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TWO OPPOSING LINES IN THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

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PART ONE

BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. ITS TRENDS AND ORGANIZATION ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATION OF THE WORKING CLASS AND THE FIRST TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE DIFFERENT CURRENTS WITHIN THEM

1. The conditions of the emergence and development of the working class and the trade union movement.

Historically, the proletariat emerged at the same period as the bourgeoisie and the capitalist mode of production, when the productive forces made rapid progress, hand work was gradually being replaced by machine work, and the industrial revolution begins first in England, in the second half of the 18th century, and subsequently in the other capitalist countries in Europe and the United States of America.

The industrial revolution, which was marked first and foremost by the introduction of machinery and the setting up of factories, was not simply a technical change; it exerted a direct influence on the class make-up of society, creating new relations among people; hence the emergence and development of two antagonistic classes, the industrial bourgeoisie and the industrial proletariat. This fundamental qualitative transformation of society led to the establishment and growth of capitalist relations in production, between the proprietor who owned the means and tools of production and the proletarian who depended solely on his labour for daily wages. The struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie begins precisely with the emergence of the proletariat as a class.

Parallel with the birth and development of capitalism grew the class of the proletarians, these “wage slaves”, which began to form with the process of the initial accumulation of capital, as a consequence of the expropriation of the land of the peasants and the elimination of the artisans. It was these new contingents who formed the army of wage-labourers, forced to sell their labour to the capitalists at a low price.

The mechanization of industrial production resulted in the savage and inhumane exploitation of the proletarians. Extremely heavy work, the lack of safety measures, or hygiene, as well as of any labour code, very low wages, the deplorable housing conditions of the workers, hunger, poverty and the arbitrariness of the capitalist employers – this is the grim setting in which the proletariat lived and worked. A vivid picture of it is given by Engels in “The Condition of the Working Class in England”.

With a view to securing the maximum profit and producing at the lowest possible cost, the capitalists exploited the labour of women and children in particular. In the textile industry, there were thousands of children working for very low wages. There were cases where children of 5 or 6 years old were beaten to keep them awake. “As late as 1875, there were still nearly one hundred and twenty thousand children under thirteen years of age employed in the textile industry in England and Ireland. In general they were obliged to work standing from twelve to

fourteen hours a day...”¹ The Law passed by the House of Commons in England on April 6, 1802 stipulating that children should not work more than twelve hours a day, and that no more than two children should sleep in one bed in the factory dormitories, was never enforced.

The working and living conditions of the workers were disgraceful. The worker was merely a market commodity who could be employed or dismissed from his job according to the demands of production and competition, he was also subjected to the many arbitrary acts and draconian rules of his bosses. This is what we read in one of the rules of the Krupp factory in Germany, which at that time (1838) was considered to be the most advanced socially: “Every worker must be loyal and obey without hesitation, conduct himself well both within and outside the factory, and demonstrate through his zeal that he wishes to work for the benefit of the factory”.²

Ruthless exploitation and the denial of their most elementary rights compelled the workers to demand and fight for the improvement of their economic condition. This resistance, by peaceful and violent means, was spontaneous and isolated, not well thought out and organized, up to the middle of the 19th century. At first the workers thought that the source of their misfortune lay in the machines, therefore they forcefully opposed their introduction into production. They even went so far as to destroy the machines. But from their own experience they became convinced that this gesture did not lead to victory, that the source of their sufferings lay not in the machines but in the capitalist relations in production and in the capitalist class itself, which exploited the workers so inhumanely.

Following the bourgeois revolutions, up to the first half of the 19th century, when capitalism was fully or partially established as the dominant system in Western Europe and the United States of America, the steady development of capitalism brought about the numerical increase of the proletariat and the formation of the working class,

Historically, during its formation and development, the working class passed through different stages and phases, in specific countries and conditions. In this long and difficult process, it found and carried out forms of work, struggle and organization which led to the formation of its first organizations. These organizations had various names like: “Associations or Funds for Mutual Aid”, “Journeymen’s Corporations”; “Labour Unions”, “Trade Unions”, “Chambre syndicate”, “Bourses du Travail”, “Syndicats”, etc.

At the beginning these associations came into being in the different branches of production as a consequence of the spontaneous endeavours of the workers and the need to offer collective resistance, to unite to protect their narrow professional interests. Their claims were confined to the needs of the day, the problem of wages, working hours, unemployment, competition and so on. Later on these associations were gradually transformed into “organizational centers” and “organs of resistance” of the working class, against the capitalist bourgeoisie, thus waging a more systematic campaign against capitalist oppression and exploitation. Thus, the initial, lower form of struggle in the trade union movement was the economic struggle.

As far back as 1720, in a letter to the House of Commons, the apprentices of the tailoring trade in London, organized in their own association with a membership of over seven thousand artisans, said that the aim of their association was. “...to raise their wages, and leave work one hour earlier...” and that “they had accumulated large sums of money to protect themselves in

¹ The International Labour Office, “The International Labour Organization in the Service of Social Progress”, French edition, Geneva 1868, page 10.

² Ibid. p. 12.

cases of persecution.”¹

With the growth of the proletariat and its class awareness, and its education with socialist ideas, the trade unions as the organizations of the working class underwent quantitative and qualitative transformations. Eventually, they took on a pronounced class character, both in substance and form, advancing specific economic and political claims. “The trade unions”, Marx stressed, “should convince the whole world that they are not fighting to further their narrow personal interests, but to free millions of oppressed people.”²

The history of the worker movement shows that its organizations, the trade unions, were not granted legal recognition right away. The bourgeoisie and the State apparatus maintained a ruthless attitude towards them, persecuting and killing their members, particularly their leaders. The bourgeoisie did its utmost to prevent the working class from being organized. At first the trade unions were illegal, since they were considered to be a menace to the bourgeois social order, and therefore taking part in them was considered an offence against the law.

In order to weaken and crush the worker and trade union movement, the bourgeoisie resorts to direct violence, demagoguery, and corruption of the workers. Under given conditions these methods are used in turn, but often they are combined. Using the “Extraordinary Law Against The Socialists”, the Chancellor of the German Government, Bismarck, killed and slaughtered as many as he could for 12 years on end, but when he realized that in order to uproot the ideas of socialism, he had to exterminate the whole working class, who were their bearers, he changed tactics, and instead of using the stick, he was obliged to hold out the carrot, issuing laws recognizing trade unions, on social insurance, accidents at work, etc. The bourgeoisie was obliged, and is still obliged today, to make these “concessions” and “reforms” for the purpose of appeasing the working class and forestalling “major upheavals”.

Thus, the formation of trade unions is not a gift of the bourgeoisie, made out of its “magnanimity”, but a consequence of the resolute and consistent struggle of the proletariat. The bourgeois point of view that the trade union movement came into being as a demand of the working class to collaborate with capitalism, is put forward for the purpose of divesting the movement of its class character and perpetuating the capitalist order, so as to indicate that class collaboration between the proletariat and the capitalists has been and, must continue to be the fundamental objective of the trade union movement.

The working class has never been able to wrest anything from the bourgeoisie without a bitter class struggle, a struggle which, in specific stages, has assumed very varied, and violent forms, up to an armed uprising to overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The working class has drawn this valuable lesson from its own experience.

The organization of the working class into trade unions has been a great victory for the workers, who, from isolated individuals, were united and became a major organized force: thus, the bourgeoisie was obliged, willy-nilly, to acknowledge the existence of the trade unions as representatives of the working class.

2. Various trends and features in the development of the world trade union movement

The organization and struggle of the proletariat, as well as the features of the trade union

¹ G. Lefranc “Le Syndicalisme dans le Monde”, Paris, 1963, p. 6.

² K. Marx & F. Engels, “Instructions to the delegates to the Provisional Central Council on Special Problems”, Works, vol. 16, 2nd Russian Ed., pp. 200-201.

movement had from the start, were determined by the specific historical conditions of each country, by the uneven development of capitalism, the degree of class awareness of the proletariat, and the political situation of the time.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, three different forms of trade union came into existence and developed, especially in Europe, each with its distinctive characteristics. They developed particularly in England, France and Germany, and exerted a general influence on the whole world trade-union movement. These organizations had their own characteristic features, which we will mention briefly.

a. Trade Unionism

It was in England, one of the earliest capitalist countries, that the proletariat first came into existence and as a consequence, it was there that the early worker organizations were set up. Although the British Government, by laws passed in 1799 and 1800, had prohibited these organizations and their early strikes, the textile workers, spinners and miners still set up a number of illegal and semi-legal organizations. As a result of the great pressure exerted by the workers, who in certain cases rebelled, the English Parliament was compelled on a number of occasions to issue laws permitting the working class to organize in trade unions.

It was precisely due to the influence of the- British working class that the Chartist movement sprang up after 1830; but in spite of the successes it scored, it suffered defeat.

Following the abrogation of the laws that forbade workers to organize, the first trade unions of the workers arose in England. These organizations, which gathered into their ranks the qualified workers of particular trades and, at times, of special skills were later united on a national level, and in 1868 set up a single center, the Trade Union Congress (the TUC). which according to its constitution held meetings, both, then and now, "...on the first Monday of September and the four following days."¹

The worker and trade union movement in Great Britain developed under special circumstances when the economic power of the bourgeoisie had greatly increased, as a result of the ruthless exploitation of the British proletariat and the merciless plunder of the many colonial countries. Thus, having such immense profits at their disposal, the bourgeoisie were the first to begin buying off the leaders of the working class, who, together with the better qualified workers, the leaders of the trade unions, and the directors of the worker cooperatives, formed the broad ranks of the aristocracy of the working class and participated in the political organs of the country, Parliament, the local organs of state power, and so on.

It was under these circumstances that there developed in Great Britain a trend which is known by the name of Trade Unions, and which based its activity, then as now, on class collaboration, the inviolability of the bourgeois order and private property, and protecting the interests of the most privileged groups of workers. The trade unionists fight not to do away with exploitation and the bourgeois order, but to "improve" it. They use only methods which are acceptable to the bourgeoisie, such as negotiations and agreements with the entrepreneur, participation in various state and private economic organs, arbitration, in which the deciding role is played by the representatives of the bourgeois state and so on.

At the root of the ideology of trade unionism lies the theory of spontaneity, which like the theory of opportunism, views the development of the worker movement in a spontaneous way. "The

¹ TUC "Trade-Unionism" – London 1967, point 11, page 4, Second English edition.

spontaneous working class movement”, Lenin wrote, “is trade unionism and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie”.¹ Proclaiming the principle, “no politics in the unions”, the British Trade Unions confine their activity to the narrow context of economic demands. Matters of a “political” nature are handled by the Labour Party, which in origin is nothing but a product of the bourgeoisified trade union movement, and its mouthpiece in Parliament.

At the beginning, the British Trade Unions reflected that moment of development when the working class had very little experience and was taking its first steps in England. At that time the formation of the trade unions was a progressive phenomenon in the history of the labour movement. However, trade unionism soon changed into one of the opportunist trends in the trade union movement, and plays a negative role.

b. Anarcho-Syndicalism

The French proletariat has engaged in many battles and revolutions, but the 1870 Paris Commune remains the most important event in the life of the French working class, because for the first time it seized power from the bourgeoisie and tried to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Paris Commune gave a further impetus to and exerted a positive influence on the labour and trade union movement in France and abroad. In spite of the ruthless steps taken by the reactionaries after the fall of the Commune, the labour movement developed and became strong.

In France the early organizations of the working class were called “Chambres syndicales” or syndicates, which appeared as early as 1860. They were set up as local organizations for workers of the same trade. In 1884, when the trade unions were granted official recognition after the abrogation of the Le Chapelier Law, the number of organized workers came to about 100,000. Some of these trade unions were run by the French Section of the First International. The *Bourses du Travail* (Labour Exchanges) were organized at first by the municipalities for the purpose of finding jobs for the workers, helping members and organizing cultural activities. In 1895, after the union of all syndicates on a national level, there was founded in Limoges the CGT, which was later on joined by the National Confederation of Labour Exchanges of France.

Despite its industrial progress, France still preserved wide-spread small-scale ownership. Thus, “in 1900 an entrepreneur had an average of four wage labourers, and nine out of ten enterprises had less than ten workers each”.² Its rate of economic development was lower than that of the other advanced capitalist countries. This is because when France reached the stage of imperialism, the French bourgeoisie did not invest its capital within the country but exported it, mainly in the form of loans to less advanced countries, with a view to securing maximum profits. This was one of the main factors hindering the rate of capitalist development, and it exerted a negative influence on the economic development of France.

In line with the given economic and political conditions of France towards the end of the 19th century, and up to about the outbreak of the First World War, anarcho-syndicalist views emerged and spread within the French labour movement. This trend, which especially after 1906 is also known as “revolutionary syndicalism”, is a result of the ruin of the middle stratum of the petty bourgeoisie, which swelled the ranks of the proletariat and brought with it the petty-bourgeois ideology, which became the social basis on which anarcho-syndicalism grew. This

¹ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done? Selected Works*, vol. 1, page 157.

² H. Dubief, “Le syndicalisme révolutionnaire”, Paris 1969, French ed., p. 7.

trend also found favourable ground because the workers were disillusioned by the reformist and opportunist activity of the trade union leaders and the French socialist party. Because this trend had spread far and wide in France, that country was known as “the home of anarcho-syndicalism”. Later on anarcho-syndicalism spread to Italy, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Mexico and other countries which stood out for their retarded capitalist development. This is why some consider anarcho-syndicalism to be a phenomenon of the “Latin countries”.

Anarcho-syndicalist views prevailed at the founding of the French General Confederation of Labor (CGT) which at its congress of 1906 approved the “Charter of Amiens”, the programmatic document and ideological platform of anarcho-syndicalism. In it we read: “Syndicalism advocates the general strike as a method of action, and considers that the syndicate, now a center of resistance, will in the future be the center of production and distribution, the basis of social reorganization”.¹

The anarcho-syndicalists considered the general strike to be the highest and most radical form of the struggle of the proletariat. The ultimate objective was the overthrow of capitalism without revolution, and the seizure of power through a general strike which they considered as “the ideal form of revolution” and “an expression of violence which avoids bloodshed”. The anarcho-syndicalists were opposed to any form of state power, regardless of its nature. They considered the syndicates to be the sole form of proletarian organization and resistance against the bourgeoisie, and held that “the workshop would replace the government”.

Proclaiming the complete “independence” of the syndicates from the political parties of the working class, the anarcho-syndicalists denied the necessity for political struggle by the working class, the leading role of its party, the armed uprising against the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As a petty-bourgeois, semi-anarchist trend anarcho-syndicalism introduced the ideology, policy and tactics of anarchism into the labour and trade union movement. It introduced such forms of action as sabotage and destruction of machines, raw materials and products, etc. It considered strikes and sabotage, whatever their character, as “revolutionary gymnastics”. Lenin called anarcho-syndicalism “the twin brother” of opportunism, the “original reformism” from the left.

Anarcho-syndicalist trends, camouflaging opportunism with pseudo-revolutionary terms, are to be found to this day in the trade union movement disguised under various labels and nuances. They have caused immense damage to the movement.

c. Pluralism

The worker and trade union movement in Germany has its own distinctive features, expressed in particular, by trade union fragmentation and by the great influence of German social-democracy on the trade union movement. In Germany, capitalist relations were established later than in England and France. Towards the beginning of the 19th century especially after the union of the German states, the economic development of Germany proceeded at a rapid rate, speeding up the formation and organization of the working class.

But it was only after 1860 that the first organizations of the working class began to be set up there, since before that period political reaction had proscribed them. The trade unions “sprang up”, as August Bebel said, “like mushrooms after spring rain”. Because of the different political

¹ J. Reinau; “Les Syndicats en France”, Paris 1963, page 83.

currents, the trade union movement in Germany was also fragmented. We can single out four trade union currents which, according to the chronological order of their formation, can be divided into:

1. The Hirsch-Punker trade unions (after the name of their founders) which were under the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie. These were opportunist and reformist organizations of the English type and were later called the General Union of Mutual Aid.

2. Lassallean trade unions which were guided by the Lassallean political party. These trade unions renounced economic struggle entirely, and opposed the revolution replacing it with the struggle for universal suffrage and activities in parliament. At the same time they preached a peaceful transition to the socialist society. In his "Critique of the Gotha Program", Marx exposed the reactionary character of Lassalleanism.

3. The Eisenacher trade unions, otherwise known as "Worker Education Associations". These were set up by the German Social-Democratic Worker Parties, whose leaders in general took a Marxist position. In addition to the economic struggle of the workers, they had assigned themselves the task of eliminating the capitalist regime, and called for the use of all methods for this purpose. In November 1868 they approved the program of the First International. They were particularly powerful and had much influence in Germany. In 1879, they had about 50,000 members.

4. Christian trade unions, which were based on religious principles. They preached class harmony and were founded by the Catholic clergy.

The union of the two political parties of Eisenach and Lassalle, led to the unification of their trade union movements. The Trade Union Congress which was convened on this occasion laid down two principles:

1. "The task of the workers is to keep politics out of their trade unions".

2. "The workers are morally bound to join the socialist party which is the sole agent to realize the political and economic demands of the proletariat"¹.

Thereafter the united trade union movement in Germany began to take the course of opportunism and reformism, turning from Marxist ideology to reformist practice.

At the First All-German Congress of Trade Unions in 1892, a single organization was set up for all Germany: it was under the influence of German social-democracy and plunged deeper and deeper into the quagmire of opportunism and reformism. From its foundation to 1920, it was headed by the right-wing social democrat, the infamous opportunist Karl Legien, whom Lenin called a contemptible cutthroat of the working class in the service of the monarchy and the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie.

During this period the German trade unions attached greater importance to administrative aspects than to the struggle of the working class. That is why they were ironically called trade unions obsessed with "the brick and mortar disease", since, with many funds and materials at their disposal, they bought and built magnificent structures. The trade unions became bureaucratic, headed by permanent functionaries who gradually turned bourgeois and, orienting them mainly towards parliamentary struggle, turned the trade unions away from the class struggle.

* * *

These three main trends in the trade union movement in England, France and Germany were

¹ G. Lefranc, "Le Syndicalisme dans le monde", Paris 1963, p. 16.

of special importance, because they influenced the development of the whole world trade union movement.

The trade union movement in the western countries has had its own distinctive features because it came into being and developed before the formation of some of the political parties of the working class; moreover, many of these parties emerged from the ranks of the trade unions, which at the beginning acted more in the economic sphere, as the more immediate concern of the working class, while the political parties engaged in the parliamentary struggle, the political struggle.

These trends flourished in particular during the period from the Paris Commune to about the beginning of the 20th century, when capitalism had not yet reached its highest phase of development, the phase of imperialism, there were no revolutionary storms, and the trade union movement was growing in size (towards the end of the 19th century, the ranks of the trade unions contained about 4 million workers); and when the bourgeoisie, as a result of strikes, was obliged to grant the workers some of the most elementary economic and political rights.

CHAPTER TWO

ON THE TWO ANTAGONISTIC LINES IN THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

From the last quarter of the 19th century, when the worker and trade union movement began to become an organized force, with growing weight in the political and social fields, two different, irreconcilable views, began to stand out and: deepen gradually within the ranks of the working class: the opportunist line, and the proletarian line of class struggle. These two opposing lines reflected then, as they do to this day, two different political and ideological attitudes.

1. The reformist and opportunist line

The emergence and development of opportunism and reformism within the ranks of the worker and trade union movement was determined by a number of objective economic and social conditions, among which we may mention:

First, the relatively "peaceful" development of capitalism, when not all the contradictions typical of capitalist society had yet appeared as strongly as during the later period of the general crisis of capitalism. The rapid development of capitalism, despite the crises which accompanied it, led to a relative and temporary improvement in the living standards of the working class, namely, shorter working hours, a rise in wages, the adoption of laws pertaining to safety measures at work and social insurance, and so on. Thus, for instance, in Germany, during the last decade of the 19th century, the wages of the mass of workers increased by 15 per cent, while those of qualified workers rose by 50 per cent.

Second, with the establishment of large capitalist enterprises, the small producers (the broad masses of the peasantry, handicraftsmen and the declassed petty-bourgeoisie) swelled the ranks of the proletariat and, under the great pressure exerted on them by the bourgeoisie, and its ideology, brought into the ranks of the working class their petty-bourgeois views, the spirit of disorganization, anarchy and vacillation. These new contingents joining the ranks of the working class brought with them reformist views and illusions.

Third, the bourgeoisie corrupted and bought off some of the workers, the higher strata of the working class aristocracy. This elite severed its relations with the working class, and could hardly be distinguished from the bourgeoisie in either economic standing or way of thinking, since it expressed the interests and mentality of the bourgeoisie. It became the social basis and the main support of the bourgeoisie within the worker and trade union movement.

The conditions of legality of the worker and trade union movement, the swelling of its ranks with elements coming from the bourgeoisie, the atmosphere of electoral successes achieved by certain worker parties (more than two hundred such representatives were elected to the parliaments of ten of the most advanced industrial countries), as well as the achievement of certain partial successes in the social field, all contributed to the emergence and spread of opportunist and reformist trends as an ideological platform in the ranks of the working class and the trade union movement. At this time, there arose a number of theories and theses which the reformists and opportunists took up and spread in the trade union movement.

Narrow trade unionist corporative trends developed in the trade unions, which confined their activity to certain economic claims and to the collection of dues and, in some cases, turned the unions into cultural and benevolent organizations; class collaboration thus became the basic

principle of the trade union movement. The trade union leaders considered the parliamentary rostrum to be the principal means of their struggle.

2. On some basic principles in the working class trade union movement

The founders of scientific communism and the revolutionary philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, were the first to set down the theoretical, practical and organisational basis of the class trade union movement, considering it to be a school of class struggle for the proletariat, under the conditions of the capitalist regime.

Karl Marx clearly formulated the role and tasks of the trade union movement. In his report “Wages, Price and Profits”, which constitutes, in fact the essence of trade union policy, we find; “Trade Unions work well as centers of resistance against the encroachment of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system”.¹

The Resolution “On the role, importance and duties of the trade union”, which Marx submitted at the Congress of the First International, which met in 1866 in Geneva, set down, for the first time, the foundation of the Marxist concept of the trade unions as class organizations. According to this, the trade unions should become organizational centers of the working class, and undertake the task of fighting for its complete emancipation. To achieve this, they should also back every revolutionary movement. The Resolution warned the workers against exaggerating the importance of the economic struggle (as the English workers did) and against minimizing it (like the French and German movements, especially the Lassalleans). The trade unions were considered to be not only a lawful phenomenon but also an indispensable one as long as capitalism existed, and they were seen as extremely important for the organization of the working class.

Eventually, on the basis of an analysis of the class struggle Lenin worked out in a scientific way a broad political, ideological and organizational program of work to be done among the trade unions. He developed further, and argued theoretically, the new doctrine of the revolutionary trade union movement, which sets out the role, functions and tasks, which are incumbent upon it during the three epochs, namely, the epoch of imperialism, that of the transition from imperialism to socialism, and that of the construction of the socialist society.

During the period of capitalism Lenin considered the trade unions to be necessary and essential organizations for the working class, as centers of resistance, organization and joint action against the bourgeoisie, and as elementary schools for the class education of the workers in which they would form and develop their class consciousness, and wage an active campaign against capitalist oppression and exploitation.

Rejecting the reformist and opportunist thesis of the “neutrality” of the trade union movement towards the political parties of the working class, Lenin stressed that the trade unions could not and should not stand aloof from ideology and politics, since every social organization or movement has its own political and ideological views, those of the class it represents. Thus, the trade unions, as organizations of the working class, adhere to the proletarian ideology. “...The work in the trade unions,” Lenin said, “should not be carried on in the spirit of neutrality, but in

¹ K, Marx, “Wages, Price and Profits”, Social Editions, Paris 1947, p. 142.

that of the closest contact with the social-democratic party”.¹ Lenin considered the trade unions to be important links and levers which bind the party with the broad masses of workers. In Russia, unlike the other capitalist countries, it was the bolshevik party which created, organized and guided the revolutionary trade union movement.

Lenin also waged a resolute campaign against anarcho-syndicalist deviation within the Communist (Bolshevik) Party in Russia and the so-called “worker opposition” which considered the trade unions, and not the party of the, working class, as the highest form of organization of the working class. According to the “worker opposition”, the running of the whole national economy should be entrusted to the “Russian Congress of Producers”, gathered in the trade unions.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin was the first to work out and argue theoretically the historical necessity of the trade unions under the dictatorship of the proletariat, mapping out the role, functions and tasks of the trade unions, as broad mass organizations of the working class in the construction of socialist society,

Lenin considered the trade unions as “...an organization of the ruling, dominant class, of the class in power, which exercises dictatorship, exercises state control, But it is not a state organization of compulsion; its aim is to educate, activate, and instruct, it is a school, a school of leadership, a school of administration, a school of communism.”²

Lenin emphasized that the role and functions of trade unions change according to the periods of transition of society, Thus, for instance, in Russia, their functions underwent a radical change after the seizure of power by the proletariat. They assumed new functions; from being organizations of resistance against capitalism, and the bourgeois state, they became Organizations of education, and the closest and most indispensable collaborators with the state, a “reservoir” of the state power in the hands of the working class,

Referring to the place of the trade unions in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin wrote: “The trade unions are an organization of the ruling class, of the class in power, of that class which exercises the dictatorship of the proletariat, of that class which carried out State duties. But they are not State organizations, they are not organizations of coercion...”³

The correctness, vitality and relevance of Lenin’s teachings are of major theoretical and practical importance to the trade union movement of both the capitalist and the socialist countries. They axe of universal value to this day, and have been confirmed by experience, by the struggle and history of the development of the international worker and trade union movement, and by the practice of socialist construction in the Soviet Union under Lenin’s and, later, Stalin's leadership.

1 V. I. Lenin, “The Neutrality of the Trade Unions”, Works, vol. 13, pp. 535 & 536, Albanian edition.

2 V. I. Lenin, “Trade Unions, the Present Situation and the mistakes of Trotsky”, Works, vol. 32, Albanian edition, p. 2.

3 V. I. Lenin, “Trade Unions, the Present Situation and the mistakes of Trotsky”, Works, vol. 32, Albanian edition, p. 2.

CHAPTER THREE

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM AND WORKER SOLIDARITY – BASIC PRINCIPLES IN THE WORKING CLASS TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

With the growth and development of the proletariat and the spread of the ideas of scientific socialism, the workers began to understand more clearly that wherever they worked and lived they were subjected to ruthless exploitation, that, regardless of their nationality, they have common interests and aspirations because they are brothers, and that in order to get rid of oppression and exploitation they had to be organized and united, and help one another in the struggle against their common enemy, the bourgeoisie and capitalism. For the proletariat, internationalism became a vital necessity, a very important principle, and a moral norm of deep revolutionary significance. It arose in the consciousness of the proletariat as a consequence of the economic and social position this class occupied in capitalist production.

The fundamental principle of internationalism is militant solidarity among different workers, the collaboration, backing and support they should extend to one another in the joint struggle against capitalism, the establishment of firm relations among them and the combining of class struggle against the bourgeoisie with national-liberation and revolutionary struggles.

Lenin wrote: “There is one and only one true internationalism: it consists in working with self-denial for the development of the revolutionary movement and revolutionary struggle in one’s own country, in giving propaganda support, sympathy and material assistance to this struggle, to this line in all countries without exception.”¹

The international character of labour and capital, as well as the specific conditions of the numerical growth and qualitative development of the proletariat, call for the creation of an international organization of the working class to defend its interests and to confront the united forces of the bourgeoisie with the united forces of the proletariat.

As early as 1847, Marx and Engels launched, through the Communist Manifesto, the famous slogan “Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!” and they were the first to put to the proletariat the need to be united and organized not just on a national but also on an international level. In September 1864, they founded in London the International Workingmen’s Association, otherwise known as the First International.

Within the First International Marx and Engels waged a bitter campaign against the Proudhonists and their collaborators, who were opposed to the creation of trade unions, to strikes and to other revolutionary forms of the class struggle of the proletariat. Thus, the First International played an historic role in the development and further strengthening of the international worker and trade union movement on profoundly working class lines. It laid the basis for the international organization of the workers, and paved the way for a further and higher stage of development of the worker and trade union movement.

Later too, the Second International, especially during the early period when it was led by Engels and stood in a revolutionary position, exerted a good deal of direct influence on the formation of the trade unions, by helping uniting and organising the world revolutionary forces. At the very first Congress of representatives of the socialist parties, held in Paris on July 14, 1889 (the hundredth anniversary of the seizure of the Bastille) where the Second international was set up, it was decided to celebrate May Day each year – the anniversary of the bloody

¹ V. I. Lenin, Works, vol. 24. Albanian edition, p. 63.

massacres of workers in Chicago who demanded an eight hour workday – as a day of international proletarian solidarity.

The formation of the international trade union organizations.

The first attempts to organize the trade union movement on an international scale were made in certain branches of production, that of tobacco, pottery and printing, etc. Their role was confined to the narrow framework of a single trade, their task being to exchange information as well as provide financial support.

In 1871, for the first time, the International Trade Union Federation of tobacco was founded. Eventually, international organizations multiplied to such an extent that on the eve of the First World War, there were about 32 such trade union federations. But, in fact, they played no important role as regards support and solidarity, or in combining the struggle of the worker and trade union movement on a national and international scale.

On the occasion of the German Trade Union Congress held in Stuttgart in 1902, the delegates from the trade union centers of Europe and the USA held an international trade union conference, and in the same year there was set up, in Dublin, Ireland, “The International Secretariat of National Trade Union Centers”. At its congress in Zurich in 1913 this organization took the name “International Trade Union Federation”, but it played no role despite the fact that it encompassed 19 national trade union centers with over 6,200,000 workers. Legien, a German right-wing social-democrat, was elected its president.

The contacts and meetings which were held within the framework of these organizations, although of a positive character, failed to map out a program and platform for the struggle of the working class or to encourage and promote the struggle which it was waging all over the world against capitalist exploitation. What characterized these contacts and meetings was their spirit of opportunism and reformism, as well as the manifestations of chauvinistic and nationalistic tendencies. Although war seemed to be imminent, the leaders of the international trade union movement considered the problem of imperialist war to be a “political” matter, and therefore took no stand against it. Moreover, when the First World War broke out, such leaders of the trade union movement as Jouhaux, Gompers, Legien & Co adopted a narrow bourgeois nationalist stand, and became the most ardent supporters of the chauvinist and militarist ideology of their respective countries, occupying important posts in the state organs.

The Great October Socialist Revolution brought radical changes in the international situation and in the ratio of forces: it was a brilliant example of inspiration and experience for the working class and the world trade union movement. The workers of the world saw in this revolution how their lawful aspirations could be realized. It became a decisive factor, which invigorated the worker and trade union movement and raised it to a higher level, awakening the working class in the capitalist and colonial countries, strengthening and consolidating it in the fierce struggle against capitalism and its reformist agents. The creation of a powerful trade union center in Russia was objectively a major incentive and support for the whole world working class trade union movement. The resolute backing and international solidarity which the proletariat of the whole world gave to the new Soviet Republic proved that the workers realised the Russian Socialist Revolution was their joint cause. The opportunist and reformist trade union leaders, with the backing of the capitalist states, immediately following the triumph of the October Socialist Revolution, set up a number of trade union organizations with an international character. Their main objective was to limit the great influence exerted by the ideas of the

October Revolution, to check the drive of the class struggle and the revolutionary spirit which, at that time, had spread far and wide, and to seize control of the worker and trade union movement.

Particularly as a consequence of the triumph of the October Socialist Revolution, the struggle between the two opposing lines in the international workers and trade union movement became stronger. In the trade union field, this is manifested in the formation of, on the one hand, opportunist and reformist organizations, like the International Trade Union Federation, the International Confederation of Christian Trade Union and the International Labor Organization and on the other the Red Trade Union International as a revolutionary working class trade union organization.

A. The International Federation of Trade Unions

This organization was founded in 1919 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and spread mainly in western Europe; it is also known as the "Amsterdam International". Its leaders always stood in a position of opportunism, reformism and class collaboration, opposing the working class trade union movement, the socialist ideas of October, and the liberation movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries; they sabotaged the class unity of the trade union movement. Although this center considered itself to be outside parties and politics, in fact it was dependent on the Socialist International which was run by the socialists of the right.

B. The International Federation of Christian Trade Unions

This Trade Union Organization which was founded at the Hague, the Netherlands, based its activity on Christian doctrine. According to Article 2 of the Constitution of the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions "economic and social life calls for the collaboration of all the sons of the same nation. Thus, it rejects violence and class struggle..."¹

This organization did not exert any influence among the ranks of the working class. It played a limited role, and up to the outbreak of the Second World War it had at most two million members.

C. The International Labour Organization (ILO) was founded in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1919, at the same time as the League of Nations, by the governments which had emerged victorious from the First World War, "...as a permanent organization to protect and improve the lot of the workers on a world scale".²

Its most ardent advocates and supporters were the social-democrats of the right, Gompers and Jouhaux, and the leaders of the International Trade Union Federation. It was originally led by Albert Thomas, a "socialist" syndicalist, and French Minister of Armaments during the First World War.

The International Labour Organization was set up for the purpose of alienating the working class from revolution, covering up contradictions, and suppressing class struggle, so as to create within the working class and the trade union movement a reformist mood and the illusion, that its class interests would be protected and resolved by this organization.

1 G. Lefranc. "Syndicalism in the World", French edition. Paris 1969, p. 55.

2 International Labour Office. "The International Labour Organization in the service of Social Progress" Geneva 1969, French edition, page 38.

In fact, the three above mentioned international organizations, the International federation of Trade Unions, the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions and the International Labour Organization, with their markedly opportunist and reformist stand, have caused a lot of damage to the worker and trade union movement, while rendering great service to the bourgeoisie.

D. The Red International of Labour Unions

The founding of the Third Communist International in Moscow in March 1919 exerted direct influence on and gave further impetus to the world working class trade union movement. Thus, in 1920 the First Congress of Revolutionary Trade Unions was held in Moscow, and was attended by delegates from 41 different countries. It was there that the Red International of Labour Unions was founded.

In its program it was charged with the task of doing away with the capitalist system and establishing socialism. Membership was open only to trade union organizations which accepted the revolutionary principles of class struggle, which combined the struggle for the economic claims of the workers with the political struggle, and which strove to expose the reformist movement represented by the leaders of the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions. The Red International, which was created under the sponsorship and direct backing of the Third Communist International, openly declared its collaboration with it and accepted its political and ideological guidance.

The setting up of the Red International played a major role in the entire struggle of the working class and the world trade union movement. Its growing influence was also manifested in the increase in the number of its members. By 1937 its membership had reached 20 million, while the membership of the Amsterdam International had fallen from 20 to 12 million.

A number of times the Red International called on the Amsterdam organization to undertake joint actions against the offensive of capital, the emergence and establishment of fascism, and the danger of an imperialist war, but all these proposals for unity and a joint front against fascism were turned down by the right-wing leaders of the Amsterdam International, who paved the way for fascism.

The establishment of fascism in Italy and Germany brought about the break up of the trade unions and the suppression of the trade union rights and liberties which had been won in these countries. The danger that fascism would be established also appeared in some other countries, such as France, where the working class undertook a series of actions against fascism. In this framework, in 1935 the Popular Front was created in France, which was the result of unity from above, by the leaders; the trade union movement also took part in it. In March 1936 the two biggest trade union centres in France united; their unity was reached not on the basis of class struggle but of unprincipled compromise, and expediency. An unprecedented wave of strikes then burst out all over France, the workers occupied factories and enterprises everywhere, and a revolutionary situation was created. But the trade union leadership, intimidated by this broad movement of the class struggle, sabotaged it, reaching a compromise with the bourgeoisie which is known as the Matignon agreement.

The period between the two world wars was characterized by the internal crisis of the capitalist system, the increase of the working class, its organisation into trade unions, and the upsurge of the revolutionary spirit. Thus, on the eve of the First World War the trade unions had about 10 million members, but just before the Second World War they numbered about 40

million members.

The war against fascism, especially after the Soviet Union had entered it, raised the awareness of the working class and its militancy to a new and higher level. It saw in fascism a double menace, both to the working class and to national independence; thus, while fighting against the invaders to free their own country, the working class fought at the same time to solve its own most immediate problems. This is why the working class everywhere took an active part in the battle against Nazi-fascism, resorting to the most varied methods, ranging from strikes and sabotage up to armed conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS AND ITS POSITIVE ROLE DURING ITS FIRST STAGE

Under the conditions of the anti-fascist coalition, there emerged the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), as the broadest democratic organization and the representative of the world trade union movement. Its creation was not fortuitous, but a fact of history, in response to the new conditions created during the Second World War.

The first attempts to establish regular links and relations of collaboration within the context of the anti-fascist war in the trade union field, were substantiated in the creation of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee in December 1941; the latter took the initiative and set up a Preparatory Committee, made up of the representatives of the Central Council of the Soviet Trade Unions, the British Trades Union Congress, and the American Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). This Committee made preparations for and called the First World Trade Union Conference.

The World Trade Union Conference was held in London from February 6 to 17, 1945, with the participation of 40 national trade union centers and 15 international organizations, which represented neatly 50 million workers. The Conference mapped out the tasks of the Trade Union movement, for the period during and after the war, and worked out the program for the basic social and economic demands of the workers for the future. One of its main decisions was to convene a Provisional Committee to found a world trade union organization.

Thus, a World Trade Union Conference was held in Paris from September 25 to October 8, 1945, with 215 delegates from 56 different countries taking part; on October 3, 1945 it was transformed into the First Trade Union Congress, which founded the WFTU.

The Congress approved the Statute of the WFTU which defined its aims, methods and organization as well as the program and platform on the major international problems of the time, such as the uprooting of fascism, the problem of peace, the demands of the trade unions to improve the living and working conditions of the workers, trade union unity, etc. The Congress also appointed the leading organs of the WFTU.

In the first resolution approved by the Congress, the struggle to put a speedy and final end to fascism was considered to be the main task of the WFTU and the trade union movement of all countries. The success of the Congress lay in the fact that it was the first time that the problem of the struggle against colonialism and the national liberation of the people was taken up for discussion. "It would be an incomplete victory indeed", the fourth resolution of the Congress stated, with reference to the right of peoples to self-determination, "if the full use of the right to self-determination and national independence of the peoples of the colonies and territories of all countries were denied them".¹

The London Conference, the Paris Congress and the founding of the WFTU itself were a success for the working class and democratic trade union forces, for it was the first time in the history of the trade union movement that meetings had been held with such wide representation from all continents. The decisions taken were positive ones and, in general, took into account the defence of the rights and interests of the working class. These results were not achieved without

¹ Report of the Conference – Congress for the founding of the World Federation of Trade Unions, 25 Sept. - 8 Oct 1945, Paris. Rumanian edition, page 323.

struggle, which at times was bitter indeed. The Congress came up against many differences of various kinds which were not just passing ones, but showed that sooner or later, under specific conditions, they would break out.

On one side, there were the working class, anti-imperialist, progressive trade union forces, which wanted the new world trade union organization to be set up on a sound, broad democratic, anti-fascist and class, basis, to comprise the working class of all countries, in order to solve the fundamental problems relating to its class interests successfully. Speaking about the problem of unity and about the anti-Soviet tendencies which were manifested among the leaders of the English trade unions, the head of the delegation of the Soviet Trade Unions to the London Conference said: "How can we speak about unity in the international trade union movement, how can we speak about the efforts of the working class to bring about the defeat of Nazi Germany, if we frighten the delegates with the bugbear of the Soviet Trade Unions?"¹

On the other side, there were the reformist and opportunist forces, represented by the trade union leaders of England, the USA and other countries, which resorted to various methods in order to hinder and sabotage the creation of the WFTU so as to keep alive the bankrupt Amsterdam International Trade Union Federation of their own making. When these attempts met with failure, under pressure from the masses and a general increase in the class spirit in the trade union movement, they remained in the WFTU, not for the purpose of strengthening it but in order to capture it from within, and turn it into a tool in their hands; if they could not achieve their objective, they would paralyze and undermine it, and destroy it from within. So they continued to wage their battle within it, but in a disguised way. They hindered the work of establishing Professional Departments of the WFTU, and systematically sabotaged a number of its decisions.

All these facts go to show that right from the founding of the WFTU, there appeared two opposing lines; although they existed at that time, because of the particular political situation they had not then taken definite shape, but did so at a later date.

When the Anglo-American imperialists saw that they could not transform the WFTU and turn it into their tool through their reformist trade union leadership, they then sought its destruction, trying to break up trade union unity within the WFTU. To this end they began to gather their forces and look for a pretext to shatter it.

This pretext was found in the "Marshall Plan". At the meeting of the Executive Bureau of the WFTU, the American trade union delegation from the CIO demanded that this session should take up the "Marshall Plan" for discussion, although this was not on the agenda. This proposal was rejected by a majority of votes. On January 28, 1948, the General Council of the British TUC, in collusion with the American CIO, sent an ultimatum to the WFTU, demanding that "the Bureau (the executive bureau of the WFTU – author's note) should either call a meeting towards the middle of February, with the 'Marshall Plan' on the agenda, or else the Trades Union Congress would feel free to call a separate meeting with those trade union organizations which supported the Plan".² This ultimatum was rejected by the WFTU.

Then, outside the WFTU and at variance with it, though formally still connected with it, in London, in March 1948, the British trade unions called a congress of "Marshall Plan" countries

1 "Report of the World Trade Union Conference", County Hall, London 1945. French edition, page 66.

² WFTU – "Report of the Activity of the World Federation of Trade Unions". Milan 1949, French edition, page 55.

which set up “The Consultative Committee of Trade Unions” for the purpose of carrying out “the Program of European Reconstruction”. This was a divisive act which marked the final break-up of unity within the WFTU.

Later on other divisive acts followed. At the January 1949 meeting of the Executive Bureau of the WFTU, the representative of the General Council of the TUC demanded that the WFTU suspend its functions. This proposal was accompanied by an ultimatum which said that: “In addition, the General Council has decided that if the WFTU should refuse to suspend its activities, the TUC will withdraw from it...”¹ This, proposal, which in reality aimed at doing away with the WFTU itself was not approved by its Executive Bureau; therefore the representatives of the English, American and Dutch trade unions left the meeting, and broke with the WFTU. Thus the split became a reality.

The attitude of the American and British trade unions and their followers was not a purely isolated act. Above all it was a political stand, part and parcel of the general plan of US imperialism to establish its hegemony everywhere, and to maintain its leading role. The reason for the split, therefore, was not the approval or disapproval of the “Marshall Plan” by the WFTU; that was merely a pretext. The split, as was learned later, had been previously prepared in the greatest detail by the US State Department, in collusion with the CIA.

The strategy and tactics to be pursued in order to destroy the WFTU were decided upon as early as 1947, at the Geneva meeting in Switzerland, which was attended by representatives of the US government, together with certain leaders of the CIO. As from 1947 we can make out the moves of emissaries from the US government who, under the guise of trade unionists, were appointed as social or labour attachés to the US embassies in the Marshall Plan countries. Their main task was to pave the way for the creation of a new international trade union organization. A special part in this was assigned to the AFL, which, had not taken part in the creation of the WFTU, and which had been scheming against the WFTU since 1946. It set up a correspondence office in Brussels with the aim of sabotaging the activity of the WFTU. Green, president of the AFL, himself admitted that he had distributed 160 million dollars to subsidize new trade union organizations in Europe.

As a consequence of this split, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was set up in London on November 23, 1949. It is no secret that this new organization was set up under the instigation and with the backing of the imperialists, as a consequence of the secret agreement between the British Foreign Minister the “trade unionist” Ernest Bevin, and John Foster Dulles, leader of the Republican Party and later American Secretary of State. According to that agreement, the principal task of the ICFTU was to give active support to the Atlantic Pact and its tools, and to frustrate the influence of the communists and other progressive elements in the trade unions, etc.

Following the establishment of the ICFTU, a great divisive and corruptive campaign was launched, with the direct aid and support of the American State Department and the CIA. What they did at that time was to set up the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB), divisive trade union groups in France, the General Confederation of Labour – Work Force (CGT-FO), the Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions, etc. This was affirmed by George Meany, head of the American Federation of Labour who, in 1951, said: “When the communist menace was great in France and Italy during the post-war years, the trade unionists with free tendencies were aided

1 WFTU – “Report of the Activity of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Milan 1949, French edition, page 55.

by their American colleagues stationed at the embassies, who gave them material aid in establishing anti-communist trade unions”.¹ The local governments also helped in setting up divisive trade union organisations. Suffice it to mention that in France alone, the government offered forty million francs to help set up the General Confederation of Labour – Work Force organization.

The chiefs of these trade union centers supported the measures taken by their governments, which attacked the standard of living and the democratic rights of the workers, and the freedom of the trade unions. Thus, during the May 1947 miners’ strike in England, the President of the National Union of Mineworkers, condemning the strikers, declared: “This unofficial strike must be opposed by every faithful member; we will not tolerate it... The Government should use every means at its disposal to stop this criminal act, which jeopardizes production”.² A rabid anti-communist hysteria broke out among all the reformist trade unions, Its aim was to deal a blow at the progressive trade union movement and its leaders. In November 1948, Tewson, the General Secretary of the TUC, gave categorical instructions to the trade union leaders to fight.

The secession of the TUC, the American CIO, and a number of other reformist trade union centers, far from weakening the WFTU, gave it further impetus. The many concrete actions it undertook in defense of the vital interests of the workers greatly enhanced its authority and prestige among the masses. The working class did not stand idle before the bourgeoisie, but rose in struggle. During this period, the WFTU actively aided and supported the broad economic and political claims of the working class and the trade union movement through documents, resolutions, actions of solidarity and practical activity, matching words with deeds. It undertook a wide international activity in mobilizing all the sound trade union forces in defense of peace, and in setting up a united front of the labouring masses everywhere.

While condemning the principles of class collaboration, opportunism and reformism in the trade unions, the WFTU strove at that time to implement the principles of proletarian internationalism and worker solidarity, and to consolidate class unity. Within this context the “exposure and denunciation of splitters was one of its "important tasks. Thus, the resolution of the Executive Committee of the WFTU, meeting in Budapest in May 1950, stated: “The Executive Committee of the WFTU stigmatizes the chiefs of the yellow International and all the traitors to the working class, and considers them to be agents of Anglo-American imperialism within the ranks of the worker movement”³.

The WFTU firmly opposed American hegemony and global policy of US imperialism and condemned its various political, economic and military organizations. In the resolution on its economic and social program we read: “The ‘Marshall Plan’, the ‘Western Alliance’, and the ‘Atlantic Pact’ are links in the same aggressive policy of the Anglo-American imperialists, who aspire to world hegemony”⁴.

The WFTU maintained an equally correct stand towards the divisive activity of the Yugoslav Trade Unions. In its June 1950 resolution, “On the betrayal of the leaders of the Central Council

1 G. Meany, “The last five years”, Speech delivered before the Catholic Labour Alliance, 13 March, 1951.

2 G. Lefranc, ”Trade Unions in the World”, Paris 1963, French edition, page 93.

3 WFTU – “Report of the activity of the World Federation of Trade Unions”. Resolutions adopted by the 2nd World Trade Union Congress, Vienna 1953, French edition, page 99.

4 WFTU – “Report of the activity of the World Federation of Trade Unions”. Resolutions adopted by the 2nd World Trade Union Congress, Vienna 1953, French edition, page 54.

of the Yugoslav Trade Unions”, its Executive Committee decided to sever relations with them and expel them from the Executive Committee of its General Council.

A major success in the struggle against colonialism was scored by the great Chinese Revolution, culminating in the establishment of the People’s Republic of China on October 1, 1949. This was an event of historical significance for all mankind, because it brought about a radical change in the ratio of forces in favour of socialism, and rescued one third of the world’s population from feudal-bourgeois oppression and exploitation. It was at the same time a valuable contribution to the struggle of the oppressed peoples.

During its initial period, up to 1960, the WFTU was an organization which grew, became strong and won prestige and in general adopted positive stands, imbued with the working class and anti-imperialist spirit.

PART TWO

ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

CHAPTER ONE

MODERN REVISIONISM IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT – A NEW VARIANT OF OPPORTUNISM AND REFORMISM

Following the Second World War, major events of historical significance took place, and brought about radical transformations in the world. A number of countries embarked on the road to socialism, and a major impetus was imparted to the revolutionary and national liberation movements for national liberation and social emancipation, directed against colonialist and imperialist bondage.

Changes in the ratio of forces took place among the capitalist countries too. US imperialism strengthened its economic, political and military position and emerged at the head of all the capitalist countries, becoming the bastion of capitalism and its international gendarme.

New development occurred in the world. State monopoly capitalism was greatly expanded and the technical-scientific revolution made rapid progress. In certain countries capitalism developed in a more or less peaceful way, recording a temporary relative improvement in the economic situation of the working people, new industries were set up, involving large capital investments and swelling the working class with new “recruits” from strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, and especially from the middle and poor peasants, who brought with them their particular views and wavering stand.

These and other changes were interpreted and responded to in various ways within the leftist forces themselves, became in some of them, a new opportunist trend, modern revisionism, had begun to emerge and take shape; its political and ideological platform was gradually introduced into the trade union movement. The trend denies the necessity of class struggle, and propagates the thesis of the allegedly changed nature of imperialism and the gradual transformation of capitalism into socialism through new forms of the development of capitalism; it tries to divert the working people from the road of revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation and supports peaceful coexistence, which, according to this trend, should constitute the basis of the trade union movement.

The general conditions and reasons favouring the emergence and spread of modern revisionism are many and have their own distinct features. Without claiming to give a thorough analysis of this problem, which is not the object of this study, we can say that in general, modern revisionism is the product of given social and economic conditions in which the objective as well as subjective factors played their role.

The degeneration of the trade unions in the Soviet Union and in the other countries where the revisionists are in power

The assumption of power by the Khrushchevite group in the Soviet Union brought about radical changes in the whole political, economic and social order, in the base and the superstructure. Of course, the Soviet trade unions, as important links in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, could not stand aloof from the process of disintegration and

general degeneration. The Khrushchevite revisionists had, first of all, to break down the principles and fundamental norms on which the trade unions had been set up and were functioning; they had to revise the Marxist-Leninist teachings on trade unions, and to discard Leninist ideas on the leading role of the working class. They did all this under the cloak of demagoguery as "socialists" and in Lenin's name.

The fundamental principles on the role and tasks of the trade unions were gradually violated and replaced by a new revisionist line and norms in the Soviet Union and the countries where the revisionists have come to power; these new stands can be summarized thus:

1) The negation of the leading role of the working class.

The general revisionist course has turned the working class from the political force of the country which played the principal role into an economic appendage, a work force, whose task is not to direct but to fulfil plans, and to work and produce for the new stratum of the revisionist bourgeoisie. The role of the working class is confined to the sphere of production, while nothing remains of its role of leadership and supervision as the class in power, nor can this even be spoken of now that the revisionists are in power.

The functions of the trade unions have also undergone a radical change: their political and educational role has been replaced by economic, as general line.

2) The growth of the capitalist tendency.

With the application of the new economic reform in the Soviet Union and, gradually, in the other revisionist countries, the bolshevik economic policy for the building of socialism and communism was abandoned, and the new course of encouraging capitalist tendencies to seek profit and place narrow personal interests above general interests, and immediate interests above long-term ones was established. This became the main driving force of production and the productive activity of the workers. The introduction of this line hastened the disintegration of socialist property into a special form of capitalist property, revived the trend toward private property and individualism, and helped to create a new privileged bourgeois class with a high income.

An important task in applying this reform has been assigned to the revisionist trade unions, which make a fetish of material stimulus and consider it to be "a very strong weapon" and a "new, effective instrument". This line goes so far as to seek to replace educational work with material stimulus. The organ of the Soviet Trade Unions, the newspaper "Trud", wrote on February 16, 1969, in an article headed "The 13th Wage": "We have now been given the chance to fight against the parasites, the cadres who quit work, the drunkards and the undisciplined, with the aid of the ruble".

3) The creation of the worker aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy.

Class differentiation in the Soviet Union and the other revisionist countries is now a well-known reality. The new bourgeoisie, among others, includes the trade union bureaucracy and the new worker aristocracy. From the ideological and economic point of view, this stratum has detached itself from the working class and the interests it upholds, from the base; it opposes the working class, and, with the aid of the state, exploits and oppresses it and all the working people.

Within this context, the function of the trade unions is to supervise, keep in submission and curb the working class, to suppress the inevitable class conflicts, and to break its revolutionary spirit.

It is precisely this class differentiation which has caused the outbreak, in certain revisionist countries, of antagonistic contradictions and class conflicts, expressed in strikes and protests organized by the working class, as in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. The December 1970 revolt in Poland, which was bloodily suppressed by the revisionist bourgeois state, is vivid proof of the establishment of two antagonistic classes.

4) The bureaucratization and degeneration of the trade unions.

In revisionist countries, the trade unions base their activity on the work of the trade-union functionaries, who make up a bureaucratized “elite”. The principle of active work in society has been replaced by that of the closed, confined work of the bureaucratic trade union apparatuses, which impose themselves above the elected organs and decide everything.

This method of work led to a situation in which the trade union organizations at the base in the revisionist countries were no longer motivated by a spirit of militancy, but were characterized by the general indifference and apathy of the masses of its members towards various problems. The trade unions were turned into a formal organization without vitality and vigour. In explaining why he gave up being a member of the trade union committee of his work center, a Soviet worker wrote, in a letter to the newspaper “Trud” dated November 13, 1969: “The fact is that our trade union organization exists only formally, on paper. In fact, no work is done in it. It has neither standing nor temporary commissions”. Nor is this an isolated case.

A. Shelyepin himself, in his capacity as president of the Soviet Trade Unions, felt compelled to admit in his report, submitted at the 15th Congress in 1969, that there existed “pronounced shortcomings and irregularities as regards work and discipline, such as cases of alcoholism, idleness, disregard for the interests of society and the collective, and theft of socialist property”.

The trade unions in the Soviet Union and in other countries where the revisionists are in power have been placed completely at the service of the new revisionist bourgeoisie. They strive to corrupt their members spiritually, ideologically and politically. Economism, technocratism, the administrative and bureaucratic spirit – these are the typical features of the trade unions in these countries.

The internal degeneration of the Soviet Trade Unions could not help but bring about changes and consequences in their stand on international problems and in the development of the world trade union movement.

With the usurpation of power by the Soviet revisionists, the revisionist views, which up to that time had not been openly manifested, and those within the ranks of certain trade union centers in the capitalist countries, for instance the CGT of France or the CGIL, and others, were not late to appear. These centers which, in general stood out for their anti-imperialist nature and stand, later abandoned this line, and gradually became organizations of the trade-unionist and reformist type.

CHAPTER TWO

THE REFORMIST AND TRADE-UNIONIST CENTERS – TOOLS IN THE HANDS OF THE MONOPOLISTS AND CAPITALIST GOVERNMENTS

The traditional reformist trade unions base all their activity on class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and the capitalist state in which they act. Thus, for instance, this function of the trade unions in the USA was: “to defend and preserve the existing order, and to develop and improve it”.¹ This was the task set for the AFL by S. Gompers, who headed this organization from 1889, when it was set up, to 1941; it continues the same to this day.

This is how the collaboration between the State and the trade unions is sanctioned in the program of the British Trade Unions: “Consultation takes place daily between the TUC and Government Departments often at a Ministerial level – on all aspects of working life and on other national and international problems...”.²

In factories in the Federal German Republic, the trade union exists only in name; they have the “Betriebsrat”, a kind of internal commission on which both the workers and the employers are represented; its duty is to follow up the implementation of the contracts signed by both the workers and the employers, and to discuss problems connected with production. In Federal Germany there are about 300,000 such organizations which are recognized and accepted by the reformist trade union leaders of the DGB.

In Switzerland, an agreement reached as far back as 1937 between the reformist trade union leaders and the employers, is known by the name of “Labour Peace”. According to this, the trade unions undertake to stop all direct conflicts with the bourgeoisie, and to launch no further strikes, otherwise they must pay the employers an indemnity. Referring to this, the representative of the Swiss Trade Union, S. Müller, declared in London in 1968, on the occasion of the centenary of the founding of the Catholic Trade Union: “...our labour relations are very, very peaceful. Actually we, celebrate this year the 15th anniversary of the first and last general strike we had in Switzerland”.³

In England, Canada, Australia and other capitalist countries, labour disputes are “settled” by the organs and institutions appointed by the local bourgeois governments, such as industrial courts, conciliation and arbitration commissions, and so on. These organs are appointed, depending on their importance, by the Minister of Labour or by other government authorities. By accepting and supporting these mechanisms of the bourgeoisie, the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders wait for the bourgeoisie to settle these labour misunderstandings and conflicts. They strive to create illusions among the workers about the “impartiality” of the bourgeois courts, their justice and their super-class character.

The distinctive character of the activity of those reformist trade union centers in capitalist countries is not just that they are better adapted to the bourgeois order, but that they have become integral parts of its structure, and spokesmen for the big monopolies and the capitalist state, which often subsidize them. Thus, the trade union bulletin of the Swedish Confederation (Landsorganisationen) writes: “The LO Confederation as well as the member federations will

¹ G. Lefranc: “Trade Unions in the World”, Paris 1963, French ed., p 30.

² T.U.C. – “Trade Unionism”, – London 1967”. Second edition, p, 1.

³ T.U.C. 100 – “Trade Union Congress 1968”, Report, Blackpool 1968, p. 103.

from now on receive a State subsidy of 20 million kronen a year for the courses they organize”.¹

It is a known and proven fact that the leaders of those trade unions in capitalist countries which have a tradition of consistently following the opportunist course of class collaboration uphold and give direct support to monopoly capital and, especially, to US imperialism. This is the real reason that the chiefs of the trade unions of the American AFL-CIO, the British TUC, and those of German, French and Italian right-wing social-democracy, etc., by approving the “Marshall Plan”, the aggressive North Atlantic military pact and other organs of US imperialism, have shown themselves to be reserves of monopoly capital and tools of the imperialist policy of their government, subjecting the trade union movement to this policy. These trade union leaders have legitimized, approved and backed the various military aggressions and interventions undertaken by US imperialism in various parts of the world ranging from Korea, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, to Vietnam and the Near East. At the recent Congress of the AFL-CIO held in 1971, US president Nixon expressed his gratitude for the backing these groups gave to his foreign policy, particularly in the Vietnam war.

In order to realize their political, ideological and economic expansion in independent states, and to take the place of the old rival imperialists, the US imperialists made use of the trade union movement.

Especially after 1947, the US Government assigned an important role to the reformist leaders of the US trade unions, as its “partners and collaborators”.

Through the AFL-CIO, the US State Department has spent millions of dollars in order to split the trade union movement, cause ideological diversion, and finance its agents, as well as to train hundreds and thousands of trade unionists through a wide network of trade union schools and courses not just in the US but also outside it.

In 1961 the American Institute was opened; its program was to develop free trade-unionism by training trade union cadres for South America. The leaders of this Institute make no secret of the aid it has given to establish rightist forces, subservient to U.S. imperialism, in Brazil, former British Guiana, the Dominican Republic, and other countries.

US diplomatic representations also engage in a wide range of trade union activities. The “social attachés” are in charge of following up, supervising and financing the trade union movement in the countries to which they are accredited.

I. Davies, expert on African trade union affairs, wrote of the US government that “...by the early 1960s it was spending over 13,000,000 dollars a year for international labour affairs, with forty eight labour attachés in developing countries, supported by a host of trade union “advisers”. Further on he says; “it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that the AFL-CIO, the American Department of State and the CIA were working together in a common offensive. Any such suspicions were more than justified by the evidence”.²

In his book “Spearheads of Democracy – The Labour in the Developing Countries” published in 1962, the former US assistant secretary of Labour for international affairs, George Lodge, son of the millionaire and Republican leader Henry Cabot Lodge, writes about the close relations existing between the U.S. Government and the American Labour, and how they should go in the future. According to the author himself, this, book is an appeal to the government, the employers and the trade unions, to get them to understand better the importance of worker organizations in the developing world in the implementation of US foreign policy and for the

1 LO, Bulletin of the Swedish Confederation, Third series, N° 4, 1970; French edition.

2 Iain Davies, “African Trade Unions”, London 1866, English ed., p. 201.

objectives of the “free world”. According to Lodge, the US monopolies are charged with a special role and should help in setting up “free” anti-communist trade unions abroad. Lodge asserts that “the US Government, American management and the American Labour are simply three factors in our foreign policy”.¹

These statements and examples, and many others, provide clear proof that the leaders of the reformist trade union centers of the capitalist countries, regardless of their outward appearance and the demagoguery they resort to, have turned into tools of the capitalist monopolies and of their reactionary governments, and work hand in glove with them.

* * *

The trade unions of the social-democrat, trade-unionist or revisionist type are part and parcel of capitalism, its appendage, complying more and more with the bourgeois order.

On the world trade union plane, the reformist and revisionist trends find expression today in three international trade union organizations: the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the World Confederation of Labour.

a) On one side stands the WFTU which, in spite of the refined demagoguery and anti-imperialist, working class phraseology to which it resorts, cannot conceal its opportunist course, and its separation from the anti-imperialist class struggle, its submission to the dictate of the Soviet revisionists, etc. This capitulationist course of the WFTU leadership has caused discord, contradictions and rivalry to erupt strongly within its ranks, especially during the Soviet aggression against Czechoslovakia. The revisionist leadership of the CGIL and the French CGT, etc., profiting from this occasion, tried to escape from Soviet dictate, to weaken its influence and gain some measure of autonomy. But the polycentrist tendencies of these centres, particularly of the Italians, to create a single European trade union centre in the capitalist countries, in which they should occupy the key positions and be dominant, are not viewed favourably by the Soviet trade union leaders.

Although the WFTU speaks of universality, it has lost its representative nature; this is expressed in its elected executive organs, which direct all its activity. Half the members of the principal leading organs elected at the 8th Congress of the WFTU (Varna, October 1973) are Europeans.

Within the ranks of the WFTU and its International Trade Unions, there has sprung up a broad bureaucratic caste—with a swollen apparatus of functionaries who have been picked, mainly for their loyalty to Soviet policy. Among those who have been elected members of the Executive Committee of the WFTU are the “representatives” of Argentina, Brazil, and other countries, who represent nobody but themselves, for they have long since become detached from their organizations and their countries; they receive high salaries and move from one country to another attending meetings and congresses. E. Pastorino, president of the WFTU, himself represents nothing, for his trade union organization, the National Convention of working people of Uruguay, is not a member of the WFTU; and the list could be extended with numerous other cases.

b) On the other side stand the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labour, whose position is to safeguard and back the capitalist order, class collaboration, and frenzied anti-communism. The ICFTU, a direct offspring of capitalism,

¹ WFTU – “Trade Union Press” No. 13, July 1964, French edition.

gives direct service to the monopolies and, first and foremost, to US imperialism. The leaders of this organization have fully backed the stand of US imperialism on all the fundamental issues of the international situation. In various statements and resolutions, they have backed and legalized the interventions, plots and aggressions of US imperialism all over the world.

The secession of the American AFL-CIO from the ICFTU was a consequence of the deep contradictions and rivalry for hegemony and power which gnaws at this organization from within; it has become totally degenerate and is experiencing a deep crisis.

Although the heads of the WFTU, ICFTU, etc., undertake actions under the banner of “trade union solidarity” and make a lot of noise about being “independent” of their governments, facts prove that they are nothing but obedient tools of US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, and serve the policy of collaboration and hegemony of the two superpowers, which try by every means to subjugate the trade union movement.

The two imperialist courses and two reformist and revisionist lines on the trade union plane, despite the strategic objectives which bring them together and unite them, because of their very anti-proletarian nature and character are gnawed by discord, rivalry and sharp contradictions. In these conditions, resolute, consistent and uncompromising struggle on two fronts is an imperative task for the working class and the class trade union movement.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF REFORMISM AND REVISIONISM IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The complete degeneration of the reformist and revisionist trade unions is brought about in various ways. Among the principal factors we may mention the working class aristocracy and the trade union bureaucracy.

a) *The working class aristocracy.* Taking the example of the worker movement in England, the classic writers of Marxism-Leninism have explained that industrial prosperity is accompanied by an attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to buy off part of the working class and turn it into an opportunist and reformist petty-bourgeoisie, which is afraid of revolution. The bourgeoisie and capitalist monopolies use a very small part of their super-profits, “the crumbs from their banquet table”, to reward and corrupt the most irresolute elements of the working class, who are mainly qualified workers receiving high salaries. These, Stalin says, are the upper stratum of the working class, the best provided section of the proletariat, inclined to make compromises with the bourgeoisie and to make peace with and submit to the stronger force, with a view to joining their ranks”.¹

Historically, the bourgeoisie of every country has bought off some of the qualified workers, the working class aristocracy, and detached them from the masses of the proletariat, by providing them with easy jobs and posts with fewer headaches but greater rewards. Fat salaries, favours and advantages brought about their gradual estrangement from the working class, both economically and ideologically. By backing the bourgeois, the aristocracy of the working class turned into a fifth column, spreading bourgeois ideology in the ranks of the working class and the trade union movement. Without their assistance the bourgeoisie would not have been able to keep the working class under its domination. The worker aristocracy tries its hardest to keep its posts by serving the bourgeoisie zealously and by backing, overtly or covertly, its anti-worker measures and policy.

In addition to increasing production, and hence its income, the bourgeoisie is interested in increasing the ranks of this aristocracy by artificially increasing the number of job qualification and categories, which leads to pronounced differences between the wages of the ordinary workers and those of the specialized ones, and by promoting the latter to various jobs and responsibilities in and outside production.

The automation of the processes of production in no way implies that the aristocracy has disappeared from the ranks of the workers, as the bourgeois and revisionist ideologists claim, saying that now we allegedly have a middle working class with a good income. In reality, regardless of the degree of development of science and technique in production, in the capitalist countries the stratum of the working class aristocracy exists and is growing.

b) *Trade Union bureaucracy.* The bourgeoisie also finds powerful support and another lever in the trade union bureaucracy, made up of functionaries and the trade union apparatus at the center and at the base, the journalists and workers of educational and cultural institutions dependent on them, and so on. It is precisely this great mass of trade union, bureaucracy, constantly growing, and evading the control of its rank and file members, which sets the guide

1 J. V. Stalin, “More about the Social-democratic Deviation in our Party”, Tirana, 1951, Albanian edition, page 11.

lines and effectively runs the internal and external affairs of the trade unions. This stratum, emerging from the ranks of the working class, gradually becomes detached from the working masses. It has as much interest in preserving the capitalist order as capitalism itself, because it is known that it can retain its position only if it does not oppose the wishes and requirements of the capitalist bourgeoisie.

According to official figures, minimized as they are, in 1961 the American trade union movement had 450,000 people assigned to jobs, 60,000 of whom were permanent trade union employees. This great bureaucracy has resulted in having one paid trade union official for every 300 union members. In Sweden this ratio is 1 : 1,700, in England nearly 1 : 2,000, and so on.

The top trade union jobs ensure high income to their leaders. The trade union and bourgeois press has to admit that in many cases the salaries of trade union leaders exceed those of the managers of capitalist corporations and trusts. Thus, for instance, the former president of the DGB, L. Rosenberg, received about 400,000 marks a year. Dave Budge, the leader of the truck drivers' union in the United States of America, boasted: "I am paid 25,000 US dollars a year because I run this institution (the truck drivers union)". Trade-unionism in western Europe and the USA has become good "business" for its leaders. There are many examples of this commercial trade unionism. "The theory of this commercial trade unionism", J. Doner writes, "creates incredible corruption in the personal life of the trade Union leaders who lead a lordly life, with salaries that can range from 30,000 to 75,000 US dollars a year and possess luxury automobiles. This kind of life arouses further their greed."¹

In addition to the fat salaries they receive from the trade unions they direct, many trade union functionaries receive large income from the important functions they have in the bourgeois State as Congressmen, parliamentarians, directors of officials in institutions controlling pension schemes, social insurance, workers' banks and so on.

This is why there is great rivalry for power among the trade union leaders to stay in the leadership of the trade unions. In order to hold their posts as trade union leaders, they resort to all kinds of skulduggery, ranging from deceit, threats, and intrigues, to murder.

An investigation by a senate commission in the United States of America, though biased, brought out many cases of corruption and crimes. In its findings, we read: "Onetime methods including crime, violence in all its forms, fraud, blackmail, falsification of documents, and general corruption, were all considered to be useful in order for certain local sections of the trade Unions to seize power".² One recent, vivid example of this was the murder in December 1968, of the leader of the American miners' union, I. Yablonsky, and his family. In the USA we are in fact faced with a trade union "mafia" whose threads lead back to the CIA,

Trade union bureaucracy has spread its roots not only within but also outside the trade union, becoming the zealous collaborator and tool of the capitalist state and monopolists. This type of trade union takes an active part in all the organs set up by the capitalist state and the employers.

In capitalist countries, there is an admixture of the functions of the trade union leaders, and those of the state. Often the trade union leaders fill important posts in the State or in the capitalist companies or trusts. In Britain for instance, when Lord Wright was the president of the TUC, he was at the same time the chairman of the Production and Scientific Advisory Committee. Lord Carron, a member of the General Council of Trade Union, was also a member of the National

1 F. J. Doner. "The Decadence of the AFL-CIO". Report at the 27th International Congress of the UE in California, August 1982.

2 BIT – "La situation syndicale aux Etats-Unis", Geneva 1900, French ed., p. 102.

Economic Development Council, as was Lord Collison, vice-president of the TUC, and many others. There is no end to the list of lords and sirs, the “champions” of the interests of the working class, who are among the leaders of British trade unions.

When the trade union leaders quit their trade union functions, they are appointed to higher posts in the administration of the State or the monopolies. Thus, for instance, Arthur Goldberg, former representative of the AFL-CIO in Indonesia, was later appointed as permanent US representative to the UNO. When he left the post of Secretary-General of the British TUC, Sir Walter Citrine became a member of the National Coal Board and, later, director of the higher electricity council. In connection with this, “La revista Internacional del Trabajo” organ of the OIT wrote: “Citrine managed to move competently to the negotiating table, shifting from the workers’ side to that of the employers”.

In capitalist countries, the opportunist trade union leaders find no difficulty in moving from working for the trade unions to working for the state and the monopolies, or vice-versa. Under these conditions it is hard to draw a demarcation line between the trade union boss and the businessman or state functionary.

In the ranks of the revisionist trade unions, in capitalist countries, there is also a bureaucratic caste who now enjoy many privileges and rights, all sanctioned by law.

The “Labour Code” in Italy which was approved in 1970, acknowledges that the trade union leaders have the right not to be dismissed or transferred from their jobs without the approval of their trade union centers. They enjoy the right to leave with pay, reasonable absence from work for trade union meetings, and so on. This Code limits the rights and organization of the working class. By law, this right is the monopoly of the reformist, revisionist and fascist trade unions only.

In France, according to the law on the exercise of trade union rights in the enterprises, approved by the French National Assembly in December 1968, the trade union leaders are entitled to 15 working hours a month for trade union work, for which the employers must pay them the corresponding salary; they cannot be dismissed from their jobs while they fill trade union posts, and so on.

While persecuting all those who wage a genuine campaign for the real interests of the working class, the bourgeoisie grants rights and privileges to the trade union leaders who collaborate with, are subservient to it, and become its tools.

The aristocracy of the working class and trade union bureaucracy should in no way be identified with the working class, because they make up only a very tiny part of it, and the interests they represent are at variance with those of the working class. Numerous facts go to prove that the working class aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy are integral parts of the capitalist structure, and their posts are linked with the fate of capitalism, on which their very existence depends.

CHAPTER FOUR

ON THE NEW TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN RECENTLY LIBERATED COUNTRIES

Asia, Africa and Latin America today constitute the weakest links in the world capitalist system, because it is there that all the contradictions of our time have converged. These continents, which have the overwhelming majority of the world's population, have turned into powerful hot-beds of revolutionary storms. In their resolute struggle against imperialism, especially that of the USA, the working people there are striving to overthrow the old relations of poverty, oppression and capitalist exploitation. This struggle is not only of historic significance for the liberation and future of the workers and all the people of these continents; it is at the same time a powerful support for the working class and people of the entire world. A major role in these struggles is played by the working class and the progressive trade union movement of these countries.

The emergence and development of the working class and trade union movement in these continents have not been identical. Each movement has its own particular features which differ not only from one continent to another but also within each continent. For instance, in Africa the trade union movement begins, develops parallel with the struggle for national liberation. It is different in Latin America and in a number of countries in Asia where the trade union movement is older.

Proper discussion of this must be lengthier and more complex than it can be here; therefore we will discuss only certain general aspects of the trade union movement in Africa.

As everywhere else, in Africa too, the birth and growth of the working class, as a result of the trade union movement, is closely connected with the economic, social conditions. Africa, with its many resources, because of ruthless colonial exploitation, has remained in general in a backward state as regards industry, with a low economic and social level. The productive forces there developed mainly in those sectors which brought colossal profits to the colonialists, for instance mining, the extraction of primary materials, etc.

A typical feature of the development of the African working class is that under colonial rule, it was slow to form. As a relatively new class, it showed slow growth both quantitatively and qualitatively. Ruthless colonial exploitation, with its consequences for national economic life, as well as national oppression and the lack of trade union, democratic and other freedoms, constituted and still constitute very important obstacles in the process of the formation and unification of the working class.

It was under these difficult conditions that the trade union movement came into being in Africa. Of course, it did not follow the classical course, method and plan of the trade unions of the advanced countries. It is wrong to attempt to interpret the African trade union movement outside the African historical context.

The basic feature of the African trade union movement is that it came into being and grew in bitter battle against colonialist exploitation and in the struggle for national liberation, and in fact the two movements exerted reciprocal influence on each other. In its capacity as an integral part of the national-liberation struggle, the trade union movement has played a significant part in it, but its participation has changed according to its conditions and degree of maturity. In the former French colonies and in Maghreb it has developed differently from the movement in the former British colonies or the Portuguese ones.

The struggle against colonialism and imperialism is first and foremost a struggle by the African oppressed classes against the imperialist bourgeoisie of alien nationality. The participation of the progressive trade union movement in this struggle has deepened its class character. Fighting for the day to day claims of the workers, trade union rights, and democratic freedoms, the progressive trade union movement has linked them with the national liberation struggle against the colonialist and imperialist system, representing not only political and military might but also economic power. Thus, for instance, the general strike in Nigeria in 1945, that in Algeria in February 1957, and others, point out the combination and close relations of economic with political claims, and with national liberation.

In many cases, under colonialist domination, the trade union centers in the metropolis tended to play a paternalistic role contrary to the interests of the working class and the new trade union movement which was in the process of formation. Thus, for instance, in the British colonies, the TUC demanded that the trade union movement should assume a purely economic character and refrain from backing the struggle for national liberation, considering this to be a question outside the scope of trade unions. The French CGT hampered the establishment of independent African trade union centers. When the African trade union leaders participated at various international meetings, they were obligatorily considered as members of the delegation of the French CGT and not as representatives of their own trade union organization. The suppression of the local unions of the French General Confederation of Labour in Guinea, Senegal, etc., and the establishment in their place of national trade union centers, was not approved and was opposed by the French CGT.

The situation of the trade unions in Africa underwent a radical change when most of the countries won their freedom and independence and, as a consequence, national trade union centers were set up nearly everywhere, becoming a significant force in the life of their countries. The role which the new progressive African trade unions played in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and their agents, as well as against every other form of oppression and exploitation, has been great, and they have made a very important contribution to the world trade union movement. In supporting the measures their governments have taken against imperialism, to defend independence, develop the national economy, do away with the survivals of colonialism, and bar the way to the emergence of neo-colonialism, these centers have called for the carrying out of deep reforms, the nationalization of the holdings of foreign monopolies, the enactment of land reform laws, the democratisation of the State, the taking of legal steps in favour of the workers, and so on.

However, in their rivalry to divide the world into spheres of influence, the imperialists, like the revisionists, seek to subject Africa to economic, political and ideological penetration. For this purpose they have assigned a special role to their national trade union centers, as well as to the international ones like the ICFTU and the WFTU which are manipulated by and dependent on them.

The ICFTU, in particular the AFL-CIO, carry on a wide range of activities to cause sabotage, discord and corruption in the African trade union centers, and against their leaders. In Kampala (Uganda) the African Labour-College has long existed. At the beginning of 1965, the Afro-American Labour Center was set up, with George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO, as its chairman. According to its own report, during 1972 alone this Center spent one million dollars for "training African cadres". In Nairobi (Kenya) the AFL-CIO spent 54,000 US dollars on the construction of Trade Union House. In Tel Aviv (Israel) the Afro-Asian Institute of Trade Union and Cooperative Studies, has been set up, which is subsidized by the ICFTU and the ILO. The

AFL-CIO spent 180,000 US dollars just in setting up this institute. In its November 1970 issue, the Bulletin of the Trade Union Center of Israel, "Histadrut", said that the Institute had turned out more than 2,500 graduates, mainly from African countries, and that dozens of trade union seminars had been organized.

The WFTU has been no less active; through demagoguery, material aid, numerous seminars which it organises to train trade union cadres, through contacts and visits, as well as through other methods or action, it tried to open the way for new Soviet imperialism to penetrate into the African trade union movement and split it, making feverish efforts to incorporate the African trade union centres into its ranks. Taking advantage of the temporary difficulties through which the African trade union movement is passing, the leaders of the WFTU, like those of the ICFTU and of the AFL-CIO, try by every means to hinder and undermine its unity.

PART THREE

FIELDS OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE TWO OPPOSING LINES WITHIN THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND THE STAND MAINTAINED BY THE TRADE UNIONS OF ALBANIA

CHAPTER ONE

ANTAGONISTIC CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE WFTU AND THE ACTIVITY OF THE TRADE UNIONS OF ALBANIA

Right from the time the trade union movement came into being as the center of resistance against the bourgeoisie, there appeared two opposing trends, two antagonistic lines separated from each other by an insurmountable gap: the working class line which defends and represents the interests of the proletariat, and the reformist line which expresses and defends the interests of the bourgeoisie.

These two lines reflect two diametrically opposed stands confronting each other. The struggle between the two lines, now as before, never ceases, although it becomes sharper at some times and less so at others, according to the specific conditions and the class struggle. Thus, the fundamental dialectical law of the struggle of opposites also operates in the trade union movement, both on a national and an international scale.

The bitter battle between these two lines, which is waged within the ranks of the working class and outside them, in defence of its basic and most vital interests, is manifested by the different stands maintained by the working class and the trade union movement towards the key problems which preoccupy not only the working class but all other strata of the population. This great battle which is being waged today between the two ideologies: Marxism-Leninism, on the one hand, and modern revisionism and all the other reformist and opportunist trends, on the other, includes all the theoretical, political, strategic and tactical problems of the world worker and trade union movement. The demarcation line between these two antagonistic courses is becoming clearer and clearer in all fields.

A realistic and objective knowledge and interpretation and application of these two lines is of great importance to the working class trade union movement, not only from the theoretical standpoint but also in practice because it gives them the correct orientation and preparation to be able to distinguish friends from enemies, to become more militant in carrying out the principles of the class struggle within the trade union movement with more consistency.

1. The origin of divergences in the WFTU and its alienation from the anti-imperialist class struggle.

With the advent of Khrushchev's revisionist group to power in the Soviet Union and as a result of the great pressure exerted by the Soviet trade union chieftains, opportunist views began to crop up in the WFTU too and gradually, with the passage of time, they became more frequent and assumed definite shape. Thus, within the ranks of the leadership of the WFTU a new platform appeared which at first was camouflaged by a thin veil of demagoguery. According to the revisionists, changes in the line of the WFTU were made allegedly to comply with "the concrete situation" and "the new conditions", to put right any "distortion" and so on. The process of the

transformation of the general line of the WFTU did not occur all at once: it evolved gradually from partial to general and fundamental issues.

Nor were the changes in the WFTU isolated and incidental, they were directly connected with the entire new platform of the Khrushchevite revisionists who were revising the whole line and policy of the Soviet Union. The question was not just a matter of the mistakes of some individual or of wrong tactics, but of a new line of the WFTU, of a new ideological and political platform which became more crystallised especially after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This is why radical changes were made in the general line and stand of the WFTU, changes which were run through by the spirit of opportunism, reformism and revisionism. Hence the contradictions which emerged within the ranks of WFTU. This is precisely why its leadership, and especially, the Soviet trade union leaders, are directly responsible to the working class and to the international trade union movement for the situation that has been created, for the breaking of unity and the split which has been caused within the ranks of the WFTU.

As early as the 10th session of the General Council of the WFTU in early June 1960, the revisionists tried to impose their view that the WFTU in its documents should not attack US imperialism, and its chief, Eisenhower and that the organization approve the so-called "spirit of Camp David". As well, during the meeting of the Council, the revisionists, particularly those of the Soviet Union, propagated their opportunist and revisionist theses and views on such cardinal issues as that of the stand towards US imperialism, of peaceful co-existence and so on.

This new trade union platform was put forward for discussion at the meeting of the Executive Bureau of the WFTU on November 3, 1961 in Moscow, which examined the Report and documents to be submitted to the 5th Congress of the WFTU. The then President of the WFTU, A. Novella, who was also chairman of the Italian CGIL delegation, tried to throw out the WFTU's programmatic report on "The Draft Program of Trade Union Action at the present stage in defence of the interests and rights of the workers" which was to be put forward for approval at the Congress.

According to Novella, the Draft-program was overloaded with the party spirits, so he proposed that it be worked out on a new basis, so that it would also be acceptable to the other trade unions which were not members of the WFTU. In the concrete draft he presented, he proposed, among other things, that US imperialism should not be mentioned in a specific way, that, in order to preserve peace, primary importance should be given to meetings and negotiations, especially between the heads of governments, and also proposed the formulation of the thesis of the transition from capitalism to socialism through "structural reform".

He also submitted similar opportunist and reformist views about the problem of trade union unity and so on.

The Soviet revisionists were the real instigators of the draft submitted by A. Novella. This is precisely why these theses were approved by the then President of the Soviet Trade Unions, V. Grishin, too, who pressed for the theses and program of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union also to be reflected in the draft-program and report of the 5th Congress of the WFTU. The revisionist trade union leaders failed to get the results they wanted at the 5th Congress of the WFTU and had to approve the Trade Union Program of Action.

This program was an important document and its approval was a victory for the trade union movement. In general, it reflected the anti-imperialist working class spirit both in assessing the international situation as well as in mapping out the role and tasks of the trade union movement. But events showed that the program was not carried out by the revisionist leadership of the

WFTU, which, though paying lip service to the Trade Union Program of Action, in fact violated it by interpreting it in an arbitrary and opportunist way.

The Soviet revisionists intended to turn the proceedings of the 5th Congress of the WFTU into an instrument to establish rapprochement and build “unity” between them and the chiefs of the opportunist and reformist trade union organizations, and to launch attacks and slanders against the working class trade union organizations taking part in the WFTU. Khrushchev’s speech there was aimed at the same thing. In its editorial on the opening of the 5th world trade union Congress, the newspaper “Pravda” in its December 4, 1961 issue, while not making any mention whatsoever of the struggle the trade unions should wage against imperialism, called for a campaign, against “dogmatism and sectarianism” in the international trade union movement, pretending that this was the principal obstacle to its unity.

The period following the 5th Congress of the WFTU was characterized by the further departure of the leaders of the WFTU from the anti-imperialist working class platform, by them slipping deeper and deeper into opportunist and reformist portions, faithfully pursuing the revisionist line of the Soviet Union. All this led to two opposing antagonistic lines being clearly reflected within the ranks of the WFTU: the line of class collaboration, of giving up the anti-imperialist and revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the trade unions, sponsored by the modern revisionists, headed by the Soviet trade union leaders, and the working class revolutionary, anti-imperialist line faithfully and consistently upheld by the Trade Unions of Albania, the China Trade Unions and other progressive organizations.

2. The Trade Unions of Albania – vanguard detachment in the world trade union movement

In the past too, though small in number, the working class of Albania fought for its rights, and despite great difficulties, succeeded in setting up in some towns, and for some trades, the first workers' associations, which, through their activity, gradually helped to temper class consciousness. But the struggle of the working class, and its organisation, was raised to a new, still higher level, after the Italian fascist occupation of Albania on April 7, 1939.

When Albania was liberated from the Nazi-fascist occupiers, and the exploiting classes were overthrown, in completely new historical conditions, the Trade Unions of Albania (TUA) were founded on February 11, 1945 on the initiative and under the leadership of the Communist Party of Albania (today the Party of Labour of Albania) and of comrade Enver Hoxha, the leader of the Party and of the Albanian people.

The TUA became a member of the WFTU as far back as its founding at the Congress held in Paris in October 1945. Its activity within the ranks of the WFTU can be divided into three main periods which have their distinctive characteristics.

The first period was when the WFTU took a democratic, working class and anti-imperialist stand. The TUA strove consistently to carry out its platform of the WFTU and actively supported all the various actions it undertook. With the split brought about by the reformist chieftains within the WFTU in 1949, the working class of Albania and its trade unions denounced the reformist splitters. Thus, it fully approved the correct stand of the WFTU when it condemned the leadership of the Yugoslav revisionist trade unions in 1950 “for factional activities”. Time has fully confirmed the correctness of these principled stands.

The Second period begins as early as in 1960, when the leadership of the WFTU began to move gradually away from its working class and anti-imperialist course, to deviate, to follow and

implement a new opportunist line, the general line of the Khrushchevite revisionists.

During that time the TUA carried out all-round activity within the ranks of the WFTU with the aim of having it return to its former position, correct its mistakes, take steps to prevent them from being repeated, and resolve misunderstandings and contradictions along principled lines and in a class spirit through the open and frank confrontation of various views and stands, through principled and constructive polemics. By acting in this way, the TUA discharged its internationalist duty towards the working class and the international trade union movement in defence of anti-imperialist class unity.

Abiding by the principle that on questions of principle there can never be any “middle road”, that contradictions cannot be ironed out by concealing them but by bringing them out into the open and fighting against them, the TUA waged a determined battle.

At all international trade union meetings and talks, at all meetings of the WFTU and of its International Trade Unions, the delegations of the TUA have persistently striven for the various documents, decisions and resolutions to reflect the anti-imperialist working class spirit, so that they may directly serve the struggle of the proletariat. At the various meetings of the organs of the WFTU and of its organizations, the representatives of the working class of Albania, China, and other working class trade union forces have taken an active part in discussing basic problems, opposing the opportunist views of the revisionist leaders of the WFTU, and advancing concrete and constructive proposals.

The Central Council of the TUA has advanced important proposals on a number of basic documents of the WFTU and of its International Trade Unions. For example it has made remarks, suggestions and concrete detailed proposals to the Conference held in 1964 regarding its program-statute, the 2nd International Trade Union Conference of Women Workers held in 1964 in connection with the draft-charter of the economic and social rights of women workers. It has also advanced amendments and modifications to the Statutes Amendment Commission of the WFTU and to the regulations of the World Trade Union Committee of Consultation and of Anti-Monopolist Unity of Action, and so on.

These concrete proposals came up against the resistance of the Soviet-led modern revisionists who in various ways, sometimes through pressure and dictate and sometimes through demagogy, have tried, not always, successfully, to replace or side-step them.

The battle between these two opposing lines at these meetings has been a bitter one. It has been centred around the basic problems of the worker and trade union movement, on the questions of war and peace, on peaceful co-existence, on the national-liberation struggles, on the forms of warfare and the objectives of the workers in the capitalist countries on the unity of the world trade union movement and so on.

As far back as the 5th Congress of the WFTU in 1961, the delegation of the TUA opposed the revisionist views on a number of fundamental problems and opposed the revisionist variant of replacing the struggle against imperialism with the economic struggle against the monopolies. By exposing the aggressive policy of US imperialism as a great danger to the working class and the trade union movement, the head of the TUA delegation stated: “Our delegation is of the opinion, that the danger it (American imperialism – author) poses to the workers and peoples, to peace in the world, can be averted and peace be preserved only by mercilessly denouncing its aggressive nature and its demagogy, its plots and its entire policy of oppression and exploitation”.¹

1 WFTU “The 5th Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions” – Report of Proceedings,

At the 13th Session of the General Council of the WFTU, held in Budapest in October 1964, at which the theses to form the main basis for the preparation of the 6th Congress of the World Trade Union were put forward, the delegation of the TUA presented its substantiated views on fundamental problems and refuted the report submitted by the Executive Committee of the WFTU as “a revisionist document which did not serve the interest of the working class and the anti-imperialist working class trade union movements”. By denouncing the capitulationist general line of the WFTU, the delegation of the TUA stressed that: “The Soviet trade union leaders have become the sponsors of this dangerous and fatal course in order to undermine the unity of the WFTU. In order to achieve the aims of the anti-worker policy which they have been charged to follow in our organization, they strive to side-track the WFTU from its traditional line of working class and anti-imperialist struggle, to force their policy of subservience to imperialism on it.”¹

When the leadership of the WFTU made itself entirely dependent on the politics and ideology of the Soviet modern revisionists and adopted their capitulationist general line to the letter, it adopted documents and stands which fully conformed with those of the Soviet revisionists.

One such gesture by the leadership of the WFTU was their approval of the Moscow Treaty “On the partial prohibition of nuclear tests”. At a time when such an important problem as this had not yet come up for discussion and when no decision had yet been taken about it, the General Secretary of the WFTU declared immediately after the signing of this treaty that it was “a step towards the lowering of international tension, towards creating a climate of peaceful co-existence.”

The Central Council of the TUA through a statement addressed to the WFTU regarding the August 21, 1963 Moscow Treaty on the partial prohibition of nuclear tests put forward its own views rejecting this treaty. “The Moscow Treaty”, the declaration stressed, “constitutes a new dangerous, imperialist revisionist plot against the socialist camp, the freedom-loving people and peace in the world, a diabolical trap against the peace-loving forces to the benefit of US imperialism”.² It also condemned the statement of the General Secretary of the WFTU which approved and upheld this fraudulent treaty. “This statement” it added, “does not conform to the correct line of the WFTU, to its working class and anti-imperialist orientation and is at variance with the spirit of the Trade Union’s Program of Action...”.³

Through its Statement of September 17, 1963 and persisting in its divisive stand, the Secretariat of the WFTU not only gave its complete approval to the Moscow Treaty, but also launched a public, groundless, attack on the Chinese trade unions considering its stand as “deeply erroneous”.

In his December 13, 1963 letter to the WFTU, the Central Council of the TUA once again condemned the Moscow Treaty and denounced the divisive activity of the leadership of the WFTU. The letter said: “We are also disturbed by the fact that at a time when great concern is being shown to avoid any criticism and public exposure of the reactionary chiefs of the ICFTU or of the leaders of the Trade Unions of Yugoslavia who engage in undermining activity against the WFTU and the unity of the international trade union movement, public attacks are freely

French, ed. Moscow, 1961, p. 732.

1 The Archives of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1964.

2 Ibidem.

3 The Archives of the C.C. of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1964.

launched against the member trade union organizations of the WFTU... Acts of this kind do not help preserve unity in the ranks of the WFTU and are fraught with serious dangers...”.¹

Another divisive act and a challenge to the sound trade union forces struggling in the WFTU was the message of congratulation sent by the General Secretary on behalf of the WFTU to Khrushchev on the occasion of his 70th birthday, in praises of the latter’s treacherous activity.

The Central Council of the TUA, in its letter to the WFTU dated 28.5.1964, returned this message broadly denouncing Khrushchev’s treacherous and divisive activity and his hostile attitude towards Albania. “The organization of the trade Unions of Albanian,” the letter said, “has made repeated appeals for activities infringing the authority of the WFTU and endangering its unity to be refrained from. But it seems, that certain circles in the leadership of the WFTU refuse to abide by reason and the correct course, and thus have a lot to answer for to the workers and the trade union organizations affiliated with the WFTU”.²

In their capacity as bosses of the WFTU, the Soviet trade union chieftains, being unable to openly attack the TUA for lack of arguments, began to resort to many discriminatory acts, to arbitrariness and restrictive measures, to arrogant and despicable gestures against it and its delegations, making trumped up accusations, engaging in intrigues and so on.

When the Soviet trade union leaders launched an open attack in the press and on radio against the Albanian working class and the TUA, those of the WFTU were quick to follow this divisive act by resorting to blackmail, pressure and threats with a view to subjugating the TUA and turning it away from its principled stand. After 1962, the leadership of the WFTU began to maintain dead silence and its propaganda press organs carried no information whatsoever about the life and work of the Albanian, working class although ample material was available about this. It went so far as to exclude Albania from the list of socialist countries in the documents of the 13th Session of the General Council of the WFTU.

This discriminatory spirit and line of the WFTU was also faithfully carried out by its International Trade Union. Thus, at the International Builders’ Conference in 1963, attempts were made to deny the membership of the TUA, and the TUA delegation was deliberately not invited onto the presidium of the meeting, and the Albanian flag was not displayed. At the 2nd Conference of the International Working Women’s Union held in Bucharest in 1964, our delegation was arbitrarily excluded from the sub-committee of the draft-charter although the Conference had formerly approved it and it had even submitted its own draft of amendments. At the 1964 International Miners’ Conference in Moscow, the translation from French into Russian of the speech delivered by the TUA delegation had altered the content.

Such facts and discriminatory gestures and pressures by the leaders of the WFTU against the TUA were numerous, but they neither intimidated nor curbed our determination and readiness to fight against revisionist treachery.

Our delegation to the 13th Session of the General Council of the WFTU said: “We must declare that since Khrushchev’s revisionist group has publicly attacked the People’s Republic of Albania and has begun a frenzied campaign against our country, certain leaders of the WFTU, under its pressure, have changed their stand towards the TUA. Contrary to the norms of proletarian ethics, some of the leaders of the WFTU declared their approval of the unfriendly and anti-socialist measures taken against the People’s Republic of Albania for the sole reason that it

¹ The Archives of the C.C. of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1963.

² The Archives of the C.C. of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1964.

refused to be dictated to”¹.

The third period. It began with the 6th World Trade Union Congress held in October 1965 in Warsaw. This period is characterized by the Soviet trade union chieftain’s manipulation of the WFTU, the thorough imposition of their dictate on it and their further use of anti-democratic methods.

On the occasion of the preparations for the 6th Congress of the WFTU, the Central Council of the TUA, having familiarized itself with the relevant documents and materials, submitted in time its own ideas on the problems to be taken up for discussion at the Congress, made concrete proposals for its agenda and voiced its concern about the proceedings of the Congress. In its letter of September 1, 1963 to the General Secretary of the WFTU, the Central Council of the TUA wrote among other things: “The Central Council of the TUA regrets to learn that both the agenda of the Congress and the basic documents for its preparation and its proceedings pursue the erroneous line which is contrary to the Trade Union Program of Action, a line which certain leaders of the WFTU adopted and carried out following the 5th World Trade Union Congress and which, despite the determined and reasoned opposition of many affiliated national organizations, they imposed on the 13th Session of the General Council of the WFTU. Adherence to this erroneous line which consists in giving up the principles of the anti-imperialist class struggle of the workers and progressive trade unions of the world, far from guaranteeing of the Congress, seriously damages the success of the proceedings, the unity of the international trade union movement and lowers the prestige of the WFTU, jeopardizing its very existence and activity.”²) And, in fact, the proceedings of the 6th Congress of the WFTU fully confirmed the concern of the TUA.

The fundamental opposition between the two opposing lines within the WFTU were further deepened at the meeting of the 14th Session of the General Council and, more particularly, at the 6th Congress, which was convened immediately following this Session.

Witnessing the flagrant violations of worker democracy by the revisionist leadership at the meeting of the 14th Session of the General Council of the WFTU, and in connection with the draft regulations of the proceedings of the Congress, the delegation of the TUA to the 6th Congress of the WFTU demanded that “...every delegation should be guaranteed the right to freely express its own views, to submit the views of the organization it represents whenever it deems it necessary, regardless of whether these opinions or views are liked or not”, and proposed that the following be added: “It is categorically forbidden to interrupt a delegate who takes the floor at the plenary session of the Congress. The Presidium must maintain order and silence during the-proceedings and take steps to put an end to noise, cat-calls, interjections and similar acts which hinder the free expression of opinion.”³. This proposal was rejected because it was openly opposed to the boss-like attitude of the Soviet revisionists in the WFTU.

Both at the plenary session of the Congress and at its commissions, the representatives of our working class exerted all their efforts to point out the source of the contradictions within the WFTU and presented facts and arguments to prove the demagoguery and betrayal of the Soviet-led chieftains of the revisionist trade unions. “It is now known”, the head of the TUA delegation said at the 6th Congress, “that there are divergences of principle within the WFTU. To hush up these divergences is dangerous to the cause of the workers; on the contrary, their causes should be

¹ Archives of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1964.

² Archives of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1964.

³ WFTU, “The 6th Congress of the World Trade Unions”, Warsaw, 1965, French ed., page 51.

pointed out... The cause of these divergences is the implementation, by certain leaders of the WFTU, of the erroneous line dictated by the leaders of the Soviet trade unions, which has also led to the violation of the principles of democracy and equality”.¹

In connection with the question of the revision of the Statutes of the WFTU to be taken up for discussion by the 6th Congress of the World Trade Unions as a fundamental problem of principle, the Central Council of the TUA sent its remarks and very detailed draft-amendments to the relevant Committee of the WFTU. “We are of the opinion”, the representative of the TUA delegation, to the 8th Congress declared, “that changes in the statutes should dearly indicate that the WFTU is a working class organization and integral part of the general liberation movement of the proletariat: it cannot stand aloof from this movement”. And referring to the contradictions that had arisen on this matter, he said: “The difficulties we have met with reflect the two opposing lines within the WFTU and the profoundly differing positions that have been taken in regard to defining the character, aims, methods and objectives of the WFTU.”²

The 6th Congress of the WFTU conducted its proceedings under the control of the Soviet trade union leaders who, in collusion with their puppets, trampled underfoot the most elementary norms of worker and trade union democracy. Fearing that open confrontation with working class trade union forces would reveal their betrayal, they launched a frenzied campaign of slanders, attacks and base provocations. Switching off microphones, cutting short speeches, organizing noises and stamping of feet, insults, yells, threats and other anti-democratic gestures during work sessions were the methods they resorted to. This was done in order to prevent the TUA delegation, that of China and those of the other working class trade unions from freely expressing their views and to drown out the voice of truth.

The revisionist leaders of the WFTU, in the official report of the 6th Congress of the WFTU went so far as to distort and falsify the speech of the TUA delegation by attributing to the Albanian representative abusive words which he had never uttered.

The brutality of the revisionist leadership of the WFTU reached its height at the proceedings of the 16th Session of the General Council of the WFTU held in Sofia in December 1966 at which, under the dictate of the Soviet trade union chieftains, the participants were forced to agree to the arbitrary decision, to deny the right of the delegation of the Trade Union centers of China to take part in the meeting of the Session of the General Council of the WFTU.

Among those who opposed this divisive act and who were in favour of having the above decision annulled were the delegation of the TUA, that of the trade union centers of China, that of Vietnam, South Vietnam, Ceylon and Indonesia.

When the TUA delegate took the floor to express his opinions, he was not only denied the right to speak but was subjected to insults and arrogance and even to the physical violence of the Bulgarian secret police who used force to remove him from the microphone.

In a statement to the press, the TUA delegation, described the police violence and the act of excluding the Chinese delegation from the Congress as “... typical fascist act without precedent in the trade union movement, a grave political provocation, and a mine placed under the WFTU by the Khrushchevite revisionists and their followers”.³

Summing up the 16th Session of the General Council of the WFTU, the then General Secretary, L. Saillant, referring to this deeply divisive act declared: “This decision had to be

¹ WFTU, “The 6th Congress of the World Trade Unions”, Warsaw 1965, French ed., p. 475.

² WFTU, “The 6th Congress of the World Trade Unions Warsaw 1965, French ed., p. 769.

³ The Archives of the Central Council of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1966.

taken in the name of the fundamental principles of international workers' solidarity and proletarian ethics".¹⁾

In the newly-created situation when the revisionist trade union leaders were in full control of the various meetings of the WFTU and of its organizations and when the WFTU had turned into an appendage of the Soviet policy, when the most elementary norms of trade union democracy were being unscrupulously trampled underfoot and the normal proceedings of meetings were not abided by, when the voice of the working class trade union organizations was being stifled, thus when there was no possibility whatsoever of fighting within the WFTU, then the TUA no longer took part in any of its meetings and continued its battle outside it.

The armed aggression against Czechoslovakia by the Soviet revisionists and their satellites brought about disorder and confusion in the ranks of the WFTU and made the contradictions which were gnawing at it from within burst out into the open. Some leaders of the WFTU, under the pressure of progressive world public opinion and of the reformist trade unions, were obliged, for tactical reason, to condemn the invasion of Czechoslovakia in "moderate" terms in the half-hearted communique of August 28, 1968 but later they drew back, and fully upheld the aggression. Under the dictate of the Soviet trade union chieftains, numerous secret meetings were held within the WFTU. The leaders of the CGT of France and of the CGIL were called to Moscow one after the other for consultation connected with their "rebellion". Under these difficult conditions which were very unfavourable for them, the revisionists indefinitely postponed the meeting of the 18th Session of the General Council which was to take place from October 2 to 5, 1968.

In connection with this, the 7th Congress of the WFTU in 1969 made certain "purges" in its leadership. Thus, among those the Soviet revisionists took action against was the General Secretary of the WFTU, L. Saillant who, for his act of "rebellion", was removed from that post, which he had held since its founding, and named an honorary president. This changing of the guard was justified by the ridiculous argument: "Life is bitter and we must keep in mind that towards the end of our life our forces dwindle... He is no longer strong enough to hold the post of General Secretary!..."² Not long after this Saillant was elected Federal Secretary of the CGT of France.

The TUA immediately denounced the fascist-type armed aggression against Czechoslovakia as "an ugly act of imperialist violence" and "a monstrous crime". In a letter to the WFTU it demanded that another item be added to the agenda of the 18th Session of the General Council which was to meet in Berlin on December 16, 1968. This item was to be formulated as follows: "Denunciation of the aggression by the armed forces of the Soviet Union and the other four members of the Warsaw Pact against the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia; and support which must be given to the working class and people of Czechoslovakia in their struggle to win back their freedom and national independence".³ This proposal, in flagrant contravention of the provisions of the Statute of the WFTU, was not referred to the General Council. The press statement of the Central Council of the TUA on this occasion said among other things: "This fact confirms what the Central Council of the TUA has often said in recent years, that the WFTU has turned into an obedient tool in the hands of the revisionist leaders of the Soviet trade unions and

1 "WFTU faced with its responsibility", Sofia 1966, French ed. p. 81.

2 WFTU "The 7th Congress of World Trade Unions" – minutes of the meeting. Budapest, 1969. French ed., p. 879.

3 Archives of the C C of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana, 1968.

that the whole of its activity has been entirely subjected to the Soviet dictate”.¹

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During the last two periods the revisionists changed their tactics within the WFTU to suit the general political situation. In general, their aim has been to conceal the contradictions within the WFTU in order to evade open polemics and the confrontation of opinions by all means. They have done this under the demagogical slogan of “unity” and of allegedly looking at things that “unite us” and “bring us closer”. They have sought to create the false impression that time will resolve any contradictions that may exist.

At first they tried to introduce their theses without much of noise, by not appearing on the scene themselves but using others as mouthpieces, but this did not last long. Following the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet revisionists brutally intervened to have their platform approved in the WFTU. They carried on intense activity to convince the trade union organizations of the other countries to accept this. Special attention was devoted to the selection of zealous delegates who would support the revisionist thesis and would attack the working class trade union organizations. They had visits and tourist excursions organized especially for them in the Soviet Union and in other revisionist countries.

After Khrushchev’s downfall, the revisionists changed their tactics. For a time they strove to appear “more conciliatory”, making no reference, at their meetings and in their various materials, to agreements which had been denounced, such as those of the Caribbean crisis and the Moscow Treaty, in order to create the impression that something was being done. Similarly, the view began to circulate that the contradictions within the WFTU would be ironed out, that the misunderstandings were of a “subjective” nature and not matters of principle. This subtle demagogy was resorted to for the purpose of creating the illusion that things would change within the WFTU, too. This brief pause assisted the revisionists in accumulating forces so that they could later launch their attack with more ferocity.

The TUA replied with open polemics to the revisionists’ tactics of concealing the divergences in principle and the existence of two opposing lines within the WFTU as well as to their claim that the meetings of the WFTU would “henceforth run smoothly”. It used facts to expose the Soviet revisionists as the instigators of the split, as demagogues who cover up their activity under a veil of anti-imperialist phrases while serving imperialism in deeds. Guided by the Party of Labour of Albania and in the spirit of worker solidarity and proletarian internationalism, the TUA has been characterized in all its activity by its principled and irreconcilable battle against opportunism, reformism and revisionism both within and outside the WFTU, in defence of the vital interests of the working class and the working masses and the principles of the anti-imperialist and class struggle in the world trade union movement.

¹ Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT – INTEGRAL PART OF THE FRONT OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST CLASS STRUGGLE

A long and principled battle has been going on in the worker and trade union movement since the end of the 19th century in connection with the nature of the trade union movement, with its role and tasks and the relations which should exist between the trade unions and the political parties of the working class.

As in every other domain, in this important one too, there have been and continue to be two trends, two diametrically opposed stands between which a great principled battle is being waged.

On the one hand there is the opportunist, reformist and revisionist line which accepts the existence of the capitalist order and class collaboration and endeavours to alienate the trade union movement from the general political movement of the proletariat for national liberation and social emancipation, to make it stand aloof from the solution of the major problems of the time, to turn it into a reformist social movement, confining its battle to that of securing immediate economic demands within the framework and legality of the bourgeois system, subjecting itself to the bourgeoisie and becoming an appendage of the capitalist order and an integral part of it.

On the other hand there is the anti-imperialist revolutionary working class line which seeks to make the trade union movement a center of resistance and organization against capitalist exploitation, a lever for the ultimate liberation of the working class and a school of the class struggle of the proletariat, part of the general revolutionary front and, as such, an important force in the struggle to wipe out the system of capitalist exploitation, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish socialism.

The main fields where the two antagonist lines clash have to do principally with the objectives, views, stand and course which the working class and the trade union movement should follow.

A major ideological battle is being waged today within the trade union movement between these two opposing lines on its basic problems. Let us cast a glance at some of these fields of battle.

1. On the economic struggle in the trade union movement

An important aspect of reformism and revisionism in the trade union field is their aim to confine the trade union movement to a narrow activity of revindication relating to the immediate economic needs of the working class.

The General Secretary of the Italian General Confederation, of Labour says, “We want to negotiate with you. We want to know if discussion in the factory is possible, what wages-and working hours you are prepared to give us, and the like. All we want is the settlement of these problems. Once the contact is drawn up, our struggle will cease”.¹ This is a typical trade union attitude.

The class interests of the bourgeoisie also strive to make the trade unions merely an instrument of the economic struggle of the working class, a narrow organization whose main

¹ L. Lama: “Unitá”, daily of the Italian Communist Party, October 12, 1969.

objective is to negotiate from the top with the bosses to determine the conditions for the sale of labour power.

By advertising the course of “pure trade union struggle”, the revisionists and reformists in the trade union movement give priority to immediate economic demands, abandoning and avoiding the political struggle and actions of the working class against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Thus, they deliberately side-track the working class trade union movement from the general political movement of the proletariat, from the solution of the major political and social problems of the time.

These principles have also been adopted and implemented by the revisionist leadership of the WFTU which has striven at various international meetings, in the press and everywhere, to have the trade union movement embark on the road of reformism and trade unionism. The conclusions of the meeting of the General Council of the WFTU in December 1968 said: “To lay more stress on the trade union character of the WFTU means to pay greater attention to occupational matters, to wage claims and to activities which justify its existence as a trade union”.¹

The economic struggle led by the trade union organizations has its importance and is one of the forms of class struggle, but the working class trade union movement should never separate the economic and social demands of the workers from their political ones, for the former can be achieved only by accompanying and combining them with persistent political struggle. To act otherwise means to slip into the position of reformism and trade unionism, transforming the trade unions into purely economic and trade organizations.

“In waging only the economic struggle,” Lenin wrote, “the working class loses its political independence, it becomes the tail of the other parties and betrays the great principle: The emancipation of the working classes must be the act of the working classes themselves.”²

The monopoly bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries has in its hands the economic power, as well as the political power. In its whole activity it has the full support of the capitalist state. Thus, the monopolies pursue the same end as the bourgeois state and, like it, have a class character. Therefore, in conditions when the state power is a tool in the hands of the monopolies and is used by them to intensify the oppression and exploitation of the working class, it is impossible to isolate and separate the struggle of the working class and of the trade union movement for economic claims from the political struggle, since they are interwoven, although the latter has priority over the former.

The bourgeois system, due to its exploiting character, instigates and wittingly or unwittingly obliges the working class to rebel, to fight for its rights, to go on strikes, demonstrations and other actions. In these endeavours, the working class faces not only the bosses and the monopolies, but also directly the organs of the political state power, police, gendarmerie, and army. The bourgeois state with its bureaucrat and police apparatus, intervenes directly to solve conflicts, issues anti-worker laws, oppresses the working class, and confines democratic freedom and trade union rights. At every step it defends the monopoly bourgeoisie and serves its interests.

In the advanced capitalist countries, especially in the last decade, as a result of the technical-scientific revolution and the process of the concentration of capital on a national and international scale, there has been a rapid increase of the power of the capitalist monopolies, the

1 WFTU. “Before the 7th Congress of the World Trade Unions” Berlin, 1968, French ed., page 71.

² V. I. Lenin, “Urgent tasks of our Movement”. Selected Works – Vol. 1 English Edition, p. 118.

distinguishing feature of which is the broad extension of their activity outside national boundaries, enveloping many states and continents.

These international monopolies, which are often called by the bourgeoisie and revisionists “multi-national corporations” in order to camouflage their exploiting and oppressive character, have recently become a characteristic of the more advanced capitalist countries, and one of the forms of imperialist exploitation.

At present, a very limited number of the big monopolies are the main force governing the economic and political life of the capitalist world. Many “multi-national corporations” are economic entities which possess huge capital that in many cases even exceeds the budget of many industrialized states. According to some data it turns out that “of 100 countries and monopolies which have a national production of more than 2 billion dollars a year, 54 are monopolies and only 46 are states”.¹ The annual production of the US industrial monopoly General Motors Corporation, which is considered to be the biggest in the world, exceeds the national production of Sweden, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland put together. In 1968 it employed an army of 800,000 wage earners and had an annual turnover of 22.8 billion dollars. The Anglo-Dutch industrial food monopoly “Unilever” extends to 70 countries of the world and controls over 500 enterprises with more than 324,000 wage earners.

One third of all the international monopolies belong to US monopoly capital. These monopolies, which directly serve the policy and interests of US imperialism, have not only an economic character, but also an accentuated political and military one, as well as expansionist and hegemonistic objectives. In the countries to which they extend their tentacles, these monopolies make the law and dictate their policy, contrary to the national interests of the broad working masses.

Different meetings and encounters have been organized within the framework of UNO and its specialized institutions, particularly the International Labour Organization (ILO), concerning the activity of the international monopolies and its consequences. Study groups and groups of experts have been formed by the ILO and trade unionist, reformist and revisionist leaders, who ask that “control should be exerted” over the activity of these monopolies on a national and international scale. But all this is only words, purely demagoguery, which aims to quell the working class struggle in the capitalist countries and to break the resistance of the people and sovereign countries to the expansion of these monopolies. They try to create in the working people hopes and illusions that these problems can be solved through talks and resolutions.

The working people the world over and the working class trade union movement are rightfully concerned about the harmful and dangerous consequences brought about by the international monopolies in the life of the working masses, and their danger to national sovereignty itself. They are becoming convinced from their own experience, and are becoming increasingly aware that only by denouncing and opposing by every means the economic and political expansion pursued by imperialism through its big monopolies and other forms of neo-colonialism, can economic and political independence, sovereignty and national dignity be preserved.

At various international meetings the TUA have exposed and refuted all the reformist and revisionist views which consider the trade unions as merely the instruments of the economic struggle of the working class. In all their activities they have upheld the thesis of combining and linking the anti-monopoly struggle ever tighter with various actions and forms of political

¹ La documentation française — Problèmes économiques, N° 1267, 12 April p. 5.

struggle, because, without fail, economic struggle should lead to battles of a higher level, to political battles which are the only means to bring about the resolution of economic problems.

While criticizing the program of the World Trade Union Committee for Consultation and Anti-Monopolist Activity for failing to combine economic demands with political ones, the delegation of the TUA said in Leipzig in 1963: "The platform of the World Trade Union Committee for Consultation and Anti-Monopolist Activity should not be confined to the economic field alone, but, in line with the Trade Union Program of Action, it should include the task at fighting US-led imperialism in all fields..."¹

2. – On trade union "autonomy"

The reformist and revisionist trade union leaders in the capitalist countries are raising a hue and cry about the old story of keeping the trade unions away from "ideology". Herein lies the source of their various theses and preachings about the "neutrality" or the "autonomy" of the trade union movement from the political party of the working class and so on. They advertise these "theories" as the "key" to the solution of many problems and to the unity of the trade union movement. The most outspoken in this direction are the leaders of the CGIL according to whom a very important aspect of trade union "autonomy" is the discrepancy (or irreconcilability) which allegedly exists between trade union functions and the functions exercised by many trade union leaders in political parties and state organs (parliament, the senate, the communes and others). On this problem broad discussions have been conducted between the Italian revisionist and reformist trade union officials who aim to create ideological confusion within the ranks of the working class and the trade union movement, to involve them in endless empty talks which solve nothing but which are entered into for the purpose of side-tracking the working class and the trade union movement from the class struggle.

The history of the worker and trade union movement has taught us that no social movement whatsoever has been or can be divested of ideology, that every movement or social organization has its own political views which guide its practical activity. Therefore, the trade union movement, too, like every other movement, has its political and ideological character. It cannot stand aloof from politics and ideology, especially now, when in every country of the world the process of differentiation and separation into two opposing classes is being intensified, when the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie has reached its culmination. As a matter of fact, the ideological dependence of the trade unions has existed since they came into being, but the question now is what ideology has been and should be predominant, the bourgeois, reformist and revisionist one, or that of the proletariat: the working class and revolutionary ideology.

Lenin waged a resolute struggle against the so called "autonomy" of the trade unions from the political parties of the working class, calling it "a hypocritical counter-revolutionary step", "a bourgeois fraud" and "passive submission to the bourgeoisie". Speaking of the great harm done to the German trade union movement by the acceptance of the thesis of "trade union autonomy", Lenin wrote: "The result has been so conspicuous a deviation of the German trade unions to the side of opportunism that a man so well versed in this matter as Kautsky has openly admitted it."²

The reformist trade union leaders, in their attempts to confine the activity of the working

¹ Archives of the CC of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana 1963.

² V. I. Lenin, "Stuttgart International Socialist Congress", Works, Vol. 13.

class and the trade union movement within the bounds of bourgeois legality, without threatening the capitalist system, in effect are defending the bourgeois order and its government. In fact, the solution they propose suits the bourgeoisie. The hue and cry they raise in favour of rendering the trade unions apolitical is nothing but a demagogical fraud.

As well, the TUA has faithfully defended the view that in its bitter and complicated struggle, our working class needs its leading staff, its proletarian political party which must be its guiding force, its organizer and inspirer, Without a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, the struggle of the working class and the trade union movement would fail and be subjected to spontaneity and the bourgeoisie, becoming an appendage to it.

3. On certain reformist and revisionist views in the trade union movement

The bourgeois ideologists claim, that during the period of monopoly capitalism radical changes are taking place in the whole structure of capitalist society that capitalism has changed and has gradually lost its exploiting class nature and so on. It is precisely to argue these theses that social-democracy and modern revisionism have been further activated and despite the contradictions existing between them, are rendering direct assistance to the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois, reformist and revisionist sociologists are using all sorts of forms and methods to introduce their ideological baggage into the trade union movement to propagate and spread their views and “theories” in order to brainwash the working class and the trade union movement, to deceive and confuse them. Among the most zealous sponsors of this activity are the reformist trade union leaders themselves.

Both reformism and revisionism cultivate the bourgeois “theories” and ideas of the boss class with a view to turning the worker and trade union movement into an appendage of the bourgeois order, to leaving it without perspective or a way out, to making it plunge into ideological chaos. One current fairly widespread theory is that of “structural reform” which holds that in the conditions of bourgeois society and within the framework of its constitution, the ratio of forces and the structure of capitalist society can change and power can gradually pass from the monopolies to the public and thus, as a result of one reform following another, capitalism will be transformed into socialism on the “legal road”. According to them, socialism will be reached within the capitalist system, without the necessity of the working class smashing the state apparatus by force, without the class struggle, but only through “nationalization” “economic planning.”; “public control” over all investments, through the participation of workers in “running and directing” capitalist enterprises and so on.

According to the theses of the 7th Congress of the Italian General Confederation of Labour, “Action for reform constitutes a strategy of struggle aiming at creating increasing possibilities for worker’s control over the development of society and, as a result changes the ratio of forces between classes.”¹

Reality and experience have shown that reforms under capitalism are not decisive do not change the relations between classes in capitalist society, bring no qualitative changes in the position of the working class in society, and solve none of the vital problems of the workers. These reforms have their importance when they are made for the good of the labouring masses

1 CGIL. “Information”. “Thèmes du VIIe Congrès”, monthly bulletin, French edition, N° 19, Rome 1969, p. 69.

and are utilized to further the class struggle! Reforms can in no way replace revolutionary struggle but should serve it.

Much is said about the nationalization of enterprises and monopolies in the capitalist countries which the revisionists and reformists present as a “step towards socialism”, as a measure which “weakens capitalism and directly assists the improvement of the economic status of the working class”, etc.

Referring to this problem,, the representative of the CGIL to the 6th Congress of the WFTU said: “We are mainly of the opinion that state capitalism has created new and advanced conditions for our struggle, concrete conditions for a democratic alternative which, in line with the current economic and social demands of the workers and the broad masses of the population, aims at fulfilling them by reducing the power of the monopolies through democratic progress.”¹

Experience has shown that the nationalization of capitalist enterprises and monopolies by the bourgeois state is done in the interests of monopoly capitalism and is thus a fraud. In reality, nationalization occurs when the monopoly capitalists are feeling the pinch and ask the state to help them out of their difficulties. In some cases nationalization is carried out when the bourgeoisie is interested in investing in other more profitable branches. There are many cases which prove that nationalization is to the detriment of the workers.

Nationalization in the capitalist countries, far from improving the status of the working class, has intensified exploitation; it is not the “socialization” of the means of production, and it must be assessed from the class standpoint of how far it weakens the monopolies and imperialism: outside these alternatives, it is a fraud.

Reforms in capitalist society should not be rejected, nor should they be made a fetish of, but a critical and realistic attitude should be maintained towards them.

a) On the role of the working class

The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists try to deny the revolutionary character and historic role and hegemony of the working class in our epoch. They try to portray modern capitalist society as “revived” and “prosperous”. According to them, monopoly capitalism has changed and is no longer as oppressive and exploitative as it was, that at present we are on the verge of the deproletarianization of capitalist society, of the gradual disappearance of the working class, of its becoming bourgeois and being integrated into capitalism. Thus, they claim that the working class is ceasing to be proletarian because the difference between it and the capitalists are steadily becoming narrower. They give this “new” society various names such as “people’s capitalism”, “neo-capitalism”, “consumer society”, “industrial society”, and so on.

According to them, under these circumstances the working class has lost its revolutionary ability and, spirit, it is no longer interested in the revolutionary transformation of society, and, consequently the role of the trade unions, should be that of collaboration with capitalism, of solving contradictions through negotiations, within the framework of the bourgeois order and constitution.

The great changes the world has undergone and the new phenomena that have merged, far from changing the nature and character of imperialism and making it more “popular”, have made it even more ruthless, aggressive and oppressive. The exploitation and impoverishment of the working class has become more intense, the gap which divides the capitalists from the broad

¹ WFTU – “The 6th World Trade Union Congress”, Warsaw, 1967, French ed., p. 399.

masses of workers has deepened, and their polarization is increasing. This is a law of capitalist society. Thus, in the USA, the most advanced capitalist country, in 1969 the monopoly bourgeoisie, 7.4 per cent of the population, owned 65.4 per cent of the national wealth. In 1963, in Britain, the workers received only 26 per cent of the national income while the bourgeoisie received 74 per cent.

It is an inevitable and undeniable fact that in monopoly capitalist society proletarianization and, as a result, class differentiation, proceeds by leaps and bounds. While at the beginning of the 20th century, the proletariat numbered about 30 million, now in the developed capitalist countries the workers in production total 220 million. It is an important fact that the working class is not only a numerical force, it is in particular a powerful social and political force, which struggles with determination against capitalist oppression and exploitation.

The bourgeoisie pursues a cunning social policy. Even if a relative improvement in living conditions is achieved, this is as a result of the struggle of the working class and working masses, as well as of the influence of socialist ideas. The bourgeoisie is forced to make some temporary concessions such as, for instance, wage increases, social insurances, holidays, etc. However this is not a manifestation of its humanism and generosity, but mainly is a result of the objective role of the workers' power in social production.

By speculating on these changes, a concept of the ^consumer society^ has emerged, seeking to prove the elimination of classes in the capitalist society, and a change in the social and economic position of the working class. But in fact, individual consumption aims only at the regeneration of labour power, to be able to produce and cope with extraordinary tension at work

In the conditions of the technical-scientific revolution, the capitalists are interested in the workers increasing their level of education and professional qualification as much as possible in order to cope with the complex mechanization of production and the speed-up of work and nervous tension so that they can produce more products and profits for the capitalists.

These theses are also supported by the Trotskyites and anarchists who negate the role of the working class and its ability to lead, considering the students and intellectuals as the principal force of the revolution. Preaching spontaneity in the workers movement the Trotskyites and anarchists deny the necessity of the party of the proletariat, rejecting the notion of the working class being organized, and considering the trade unions as "bureaucratic" elements; they see the betrayal by the revisionist trade union leaders not as a consequence of their opportunist and revisionist line, but as a consequence of organization itself. In fact, these currents have revived within the ranks of the trade union movement, especially in recent years, as a result of the betrayal of the revisionists and the admission to this movement of petty bourgeois elements who vacillate between right and left. Adherents to these currents, despite the declarations they make, are at one with the modern revisionists in their fundamental aims.

The social conflicts which are continually breaking out in the capitalist world, the broad class movement which is assuming extremely violent forms, including bloody clashes, are real revolutionary storms which are shaking the bourgeois order to its very foundations. A distinctive feature of these conflicts is that they are being guided by the working class which is launching powerful actions against the monopolies and the political state power of the bourgeoisie, against imperialism and colonialism. In this fight, the struggle of the working class and other labouring people for the improvement of economic conditions is being correctly combined with the struggle for social and political rights. At the roots of these class clashes lies the hatred of, and protest against, bourgeois society which is the cause of all evil.

Through its struggle the working class is showing that its interests are incompatible with

those of the bourgeoisie, that the sole sure road of liberator from capitalist exploitation and oppression is that of destroying the capitalist system through violence. In every genuine popular revolution, not only socialist but also democratic and liberation, the working class can and must have hegemony, which is of great principled importance. Regardless of its level of consciousness the working class, in its capacity as the motive force of social transformations, is the most revolutionary class, which has a direct interest in overthrowing the capitalist order.

But the historic mission and role of the working class is closely linked with the creation of the revolutionary political party of the working class and its organizing and leading role. These theses are of major importance of principle. The experience of the working class and life itself have confirmed that they preserve their relevance for all time.

b) On the technical-scientific revolution

The monopoly bourgeoisie preaches that the technical-scientific revolution eliminates class differences, that it transforms capitalism, creating “abundance” and new relations in society in which nearly everybody enjoys material goods, and so on.

Thus, monopoly capital utilizes the technical-scientific revolution not only to increase its income but also to launch an ideological offensive, using many economic and social theories and doctrines to argue the progressive character of capitalism.

The reformists and revisionists make a fetish of technology and science, presenting them as decisive factors in bringing about the development of society. According to them, technological progress changes gradually to social progress, because it turns out more material wealth, raises the technological level of the workers, narrows the differences of qualification between them, and so on.

Those technocratic views and theses have also been introduced into the trade union movement. Here is what Bonnaure said in connection with this at the 9th Congress of the CGT-FO of France: “We live in a world of technology and science in which there is no room for ideology. In the eyes of the young who have grown up in this environment, it is not ideas that transform the world, but science, Thus, if they are interested in anything, it is the atom, not socialism”.¹

The great progress attained by man in the technical and scientific domain, is not capable of changing the exploiting and oppressive nature of capitalism; it is not the decisive factor in the development of society, and the greater the progress, the deeper is the social gap separating the bourgeoisie from the broad masses of the people. The salvation of the working class does not come from the progress of science and technology, but from waging class struggle against the bourgeoisie, from constantly mastering and applying the great ideas of socialism, which have become a great drawing force for all the broad working masses the world over.

Of course, the great role of science and technology and their influence on the development of the productive forces, or on the modification of the social structure of the capitalist society, can in no way be denied. But this development, far from changing the relations of classes in capitalist society, or of affecting the exploiting system and the nature of capitalism, further strengthens it, because in the conditions of the state monopoly capitalism the rapid development of science and technology, mechanization and automation intensify exploitation, increase unemployment and bring more wealth to the monopolies. Thus, the further development of automation in the

¹ “Social and Trade Union Studies”, N° 127-128, April-May 1966 Paris. French ed., p. 7.

capitalist countries will not lead to the moderation of the class struggle: but to its intensification, its being raised to a higher, level, further aggravating the crisis. In fact, the struggle of the working class is not directed against automation, but against the social conditions and causes which turn automation into a calamity for the working class.

The bourgeois and revisionist thesis according to which the technical-scientific revolution cures and reforms capitalist society is an ideological diversion, which is why the denunciation of the hostile and false character of this thesis constitutes an important task for the working class and its class trade-unionist movement.

c) Social “partnership”

With the theory of social “partnership” or “co-administration”, “co-management” of enterprises, the bourgeoisie seeks to create the impression that the workers participate directly in the administration of the capitalist enterprises. This is another demagogic thesis which is strongly upheld by reformist and revisionist trade-union leaders, especially those of West and East Germany. According to this thesis, monopoly capitalism has made it possible for the workers to take an active part not only in production, but also, together with the bosses and monopolists, in the direct administration of the capitalist enterprise, in planning its production targets, in the distribution of income, becoming “joint owners and joint managers” of the capitalist enterprises.

A resolution passed at the 7th National Congress of the DGB in 1966, says: “The demand of the trade Unions that wage earners should take part, on a just and equal basis, in decisions made on all aspects of social life, is expressed when the conviction is created that a real democratic system is possible only if the workers take part not only as citizens in parliamentary, governmental and administrative decision-making, but also exercise direct influence on the economy... At present, the demand for joint economic management is the concern of all the trade unions in all the developed countries of the west”.¹

The president of the revisionist trade union of the GDR trundled out precisely this reformist fraud at the 6th Congress of the WFTU in Warsaw in an attempt to delve deeper into the question of joint administration.

It is to the interest of the monopolies that these forms of “administration” and the participation of the workers in “the management” of the enterprises be spread throughout the organizations of the working class and be supported by them. Enlarging on this theory Ernst Benda, former West German Minister of the Interior, explained in his book “Industrial Domination and the Social State” that “joint administration is possible only if the power of the monopolies is limited and if the trade unions accept the monopoly state without reservation.”² The French bourgeoisie's loud proposals following the major strikes in May and June 1968, about “the participation” of the workers in the economic and financial affairs of the enterprise, were part of these demagogical “theories”.

There are also theories which hold that “the workers can exercise direct control on capital”. According to T. Nelson, former president of the Danish reformist trade union center, every trade union member should be compelled to deposit a specified amount of money, in the form of

¹ International Trade Union of Commerce: “Trade Workers”, Bulletin No 38, – July-September, French edition, pp. 1-2.

² “Le Magazine”, a monthly publication of the Free Trade Unions of the GDR, N° 11, 1968, French ed., p. 6.

compulsory savings, through his trade union branch. He calculates that in 20 years 21 billion Danish kroner would be accumulated, that is, the capital equivalent of half the wealth of Denmark. Thus, he says, through the shares they would buy with this capital, the workers would control the whole life of the country.

According to the sociologists of the bourgeoisie and their lackeys, in present day capitalist society, a democratization of enterprise, a more equal distribution of goods, etc., are being-witnessed. They claim that ownership over the means of production is not the monopoly of the capitalist class, and that a growing number of workers and employees take direct part in the running of capitalist enterprises or become owners of capitalist shares, that during the recent years a revolution has taken place in the distribution of the national income, that capitalism is assuming more social features, is becoming more humane.

In order to support their thesis, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie give great publicity to various "councils" functioning at capitalist enterprises. These organisms bearing various names such as in France "Factory Committees", in Italy, "Internal Commissions" or "Factory Councils", in the Scandinavian countries "Producers' Councils", etc., are officially recognized both by the patrons and the state as workers' representatives. The leaders of the reformist and revisionist trade unions aim at making these organisms serve as instruments for collaboration between classes, for the sabotage and extinction of the class struggle.

In truth, these "theories" subtly disguise capitalist exploitation and are a total fraud, for they create the illusion that the working class can administer the means of production, run the economy and distribute production, within the framework of the capitalist system. Expedience has confirmed that the capitalists will give hand out or make concessions only to the extent that they do not interfere with their interests.

The "self-administration" in Yugoslavia is also a variant of the antiquated theories of the anarcho-syndicalists based on the integration of capitalism into socialism. The transformation of socialist ownership in Yugoslavia into ownership by groups of individuals has inevitably led to the restoration of capitalism, to competition and rivalry among the worker' collectives. "Self-administration" has done away with the socialist principle of remuneration according to work done and led to the increased exploitation of the working class, to the liquidation of its hegemonistic role, to the creation of the labour aristocracy and to the enrichment of the stratum of new capitalists. It is no accident that Jules Moch, French socialist leader and former Minister of the Interior, has identified the Yugoslav organs of "worker self-administration" with the French "Factory committees".

"Present-day Yugoslavia," comrade Enver Hoxha has said, "has all the features of a bourgeois country and suffers from the same grave chronic ills typical of capitalism, such as the deep economic crises, unemployment, competition, anarchy and inflation, severe social-political conflicts and national squabbles".¹

The TUA has waged a principled and resolute battle against reformist and revisionist theses, concepts and practices in the trade union movement. It considers that the exposure and destruction of the social demagogy of the bourgeoisie and its servants within the trade union movement is a task of historic importance, a great service to and an indispensable condition for freeing the working class from capitalist exploitation and developing the working class trade union movement.

¹ Enver Hoxha, "Report to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania", Engl. ed., p. 241.

d) Stand towards the International Labour Organization

One of the features of reformism and revisionism is their tendency towards turning the trade union movement into an appendage of the specialized institutions of UNO, such as the ILO.

As has been previously stressed, the task that the ILO has been charged with is quelling the class struggle and through its activity creating false illusions and the impression that labour legislation can solve the problems and meet the claims of the working class.

This organization has solved none of the basic problems of the working class in the capitalist countries, such as unemployment, guaranteed work, equal rights for women workers, reduction of working hours, extension of paid holiday leave, improvement of the social security system and so on, although it has approved conventions and made recommendations on these and other questions. Between the time it was set up and 1971, the ILO adopted 134 conventions, but they were of a demagogical character and once adopted, were not implemented at all. The ILO has been and remains a center of endless academic discussions and frequent, flowery speeches which solve nothing on the practical plane.

On the basis of its structure and activity, the ILO has kept to class collaboration, to reconciliation and harmony among the classes, which is expressed in the “originality” of “tripartism” (three keys) sanctioned by its constitution, according to which every member country of the ILO is represented in this organization and all its organisms by the state, the employers and the “workers”. Here the state is considered as “above classes”, a “mediator” and “arbiter” between the workers and the capitalists, and is represented by two delegates, and the employers and workers by one delegate each. The government is entitled to choose the trade union organization which will represent the workers at the ILO.

In its more than 50 years of existence the structure, methods and practical activity of the ILO have shown that it has served the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, particularly those of the USA, which has resorted to blackmail and financial pressure in order to impose its law. The USA pays 3,700,000 dollars annually for the upkeep of this organization. David Morse, former under-secretary of state in the US Department of Labour, has been the general Director of the ILO for 22 years, since 1948.

In 1954, the People’s Republic of Albania participated in the ILO for the purpose of helping promote the revolutionary struggle of the workers and of exposing the anti-worker policy of the imperialist powers and the opportunist and reformist trade union centers. At its various meetings our delegations have struggled to support the national liberation and revolutionary movements of the people. Thus, at the 37th Session of the ILO in 1953, the delegation of the People’s Republic of Albania joined 32 African and Arab delegations in boycotting the meeting in protest against the fascist representatives of South Africa. The revisionists, headed by the Soviet delegation, also joined the boycott for the sake of appearances, only to return to the conference hall the next day having failed to persuade the African delegations to return to the proceedings.

Exposing the serious crisis the ILO was passing through, the representative of the workers of the People’s Republic of Albania said at the 48th Session of this organization: “The present situation calls on the ILO to pull itself out of this cul de sac and become an organization capable of responding to the demands and aspirations of the workers. The problem today is not one of a simple examination of the structure and activity of the ILO, but of it having to take a radical turn,

since its crisis is closely linked with the orientation of its activity and structure”.¹

The letter dated July 30, 1965, sent by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the People's Republic of Albania to the General director of the ILO, communicating the resignation of the People's Republic of Albania from that organization, says among other things: “...As long as the ILO does not radically change its program, statute and activities in the interests of the- working class, the oppressed people and the newly-liberated countries and does not transform itself into a genuine democratic organization, any further presence of the People's Republic of Albania in this organization would serve only the policy of the western powers which dominate the ILO”.²

¹ ILO. “Report of Proceedings”, 48th Session, Geneva 1964, French ed., p. 235.

² Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tirana 1965.

CHAPTER THREE

THE STAND OF THE TRADE UNIONS TOWARDS IMPERIALISM AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLES

The stand of the trade union movement towards imperialism is one of its basic problems. In the treatment of this problem, too, there are two opposing lines confronting each other.

For the working class, the struggle for peace is inseparable from the struggle it wages to have its claims met, to defend its achievements and to gain better working and living conditions. But in order to defend peace it is essential to fight against whoever threatens it, whoever oppresses and exploits the working class and the peoples. This real enemy is imperialism, which will continue to exist as long as society is divided into antagonistic classes. U.S.-led imperialism has been and continues to be a source of war and aggression, the greatest exploiter of the peoples and a bastion of world reaction.

The stand of the revisionist leaders of the WFTU towards U.S. imperialism began to relax and gradually change when they submitted to the Soviet dictate and replaced the line of anti-imperialism and class struggle in the trade union movement with that of peaceful coexistence. The materials of the WFTU in the press and at congresses and conferences absolutized the possibility of preventing war, claiming that the leaders of US imperialism had become “reasonable”, that they had changed their nature, that “coexistence kills imperialism”, that coexistence should be considered “the fundamental line of the WFTU” and soon. “The policy of peaceful coexistence”, the report to the 8th Session of the General Council of the WFTU reads, “is the only alternative in our day if we want mankind to be spared the terrors of nuclear warfare. The question of war or peace is raised before the people today in the following way: war or peaceful coexistence.”¹

Later, the leaders of the WFTU changed tactics. For the sake of appearances they began to speak against US imperialism, but this anti-imperialism in words was false and was intended to distract the attention of the working class and conceal their opportunist and capitulating course.

The principles of peaceful coexistence are applicable in the relations among states with different social systems, but the working class trade union movement cannot accept peaceful coexistence as its general line. To do this would mean to have the trade unions abide by class collaboration in all their practical activity, to have them give up the anti-imperialist class struggle. It has been historically proven that the exploiters and the exploited cannot co-exist in a peaceful way, that the struggle between them is endless and inevitable. The emancipation of the proletariat is directly connected with the struggle against capitalist exploitation, with the overthrow of imperialism, therefore, coexistence must not sacrifice the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples, it must not suppress the political and ideological struggle against imperialism.

History has offered no example to date of the imperialists voluntarily laying down their arms. The people must disarm them and the working class trade union movement must play an important role in this because the more of a mass character the anti-imperialist struggle has and the broader and stronger it is, the greater are the possibilities for the working class to win.

The TUA considers that the stand towards imperialism and, first and foremost, towards US

¹ WFTU, “13th Session of the General Council of the WFTU” – Budapest 1964. French ed., p. 15.

imperialism, has been and continues to be “the touchstone” and basis for evaluating the practical activity of the trade union movement. It has fought unwaveringly and uncompromisingly, and has everywhere and at all times denounced the great danger posed by US-led imperialism, considering peaceful coexistence in the trade union as an entirely opportunist stand at variance with the interests of the working class and the working class trade union movement.

The stand towards the national liberation movement is another key problem in the trade union movement.

The nature and objectives of the national liberation movement are just and progressive and, under the conditions of imperialism, it is inevitable. This movement is a very important factor and a major anti-imperialist force which renders direct assistance to the liberation of the peoples and weakens imperialism. Unreserved support for the national liberation struggles and the other revolutionary movements as well as linking them with the demands and interests of the working class continues to be an important internationalist task of the working class trade union movement. These words of Lenin are very relevant today: “The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would be practically mere deception without a complete and closer unity of the workers in the fight against capital in Europe and America with the hundreds upon hundreds of ‘colonial’ slaves oppressed by this capital”.¹

At a time when the general tendency towards revolution is on the rise, when millions of people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are increasing their awareness and waging a heroic struggle to uproot ruthless colonialism and neo-colonialism and win their rights and when active solidarity with the national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples has become more intense, the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders are striving to play down the national liberation movements and their importance. They spread illusions that freedom and independence can be won through political combination, through talks with the chiefs of imperialism, through resolutions, through outside influences and aid and so on; they even go so far as to say that “the trade unions would be changing their character if they supported armed struggles”.

The revisionist leaders, in many documents or resolutions, are spreading the illusion that colonialism has now been almost entirely eliminated. “1960”, the General Secretary of the WFTU said, “is called the year of Africa, for it heralded the death of colonialism in its final phase”.² In his speech at the 5th Congress of the WFTU in 1961, V. Grishin, former President of the Soviet trade unions said: “...we call on the UNO to accomplish its tasks towards mankind in order to bring about as soon as possible the realization of the Declaration proposed by the Soviet Union and adopted last year by the General Assembly aiming at granting independence to all colonial peoples so that 1962 can be the year of the complete and conclusive elimination of colonialism from our planet”.³

The revisionist trade union leaders maintain a two-faced attitude towards the national liberation struggles. In order to avoid being totally exposed and to appear to support the peoples fighting against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, they demagogically give verbal backing to these wars, while sabotaging them in practice.

The most typical example has been in relation to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people. At first, guided by the Khrushchevite slogan that an armed conflict is a spark which

¹ V. I. Lenin, “Works” vol. 31, Albanian edition, page 301.

² L. Sailant. “WFTU in the service of the workers of all countries”, French edition, 1960, page 122.

³ WFTU, “The 5th Congress of the World Trade Unions”, French edition, page 394.

could provoke a new world war, the revisionist leaders of the WFTU maintained a passive stand towards all national liberation struggles and, particularly, towards the struggle of the Vietnamese people, going so far as to fail to define US imperialism as the aggressor in their documents and resolutions. In August 1946, they sent a message to UNO asking it to intervene and have the Vietnamese problem discussed in that organization, in this way arousing the opposition and resolute protest of the Trade Union Federation of Vietnam.

Behind its mask of solidarity and active support for the armed struggle of the Vietnamese people, the revisionist WFTU leadership has tried to establish and broaden collaboration with the reformist trade unions which approved and supported the US imperialist aggression in Vietnam. This was proved by the fact that the revisionist WFTU leaders insisted on the organization of a world conference of solidarity with Vietnam to which were to be invited the ICFTU, the AFL-CIO, etc. But the Vietnamese trade unions opposed this plan and demanded that the International Trade Union Committee of Solidarity with the Vietnamese Workers and People be re-convened in Hanoi.

The revisionists sabotaged the convocation of this committee and replaced it with an "extraordinary" session of the General Council of the WFTU, which carried out its proceedings in April 1968 in Moscow under their manipulation.

The leaders of the WFTU also maintained a two-faced stand towards the struggle of the Arab people. On the occasion of the Israeli-imperialist aggression, the Secretariat of the WFTU sent a telegram to the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, and to the Trade Union Centers of Egypt, Syria and Jordan as well as to the Histadrut (the Israeli trade union center), a tool of the aggressive policy of the government, which far from condemning the aggressor, placed the Zionist aggressors on the same level as their victims, the Arab peoples. At the same time the WFTU leaders approved and supported the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967 which was rejected by the workers and by many Arab trade union centres.

The revisionist leaders of the trade unions also have adopted a stand of defeatism and sabotage toward the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people, a problem which they consider as a simple question of sheltering refugees and providing them with clothing. Later on, when the struggle of the brave Palestinian people became an undeniable reality and was placed in the vanguard of the liberation struggle of the Arab peoples, the revisionist trade union leaders, headed by the Soviet ones, who pretend to be their friends, adopted a demagogic attitude and tried to take advantage of this struggle in order to extend their influence over the Arab trade union movement.

Through its many statements and resolutions of solidarity proposed at a number of major international trade union meetings, and through various campaigns and actions, the Central Council of the TUA has always supported and forcefully upheld the struggle of the trade unions and workers in Asia, Africa and Latin America for national liberation and social emancipation, against racial discrimination and so on. First and foremost it has supported the heroic struggle of the people of Vietnam and Indochina, of the Arab and Palestinian people, of the people of the Portuguese colonies and others.

The TUA, through their proposal, supported by other trade union centres, have the merit of having compelled the leaders of the WFTU to add the discussion of the struggle of the Vietnamese people to the Agenda of its 6th Congress as a special item. The delegations of the TUA have proposed various amendments and resolutions in support of the national liberation struggles at the meetings of the General Council of the WFTU and its International Trade Unions, to wit, at the 4th International Conference of Agricultural Forestry and Plantation

Workers in 1962, at the 4th International Conference of the Chemical, Crude Oil and Allied Workers Union in 1963, at the 3rd International Conference of Trade Unions in 1964, at the 4th World Trade Union Conference on Education in 1965, and others.

CHAPTER FOUR

TWO DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED LINES REGARDING UNITY IN THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Trade union unity, both on a national and international level, continues to be a constant wish and legitimate inspiration of the working class and something which is indispensable to them, since, once united, they will be better organized and fight harder against their enemies. The unity of the working class and of the trade union movement is not an end in itself, but a basic objective constituting one of the key problems for the present and the future.

The cause of the failure to achieve this authentic unity of the trade unions is not to be looked for in the working class giving up its ideology or in the “autonomy” of the trade unions as the reformists and revisionists claim, but in the influences of the bourgeoisie and the pressure of its ideology on part of the proletariat, in its class make up, with some of its members being of petty-bourgeois origin, in the oppression and interference of the bourgeois state and the monopolies in the trade union movement, the splitting activity of the reformist and revisionist leaders.

As on the other fundamental problems of the trade union movement, on the question of unity too, there are two different stands, two diametrically opposed platforms.

The working class standpoint considers unity as a great problem of principle, as an objective necessity based on the fundamental interests of the working class and spearheaded against the class enemy, imperialism and the reactionary leaders of the reformist and revisionist trade unions. Experience has shown that genuine unity is achieved and tempered at the base in concrete struggles and actions in defence of the interests of the working class.

The reformist and revisionist standpoint considers unity as a problem of a mainly tactical nature which varies according to the circumstances and depends on the general conjuncture and the situation in the trade union movement so that it can serve class collaboration and paralyze the actions of the working class and the trade union movement against the bourgeoisie and its government. “The reformists and revisionists see unity as a bargain struck at the top behind the backs of the workers and at the expense of their interests, as a consequence of the negotiations and agreements reached between the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders, the employers and the bourgeois governments.

There was unity within, the ranks of the WFTU as long as it maintained a position of anti-imperialist class struggle, but unity was destroyed when the leaders of the WFTU followed and implemented the Khrushchevite revisionist ideological platform and policy. The attack on unity came out into the open with Khrushchev’s speech at the 5th Congress of the WFTU in 1961 when he called on the representatives of the different trade union organizations of the world, indiscriminately, “to find a common language and the same platform” and “to sit around the same table”. Following this dictum, the General Secretary of the WFTU L. Saillant wrote: “We can say that Khrushchev’s wise advice responds to the demands of the times. Today it is more relevant than yesterday. It fully responds to the task of preserving the unity necessary for the whole international proletariat”.¹ Speaking in such terms, Louis Saillant “forgot” what he had said four years before at the 4th Congress of the WFTU in 1957, when he said “For us, the question of unity is not a matter of circumstances, it is not a major stand today and a minor stand

¹ WFTU, “The World Trade Union Movement”, monthly review, No 12, 1963; French edition.

tomorrow. It is not a stand of expediency...”¹

The revisionist course brought about contradictions and discord within the WFTU. Although there were opposing views and attitudes on a number of fundamental problems, the leaders of this organization, contrary to the statute and the decisions that were taken, unilaterally approved documents which undermined the unity of the WFTU and split it. The collective decisions of its elected organs as well as the consultations conducted with the national trade unions affiliated with it were replaced by the Soviet dictate. And the examples in this sense are numerous. Let's mention, for instance the stand of the revisionist leaders of the WFTU regarding the Moscow Treaty on the partial prohibition of nuclear tests, the September 17, 1963 statement attacking the Chinese Trade Union, the support given to N. Khrushchev's December 31, 1963 message regarding the settlement of conflicts by peaceful means, the telegram of congratulation sent by the revisionist leaders of the WFTU to Khrushchev on the occasion of his 70th birthday and so on. There were also such divisive documents and stands regarding the Caribbean crisis, the struggle of the Vietnamese people, and so on.

The more the revisionist leaders of the WFTU appeal for unity, the more they sabotage it; their appeals are nothing but a mask to camouflage their treason. While attacking and trumping up charges against the Albanian and Chinese trade unions and other working class trade union centres, from both within and outside the WFTU, they embarked on a wide campaign of rapprochement and collaboration with all the reformist and opportunist trade union leaders. Thus, top-level trade union delegations were exchanged, and at many meetings of the WFTU and its affiliated International Trade Unions, the number of delegations invited from the ICFTU and from the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) exceeded that of the organizations of the WFTU itself. For instance at the 4th International Conference of Miners in Moscow in 1964, only 26 of the 67 delegations were from organisations affiliated with the WFTU, while at the 7th Congress of the WFTU held in Budapest in 1969, of 135 delegations only 63 were members of the WFTU and its international trade unions,

The call for trade union unity did not come as a result of any change in the course pursued by the yellow trade unions. Just as before, they maintained an anti-communist position upholding U.S.-led imperialism. Basic changes were made in the political and ideological course of the WFTU itself when its revisionist leaders made common cause with classic reformism and trade unionism.

The conspiracy against the unity of the WFTU continued at its 6th Congress where, with the approval of the revisionist leaders of the WFTU, the then President of the Yugoslav Trade Unions, V. Tempo, demanded the dissolution of the WFTU and “the creation of a new world trade union organisation on a wider basis.”

In 1961, when N. Khrushchev launched an open attack on the Party of Labour of Albania and its leaders, the leaders of the Soviet trade unions, having adopted this line, attacked the TUA in the press and at various trade union meetings and, at the same time, unilaterally severed their relations with it without any reason or explanation. Had they acted in conformity with the statute and in defence of unity within the ranks of the WFTU, its leaders should have taken steps not to tolerate attacks and trumped up charges against a member organization: but instead they showed themselves up for the tools of the Soviet revisionists they really were and that is why they joined the anti-Albanian chorus.

For a long time the revisionist leaders of the WFTU have maintained complete silence about

¹ WFTU, “4th World Trade Union Congress”, Leipzig, 1957, Fr. ed., p. 81.

the TUA and its activity, allowing it to be attacked, while they themselves maintained a base and discriminating stand towards it.

In all its activity the TUA has been guided by the thesis that "...the struggle for unity is not a mere slogan that can be used for tactical purposes, but constitutes a very serious and major question of principle for the present and the future...".¹ It has upheld and struggled for the establishment of unity at the base within the trade union movement through actions according to the principle of the anti-imperialist working class struggle against the reactionary trade union leaders and the agents of the bourgeoisie within the trade union movement, in line with the broad interests of the working class whose aim it is to crush the exploiting capitalist system.

The TUA has struggled with all its forces to preserve anti-imperialist working class unity within the WFTU, denouncing the undermining activity of the Soviet trade union leaders and their followers in the WFTU. "In order to strengthen unity in the WFTU," the delegation of the TUA declared at the 13th Session of the General Council at Budapest in 1964, "it is essential to uphold and respect principles, to condemn the Soviet trade union leaders, their anti-worker policy and their divisive activity...".²

Denouncing the thoroughgoing divisive action taken by the revisionist leadership of the WFTU, under the Soviet dictate, at the 16th Session of the General Council, the delegation of the TUA stated to the press in Sofia: "The exclusion of the Chinese delegation from the meeting and the actions of police violence against the Albanian delegation are all part of a premeditated scheme of the Soviet trade union leaders who dominate the WFTU."³

1 E. Hoxha, "Twenty Years of Socialism in Albania", Tirana 1964, p. 67.

² Archives of the CC of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana 1964.

³ Archives of the CC of the Trade Unions of Albania, Tirana 1966.

CHAPTER FIVE

ON THE FORMS OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

History confirms that there are many and various forms and methods of the class struggle of the working class and the trade union movement, but strikes have been and are one of the most powerful forms and means of the class struggle. Strikes are of special importance because they educate the workers and the trade union movement in the spirit of class feeling and solidarity, of hatred for the bourgeoisie and its tools. "Strikes," Engels emphasizes, "are a school of struggle in which the workers are prepared for the great clash which has now become inevitable".¹

From being a spontaneous and isolated activity, with the raising of the level of the class consciousness of the working class, strikes have become an organized activity expressing the spirit of protest against capitalist oppression and exploitation. Through strikes, the working class demands not only the rights denied to it and guaranteed employment, but also that its voice be heard in the solution of the economic, social and political problems of the country.

The deplorable state and the impoverishment of the masses of workers have inevitably led to pronounced social conflicts in the capitalist countries. The powerful wave of strikes, demonstrations and actions to seize capitalist enterprises and institutions, including bloody conflicts with the bourgeois police and army, have their objective basis; they are not of an "emotional" character, but are the concrete results and expression of the uplift of the political consciousness of the working class and the other exploited masses, of the aggravation of the contradictions between labour and capital and of the deep crisis into which capitalism has plunged.

Unemployment has assumed very wide proportion in the capitalist world, At the end of 1971, the number of unemployed in the USA reached the 5.5 million mark, making up 6 per cent of the able-bodied population; at the beginning of 1972 there were more than one million unemployed in England, while in Sweden, the number of unemployed reached the 107,000 mark, which is the highest in this country since the end of the Second World War. That the strike movement, as an offspring of the capitalist system, is continuing to rise and take on wide proportions is also indicated by the dynamics of strikes. Thus, during the 20 years from 1920 to 1939, there were recorded 17,700 strikes, with 81 million participants; while during the period between 1947 and 1966, the number rose to more than 380,000 with nearly 300 million participants. During the period from 1965 to 1970 the number of strikers in the advanced capitalist countries reached the 312 million mark.

"The class struggle of the proletariat and the other exploited social strata", comrade Enver Hoxha said at the 6th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania, "has assumed such proportions, both as regards the number of participants as well as its intensity, that the present period can be compared with, the most critical periods the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries has passed through."²

The basic feature of the present period is the unprecedented increase of the mass character and intensity of the class struggle of the proletariat as well as the deepening of the political and

1 F. Engels, "The situation of the working class in England", Works, 2nd Russian ed., vol. 2, p. 448.

2 Enver Hoxha. "Report to the 6th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania", Engl. ed., p. 10.

social crisis in the capitalist countries. This is expressed mainly by the participation of the working class and the other exploited strata in the strike movement, by the increase of the weight of strikes of a political nature, by the combination of economic demands with political ones and by the increase of their level of organization. Strikes and demonstrations for economic demands are being increasingly accompanied by political actions and demands for democratic freedoms and trade union rights, against the police oppression of the bourgeois state, against imperialism and the monopolies,

The bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries also benefits from labour legislation which solves labour conflicts in its favour.. The bourgeois governments often use the law to suppress, put a stop to or suspend strikes under the pretext of “protecting the national interest”. Thus, for instance, in the USA the anti-worker Taft-Hartley law vests the President with unlimited powers to intervene in collective contracts and to deny the right to strike as often as he deems it reasonable, by dictating the conditions for settling “conflicts” between workers and employers. By law, he is entitled to intervene and temporarily suspend a strike for a period of 90 days. Experience has shown that the President of the USA has used this law very often against this legitimate right of the working class. In England, in 1970, Heath's conservative government passed the “industrial relations act” which limits the right-of the working class to strike. In one way or another, in all the capitalist countries the law sanctions similar measures to restrict strikes.

The bourgeois ideologists seek to denigrate the role of strikes, to lower their working class revolutionary spirit and to slander them. “Strikes”, they say, “are things of the past” which “have changed their nature”. Thus, C. Harmel says: “Dead are the heroic, exalting, dangerous strikes – strikes that were a battle, a real battle”.¹

A major service is rendered to the bourgeoisie by the leaders of the reformist and revisionist trade unions, who strive to prevent clashes between antagonistic classes, to dampen social conflicts by intervening to have them settled by those at the top, as well as to take control of and put the brakes on the actions of the working class. There are cases when the reformist trade union leaders feel obliged to approve strikes, but they do this under pressure from the workers or for demagogical purposes; they try, not always successfully, to have the strikes conducted peacefully and quietly, without demonstrations, without creating any disturbance, and within the bounds of bourgeois norms and legality. They want to lead the strike movement towards pacifism and bourgeois reformism, to make it apolitical. The revisionist leaders of the CGIL have gone so far as to keep order and calm during strikes, to prevent any “excesses”, to set up a “trade union police force” which is directed against the revolutionary workers and objectively assists the bourgeois state. Such an event is unprecedented in the history of the trade union movement.

With a view to weakening the unity and solidarity of the working class and the trade union movement, their militant nature and their working class unity, the leaders of the reformist and revisionist trade unions in the capitalist countries, when they have been unable to find any way of avoiding strikes outright, try to limit and cripple them, striving to have them take place in widely scattered places, to limit them to the workers of a specific branch and not include all trades and sectors.

According to the well-known reformist and revisionist practice, the date of the strike should be announced some days in advance, the workers of the public services should not go on strike, with the pretext of protecting the people. These acts benefit the bourgeois monopolies and

¹ “Les études sociales et syndicales”, No 139-140, May-June 1967, p. 1.

governments, because they are thus safe from being caught unawares, and have the time to take preliminary measures of repression; these acts enable them to replace the workers on strike with strike-breakers, and to pressure those who are vacillating, to withdraw them from strike, and so on.

While strikes are now developing and spreading to an increasing extent in the capitalist countries, this does not mean that they are prompted and supported by the reformist and revisionist leaders of trade union centers. On the contrary, the strikers' movement does not get its vigour and vitality from above, from the trade union leaders, but from below, from the workers, from pressure from the base. This was the case in Italy during the great strike of November 1968 involving nearly 20 million workers, and during that of 1970 known as "the Hot Autumn", and so on.

In order to avoid being exposed and to avoid being left at the tail end of things, the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders try to seize the reins of strikes in order to sabotage them from within. This is what is happening in Italy, France, Britain, West Germany and other capitalist countries. A most typical example of betrayal was set by the trade union leaders during the great strikes in France in May and June 1968, involving over 10 million workers, who went on strike not on the initiative, but against the will, of the CGT. Its president, B. Frachon considered this strikes as one of the "viles of leftism".

The leaders of the CGT of France were afraid of the prolongation of the strike and of the political character it was assuming, so they tried to sabotage it by advising "restraint" and "moderation", but when they saw that they might be isolated from the workers, they supported it with the aim of sabotaging it from within. Their main concern was to start immediate negotiations with the government and the employers.

Both the state and the employers in capitalist countries extend legal recognition to only some trade union centers which are entitled to declare strikes. Every strike declared outside these trade unions and without their approval is considered illegal by these trade unions, as well as by the employers and the state. There are now many cases when the working class itself, on its own initiative, goes on strikes without asking the permission of the trade union leaders and often at variance with their wishes. The bourgeoisie calls these "wildcat strikes."

"Wildcat strikes", which are a further aspect of the aggravation of the contradictions not only between labour and capital, but also between the workers and the rank-and-file trade union members, on the one hand, and the revisionist and reformist trade union leaders, on the other, constitute the development of the strike struggle to a higher level. A fundamental characteristic of these strikes is that they are decided on and led by the base, by the workers themselves, outside the traditional framework of official strikes.

Speaking of the wildcat strikes of autumn 1969, the French newspaper "Le Monde" affirmed that while seeking the confidence of the bosses, the trade union leaders were risking the loss of part of the confidence of the workers.

This sort of strike has been taking place particularly during the last half of 1960, breaking out in a number of capitalist countries. In England, from 1964 to 1967 there was an average of 2,150 of these strikes a year as against 84 "official" strikes. In 1967 a single "wildcat strike" by the British dockers paralyzed all British ports for 7 weeks on end; the workers elected their own organs and their own committees to organize and run the strike.

Sweden, which the bourgeoisie still considers the classic country of "class harmony", a "welfare society" and so on, was shaken by the major strikes of 1969 which continued for months on end in the Gotenborg, Nordbatten and other mines. Swedish social-democracy, which

has been governing the country for more than 40 years, has not touched the base of capitalism; on the contrary, exploitation in that country is on the rise, real wages are falling, and so on – events which have greatly contributed to increasing the wave of protests, Statistics show that while in 1965 Sweden was the last among 10 capitalist countries to lose workdays as a consequence of social conflicts, in 1968, this ratio changed a lot, putting it in fifth place.

The strike movement is continuing to spread and be joined by new contingents and strata of the exploited. The value of strikes does not lie in certain immediate economic advantages alone, as the reformists and revisionists claim, but above all, in the moral and political consequences they bring about, because it is only through these actions and the class struggle that the proletariat can strengthen its revolutionary spirit and raise its consciousness.

In line with this position, the TUA has always used all its forces to support the strikes, actions and other forms of the class struggle of the proletariat against the monopolies, the bourgeois state power, against imperialism and its stooges, the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders.

The statement of solidarity which the Central Council of the TUA sent to the workers in France on the occasion of their general strike in May and June 1968, says among other things: “Our working class and its organization, the Trade Unions of Albania, whole-heartedly and unreservedly greet and support the massive and courageous action of the French working class and students and express their solidarity with their just struggle against the monopolies and their government of oppression. While denouncing and condemning the treacherous activity of the revisionist leadership of the General Confederation of Labour of France, the workers of Albania and the TUA assure the French workers that they will be always by their side until ultimate victory is achieved, until capitalist oppression and exploitation are done away.”¹

1 Archives of the CC of the Trade Unions of Albania. 1968.

PART FOUR

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKING CLASS TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The trade unions, in their capacity as the broadest organizations of the working class in the capitalist countries have a rich tradition of struggle and organization and, in general, have played a positive role in defending the interests and rights of the working class.

But as a result of their present stand and activities, the leaders of the reformist and revisionist trade union centers have definitely abandoned the working class line and as a consequence are gradually losing the confidence of their members and of the working class itself.

This accounts for the fact that a good number of their members have resigned from these trade union centers. This new phenomenon of general apathy is not accidental but a result of the great discontent of the rank-and-file members of the trade unions with the trade union centers and the reformist and revisionists leaders, which keeps becoming more and more acute. This is best illustrated by the tendency for the membership of these trade union centers to drop at a time when the working class grows in number. For example, in France, while in 1953 the number of workers taking part in the General Confederation of Labour, the biggest trade union organization of the country, was 3,076,211, in 1972 it fell to 2,360,000. The same thing happened in Italy with the Italian General Confederation of Labour. In Britain the trade unions represent only 2/5 of the total number of workers, in the United States of America 28 percent, and in other capitalist countries, about 30-40 per cent.

All these and other facts go to show that we are up against a pronounced differentiation within the ranks of the reformist and revisionist trade unions. On one side are the masses of the trade union members who have been disillusioned, dissatisfied and deceived by the trade union chiefs and by the opportunist stand and the line of class collaboration pursued by these centers. This is why they keep opposing and denouncing more and more vehemently the activity and practice of the reformist and opportunist trade union centers and their leaders. On the other side are the trade union chiefs who, as part of the labour aristocracy and agents of the bourgeoisie, are being isolated and exposed by the masses of the trade union members for their anti-worker activity. The struggle between the trade union chiefs who form the principal obstacle to the class struggle within the trade unions, and the base which includes the great masses of the worker trade union members, is becoming more and more intensified and wide-spread.

It is necessary for the working class to step up this struggle so that it may finally realize its aspirations and get rid of capitalist exploitation. But historical experience goes to show that the working class does not become aware of its mission all by itself, that it can score ultimate victory over the bourgeoisie only if it is guided by its Marxist-Leninist revolutionary political party which expresses the interests and aspirations of the working class and can give it working class political awareness and the force of organization to prevent it from slipping into reformism, economism and spontaneity.

The creation in many countries of the world of such Marxist-Leninist parties representing new revolutionary forces constitutes a major success for the working class and the class trade union movement. With their political platform and their concrete and systematic activity with the base, the new revolutionary forces, which are continually growing and being consolidated in fierce class battles, are training the proletariat, educating it politically and ideologically, organizing and launching it in political and economic battles against the bourgeoisie, capitalism, imperialism and their agents within the worker and trade union movement. Thus, working with

the proletariat is essential; acting otherwise would be a blunder, a closed, sectarian gesture which would lead to self-isolation. It is only by militating within the ranks of the working class that the new forces will have all the possibilities to fight with success against both reformism and revisionism in the trade union movement.

In order to force their way into the ranks of the proletariat, the new forces attach special importance to their work with the trade union, because it is impossible to attract the working class without winning over the trade unions, for it is through them that the party creates close ties with the working class and the masses. “The closest possible contact of the Party with the trade unions,” Lenin said, “is the only correct principle.”¹

The new revolutionary forces in capitalist countries consider the trade union organization as a necessity to promote the struggle of the working class, a struggle which, if confined only to the fulfilment of immediate claims, neglecting the higher interests of the future, would lead to reformism. At the same time, they consider it necessary for the working class, within and outside the trade unions, to be educated in such a way that it does not confine itself to the narrow economic struggle but carries the struggle, under the guidance of its party, to a higher phase, to that of the political struggle, the ultimate objective of which is to seize political power.

Since the trade unions are “historically inevitable organizations” and “historically necessary”, in their all-round activity the new Marxist-Leninist parties do not give up the traditional trade union organizations, for that would leave the masses of workers under the influence of the reformist and revisionist trade union chiefs; on the contrary, they work patiently within the trade union movement to further the class struggle and to denounce and expose the trade union chiefs so that the working class may see and become convinced of the deception and betrayal perpetrated against them by the bourgeoisie and its agents, and discover the course they should pursue to get rid of capitalist exploitation.

The new revolutionary forces try to turn all the class struggles of the proletariat, actions, strikes, demonstrations and other forms of resistance directed against the monopolies, the bourgeois political power, against capitalist oppression and exploitation and so on, to the advantage of the working class and its interests. Participation in these actions or strikes is correct because they are caused mainly by pressure from the base, and the reformist and revisionist leaders of the trade unions are obliged to lead them merely for the purpose of breaking them, receiving a few handouts, or trying to speculate with the strikes to further the interests of capitalist bosses. Taking part in these strikes, firmly upholding the claims of the workers and marching side by side with them, standing out not only for their daring and determined actions, but also for their political and ideological clarity, the new revolutionary forces strive in this way to give a political character to every strike and to every action, to expose the reactionary line of the trade union chiefs and centers, the manoeuvres and tactics of these chiefs and of their bosses.

In their long practice, the reformist and revisionist trade union centers have gained great experience in waylaying the working class, having created for this purpose a whole system of complicated forms and methods of work, of education and organization, to keep the workers under the political and ideological enslavement of the bourgeoisie.

In the process, of fighting against the betrayal of the reformist and revisionist trade union centers and their reactionary leaders, the working class is gradually discarding and doing away with all the anti-proletarian organisms that lie in its way, the bureaucratic and rigid traditional trade union structures. Pursuing this course, under the leadership of its Marxist-Leninist party,

¹ V. I. Lenin, Works, vol. 13, Albanian ed., p. 113.

the working class of certain capitalist countries, studying and learning from the revolutionary traditions of the past, assimilating what is positive, is building the clearest, fullest and most revolutionary platform. In this way the necessary conditions are being created from below, without orders and decrees, for the unity of the working class into an authentic, militant class trade union movement with new features genuinely its own. Of course such a thing calls for a lot of efforts, organization and protracted struggle, both in the economic as well as the political and ideological domain, not only within the reformist and revisionist trade unions but also outside them, so that the working class itself may realize that between it, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, the reformists and the revisionists, on the other, there exist opposing interests, that the latter do not give up their position in the trade unions without struggle, and therefore there is no reconciliation with them, but ceaseless struggle.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The history of the birth and development of the trade union movement has passed through a long, intricate and difficult course. To be accurate and scientific the historical analysis of this period must be made on the basis of Marxist-Leninist ideology, of the theory of the proletariat, for only in this way can the working class make the proper generalizations, learn valuable lessons and draw up tasks for the present and the future. Any conclusion drawn outside this context is not an objective one, and as such, is metaphysical, alien and reactionary,

The trade union movement began early, immediately after the birth of the proletariat, and developed according to the maturity of the consciousness of the working class and the specific conditions of each country, passing through various stages and forms. The main characteristic of the trade union movement is that it first came into being as a necessity to defend the economic interests and to improve the working and living conditions of the working class, but with the development of capitalism and the uplift of the class consciousness of the proletariat, and particularly with the propagation of socialist ideas, the trade union movement emerged from the narrow economic context and assumed a broader social and political character.

The trade union movement is now such a great force that the bourgeoisie, far from ignoring it, does its utmost to win it over to its side through its influence and its ideological pressure, through the intervention and oppression of the bourgeois state power as well as through its agents, the labour aristocracy and the trade union bureaucracy.

Within the national and international ranks of the trade union movement two opposing lines have been continually at work, expressing the antagonistic interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The problem of these two opposing lines in the world trade union movement is as old as the movement itself and will continue as long as antagonistic classes and the class struggle exist. The class struggle is an imperative necessity and an objective law for the further development of the trade union movement of the working class too. It is political shortsightedness not to see this reality, to ignore it whether consciously or not; it would display ignorance of the law of class struggle.

The history and experience of the trade union movement teaches us that, although there have been and are many different categories of trade union organizations, with different programs and orientations, objectively and fundamentally, there are only two types of trade unions with specific lines, functions and characteristics: the working class trade unions which do not confine themselves to economic claims, but prepare, educate and orientate the working class to do away with the exploiting system and, as a result, with the capitalist order; and the reformist and revisionist trade unions which pursue the course of class collaboration and serve the bourgeoisie by remaining as part of the capitalist structure. Any intermediary or centrist line inevitably leads to a departure from the working class position.

Experience has shown that the trade union movement cannot stand aloof and remain detached from the great irreconcilable struggle which is being waged today between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between Marxism-Leninism, on one side, and reformism and modern revisionism, on the other. This movement must be organized and educated along the Marxist-Leninist ideological line, tempered through concrete actions so that it can make the working class conscious of its historic mission. And the working class, led by its vanguard Marxist-Leninist party, is the only decisive force which can smash the bourgeoisie. Experience has shown that the trade union movement can escape being infected with reformism and revisionism only when it is guided by the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class.

Historically, the birth and development of opportunist, reformist, revisionist, and similar trends and viewpoints, as regressive and reactionary currents in the trade union movement, are not accidental phenomena. These currents are now represented by some national and international trade union centers which have betrayed the interests and aspirations of the working class and the working class trade union movement and have placed themselves in the service of the policy of the imperialist powers. Therefore, priority must be given to the struggle against the leaders of these centers and their reformist and revisionist practices. This struggle must be carried through to the end.

The treachery of the reformist and revisionist trade-unionist centres lays the imperative task before the working class, led by its Marxist-Leninist political party, of waging a resolute struggle within and outside the ranks of the reformist and revisionist trade unions to denounce and isolate the bourgeois leaders from the mass of the workers, and to create gradually through revolutionary practice an authentic class trade union movement to carry forward the struggle to do away with the exploiting capitalist systems.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

1. TUA – Trade Unions of Albania
2. WFTU – World Federation of Trade Unions
3. ICFTU – International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
4. WCL – World Confederation of Labour
5. TUC – Trade Union Congress
6. AFL – American Federation of Labour
7. CIO – Congress of Industrial Organizations
8. AFL-CIO – American Federation of Labour – Congress of Industrial Organizations
9. CGT – General Confederation of Labour of France
10. CGIL – Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro
11. ILO – International Labour Organization
12. GCL – General Confederation of Labour
13. GCL-WF – General Confederation of Labour – Work Force
14. DGB – Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund
15. FDGB – Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
16. CIA – Central Intelligence Agency
17. IBL – International Bureau of Labour

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