will adopt an even more complete and objective programme of trade union activity than the one we have already established in the First and Second World Trade Union Congress.

This Third World Trade Union Congress, called by our glorious World Federation of Trade Unions, will offer proof of the complete failure of the great international reactionary plot, hatched between 1946 and 1949, aimed at paralysing the activities of the W.F.T.U. so as to be able to get rid of it quietly as the next step.

The World Federation of Trade Unions has not been got rid of.

It has never been so lively as during these last years. When the French government banned us from our headquarters in Paris, in 1951, it meant to disorganise us for a long time, and all the forces of international reaction hoped in this way to weaken our whole trade union movement throughout the world.

We are not the kind of trade union organisation that retires to lick its wounds. On the contrary, we are an international organisation which broadens the scope of its activity and consolidates its ramifications in every country.

As compared with 1949, the W.F.T.U.'s internal structure has been perfected and completed.

The Trade Unions Internationals, those Trade Departments of the W.F.T.U. which could not be set up during the first period of the W.F.T.U.'s history—the period up to 1949—have since been set up.

They constitute a new form, to supplement the methods of practical expression which our international trade union movement has at its disposal. Thanks to these Trade Unions Internationals, the World Federation of Trade Unions will be able to sink its roots still deeper in every great industry in every country.

W.F.T.U. Liaison, or Co-ordination Bureaux function in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

So we are not moving towards a weakening of our trade union movement or to its retrenchment; we are marching confidently towards a great broadening out of all our activities and our organisational system.

We are daily increasing international working class solidarity.

But let us consider the substantial proportion of men and women workers in the world who are still unorganised. We must not wait for them to come to us. Our trade union organisations have got to go to them, to help them and advise them. We must take a hand in their struggles, so as to be able to ally them more completely with the struggles we all have to win together.

Think of the young workers, the adolescents who have not had a chance yet to join a trade union, although they have already felt the burden of capitalist exploitation in many different times and ways and learnt to know what oppression is.

How many young people in the capitalist and colonial countries are at this moment without any prospect of learning or working at a trade they would like, without any prospect of enjoying a pleasant and happy life.

Youth, which is the future of humanity, all too often meets with misunderstanding or indifference from its elders. Trade union organisations of every country and the World Federation of Trade Unions have a primary duty when they are working out their plans in this Congress, to show understanding, solidarity and comradeship with the young workers. We must invite them to take their place in the trade unions and play their rightful role there, bringing to the unions a greater liveliness and energy.

In this way, when we speak of the further tasks of our international trade union movement, we can affirm that it is going to grow, prosper and shake more strongly than ever the domination of those who live from the exploitation of man by man.

In this second half of the 20th century, men and women workers of the world are inspired by the knowledge that the world capitalist system is disintegrating more and more—that system which provokes wars, keeps millions of human beings in poverty and famine, and is responsible for abnormal conditions of existence in so many countries.

These workers are inspired by the magnificent successes of their brothers and sisters in the socialist countries in their