

THESES OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

FOR THE FOURTH WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS

(Leipzig, 4-15 October, 1957)

- 1.- At its 14th session (24-27 July, 1957) the W.F.T.U. Executive Committee fixed the following agenda for the 4th World Trade Union Congress which will take place in Leipzig, 4-15 October, 1957:
- a) Report on World Trade Union activities and on the development of fraternal bonds and unity of the international trade union movement for raising the living standards of the workers, for their economic, social and democratic rights and for disarmament, peace and national independence.
 - b) Trade union tasks in the fight against colonialism.
 - c) Auditors' Report.
 - d) Report of the Managing Committee of the International Workers' Solidarity Fund on its activities, experience gained, as well as on assistance it can extend to the further development of International Solidarity.
 - e) Proposals for Amendments to the W.F.T.U. Constitution.
 - f) Election of the governing bodies of the World Federation of Trade Unions and of the Auditors.
- 2.- Four years have passed since the Third World Trade Union Congress (October, 1953, Vienna). In this period the working class in all countries has gained a wealth of new experience, full of valuable lessons for the trade union movement as a whole.

The task of the Fourth World Trade Union Congress is to analyse, study and compare the different facets of this experience which has drawn millions upon millions of men and women workers throughout the world into action, and to assess the struggles which have taken place and their results.

3.- The prime purpose of the Congress is to be a gathering of unity, an international meeting for broad and fraternal discussion. It must help to pinpoint ways and means of widening the scope of united working class action, in each separate country and also at international level.

It must help to establish new and wider international trade union contacts. It must encourage efforts already made in many countries for fresh contacts and further common action at all levels, between unions covering the same trades and sometimes in competition with one another.

I.- FACTS CONFIRM THE CORRECTNESS OF THE DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE THIRD WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS.

4.- The main decisions of the Third World Trade Union Congress are included in the Manifesto to the Workers of the World, adopted by the representatives of 88,600,000 workers by hand and by brain present at the Congress in the firm belief that further sections of men and women workers would respond to the appeals of the W.F.T.U.

5.- Have facts confirmed the statements made by the Third World Trade Union Congress?

They have. The trade union organisations, many thousands of their leaders and tens of millions of workers throughout the world can see the connection between the

great scope of working class action today, the development of the international trade union movement, and the possibilities which were outlined by the Vienna World Trade Union Congress.

- 6.- This Congress indicated that capitalist monopolies were stepping up their policy of exploiting the workers. Widespread strike movements and the wide range of actions by the workers during the last four years reveal the growing resistance of the working class to the steady deterioration in the working and living conditions of wage-earners and their families. The predictions and appeals of the Third World Trade Union Congress have been vindicated by events.
- 7.- The Third World Trade Union Congress showed that it was possible for the workers to unite, and that trade unions of all categories and affiliation must act in common, for they were all expressing common demands. Since the capitalist monopolies follow the same policy of domination and exploitation of the working people in whatever country their excessive power holds sway, common action is both possible and indispensable.
- 8.- This unity of common action for common economic and social demands has made enormous headway. Here is the proof that the Third World Trade Union Congress was particularly right in maintaining that trade union organisations not affiliated to the W.F.T.U. would themselves become involved in large-scale labour disputes in order to win the economic and social demands of their members, and that this would happen along the lines defined by the W.F.T.U.
- 9.- With regard to the defence of peace, the Third World Trade Union Congress declared itself in favour of a policy of negotiation and rejected a policy of force in relations between States, whatever their political and social system.

It emphasised ^{the} growing influence of the World Council of Peace with its inspiring advocacy of the policy of peaceful settlement of all international disputes.

This policy has brought great rewards, particularly with the Geneva Conference of the Four Great Powers.

Trade union organisations of every affiliation are at this very moment demanding an international agreement banning atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons. The W.F.T.U. has helped to build up the tremendous opposition of the working people to the tests of thermo-nuclear weapons, and their insistent demand for the peaceful use of atomic energy. In this way a very broad united front of the trade unions of the world is in practice acting hand in hand with the worldwide movement of the peoples for peace.

10.- The Third World Trade Union Congress reiterated the W.F.T.U.'s opposition to colonial exploitation. In particular, it called on the workers throughout the world to increase their solidarity and support for the struggle of the peoples for national independence, against imperialism and for an end to the colonial system wherever it exists.

These are positions of principle which the W.F.T.U. has proclaimed quite unequivocally and with all possible clarity, among the ranks of the trade unions in every country.

Here again events have turned out to prove that the decisions of the Third World Trade Union Congress accord with the interests and aspirations of the workers and the peoples.

The colonial war in Viet Nam is over. The

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colonialists' adventure in Algeria has been condemned by the overwhelming majority of states and peoples throughout the world. Territories formerly dependent and under foreign tutelage have become sovereign States.

The historical Bandung Conference created a new political atmosphere which has encouraged the struggle of dependent peoples for their national independence.

Colonialist and imperialist adventures, such as that against Egypt at the time of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company have resulted in such widespread opposition that the monopolists and imperialists have been forced to give ground and retreat in their warlike undertakings, which are as despicable as they are reckless.

11.- When the Third World Trade Union Congress sounded a warning against the schemes of those who are resisting any relaxation of international tension, for peace is not to their advantage, it was issuing a call for vigilance to all the workers of the world. It was also calling all trade unions to act in unison, and not to forget the bitter lessons of World War II but to restore national and international trade union unity in order to save peace and create the conditions for social progress in the world. To this end, the Congress proposed a great expansion of international contacts between all trade unions and between all National Trade Union Centres, without discrimination.

12.- Facts have proved that never before in the history of the international working class movement have there been so many delegation exchanges, fraternal visits, contacts for the purpose of gathering information on trade union work as in these last few years.

The advance in international trade union relations has increased international working class solidarity. These international trade union relations embrace trade unions of the five continents and of every international affiliation or none.

13. The fact that the decisions of a World Trade Union Congress have proved to be in such close harmony with the wishes and aspirations of the working people shows how great an influence and authority belongs to the trade union organisation which has undertaken to implement these decisions.

The W.F.T.U. has staked its whole responsibility on this task of honour. To respect the decisions of international trade union assemblies and to adopt as a plan of action a plan which has been collectively debated is the best way for an organisation to deserve the confidence of working men and women of all countries.

Such has been the line of action of the W.F.T.U. since the Third World Trade Union Congress. The Fourth Congress to be held in Leipzig in October, 1957, is being prepared in the same spirit.

II. - ASSESSMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

14.- The development of the international situation has been marked by a series of convincing failures on the part of imperialism and a strengthening of the popular forces.

The imperialistic expansion of the monopolies has been greatly hampered by the wide scope of the peoples' struggle against colonialism and for national independence. More and more ground is being gained for the type of policy that makes for relations based on respect of each country's rights, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and new forms of international co-operation, opposed to all political and racial discrimination.

A policy of peaceful co-existence between States, whatever their economic and social system, is the soundest guarantee for a stable and lasting peace. This policy is making genuine progress and has the support of the great mass of ordinary people who dearly cherish peace.

15.- The Geneva Conference simultaneously put an end to the cold war as it had been pursued by the Western governments since 1947, and paved the way for far-reaching understanding between States and peoples in favour of peace extending beyond the limits of the camp of peace formed by the socialist countries.

The Bandung Conference, after the end of the colonialist war in Viet Nam, added considerably to the forces which throughout the world are uniting for peace and against imperialism.

16.- One of the aims of the imperialists' attempt to provoke war at the time of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company was to stifle the demonstrations for national independence and against colonialism in the vast areas of the world which are still under monopoly capitalist control.

The imperialists have tried to revive the cold war and political discrimination in international affairs in connection with the counter-revolutionary events in Hungary. This attempt has had the further aim of diverting the powerful movement of public opinion which was set in motion by the Geneva Conference.

17.- These attempts by international reaction can be explained by the fact that the monopolies were trying to counteract the failures they had suffered as a consequence of the detachment of a growing number of countries from the colonial system, and the strengthening of the peace camp. The Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Ghana are all countries at present ruled by governments which have declared their independence of the metropolitan countries which used to rule them. These countries are in turn helping to create conditions that will open the way to freedom for other countries which are still under colonial domination and longing to break away and achieve national independence.

18.- The struggle for markets between the various imperialist powers and groups of powers is becoming fiercer.

With the "Eisenhower Doctrine", the U.S. monopolies, especially the oil companies, have explicitly declared their determination to maintain and extend their grip on the natural wealth of the Middle Eastern countries, and incidentally replace the British and French monopolies that have so far exploited these countries.

By means of the European Common Market, the European monopolies, with the active intervention of the U.S. monopolies, are trying to overcome the contradictions which lie in the way of joint exploitation of the resources of Europe and Africa. In these circumstances, to line up the social and economic policies of the Six European countries can only lead to a levelling-down of living conditions for the working people. The weakening of national independence for the participating countries, the domination of the German monopolies, and along with them, the American monopolies; the deepening of the division of Germany, which the Common Market is to hallow; and the great increase in exploitation which must follow in the six countries, - all these things are against the interests of the workers.

The imperialist monopolies are now turning to new expedients in their efforts to continue the same old policy of domination, while making allowances for international developments which are going against them.

19.- The imperialist forces have not abandoned their plans to prepare and let loose a new world war.

Following their policy of reviving German militarism, tolerating and, in fact, encouraging the introduction of nuclear weapons into the German Federal Republic and placing these weapons in the hands of the revived Bundeswehr, the U.S.A., Great Britain and France are transforming West German territory into a NATO base of aggression in case of war.

This policy is pregnant with danger not only for the German people but for all the peoples of Europe.

20.- The choice of modern forms of domination, the displacement of the monopoly capitalists from their old zones of influence, and the very contraction of these zones of

influence, are taking place at a time when socialism has become a system of world importance in a constant state of growth.

- 21.- The socialist system is that in which the workers have put an end to capitalist exploitation and created a new life. In its youth, its power of innovation, its capacity for organisation, it possesses great new reserves to work with, and even while it is in the building, it is asserting its superiority over the capitalist system. Socialism has a power of attraction that is increasing all the time, undermining the old influence of the monopoly capitalists.

III.- THE ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE AND INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' SOLIDARITY.

22.- The anti-colonial struggle has aroused widespread solidarity among workers of all countries. At the moment, this solidarity forms one of the essential characteristics of international trade union activities as a whole.

The struggle against colonialism is a historical necessity for the world trade union movement because it is in keeping with the vital interests of workers in all countries.

23.- Ever since its founding, the W.F.T.U. has supported the workers and peoples in colonial and semi-colonial countries with a view to helping them to the best of its abilities to defend their democratic and social rights, and win their vital everyday demands.

It has supported the national independence movement of peoples under foreign domination, and has stood by the side of the workers who are forging the vast liberation movement which is sweeping the world clean of colonialism.

The W.F.T.U. repeats its call to the workers and trade unions in dependent and colonial countries and territories to bind their trade union movement closely to ^{the national} liberation movements where an alliance is being established between the workers and other sections of the population, the peasantry in particular, who are fighting for national aims common to all.

24.- In this phase of the history of the trade union movement and of its development in the less-developed and colonial countries, events have gone to show the workers of these countries that, while conserving the fundamental and decisive nature of the fight against imperialism, it is

essential that in the economic and social field each trade union should base its actions on a programme which genuinely represents the working class, which is drawn up by the working class and sets out their demands.

- 25.- The W.F.T.U. draws the attention of trade union organisations in under-developed countries and colonial territories to the new forms of colonialist exploitation which are employed whenever the colonialists are no longer in a position to use the old methods of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

When they have to abandon their brutal and terrorist methods of domination, the capitalist monopolies resort to all kinds of other practices. The EISENHOWER Plan for the Middle East is nothing but a means to prolong the foreign monopolies' domination of the peoples and natural wealth of the Arab countries.

The plans for the European Common Market are creating the conditions for a neo-colonialist coalition for the purpose of integrating African colonial territories into a restricted European market under the control of the most powerful industrial and financial monopolies.

The task of the Fourth World Trade Union Congress will be to warn the African workers of this new form of exploitation which is threatening them.

- 26.- The continuation of the colonial war against the national rights of Algerian people demands redoubled efforts on the part of the world trade union movement to bring this belligerent adventure to an end and ensure recognition of the Algerian peoples' right to national independence.

Trade union organisations throughout the world must express their solidarity with the Algerian trade unions

which are victims of repression and deprived of the right to function.

In demonstrating that trade union organisations in all countries have condemned the brutal methods used by the French government against the genuine Algerian workers and trade unions - affiliated either to the W.F.T.U. or the I.C.F.T.U., the Fourth World Trade Union Congress will increase the campaign of international solidarity with the Algerian people until the day Algerian workers and trade unions receive justice.

IV.- BETTER LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS FOR THE WORKING CLASS

27.- Since 1953 we have been witnessing a substantial increase in production and productivity in the majority of capitalist countries which has allowed the spokesmen of the monopolies to call this a period of high prosperity.

The strong concentration of capital for the purpose of implementing important armaments drive plans and the heavy exploitation of the workers are behind this development of capitalist economy.

The capitalist monopolies and the big landowners are the only ones to benefit from this situation. There is no question of a more equitable distribution of wealth, of higher individual consumption or of benefitting to a greater extent from the fruits of one's labour. On the contrary, exploitation of the workers and the deterioration of their living and working conditions are becoming an increasing burden.

28.- An objective analysis of the relationship between wages, prices and profits during the last four years reveals that the enrichment of the rich and the impoverishment of the poor remains the law governing the capitalist system.

Proof of this pauperisation and an illustration of its persistence under capitalism for a given period can be given, taking some of the most convincing examples on a national scale as shown in the present struggles of the workers and trade unions.

Undernourishment of the workers, both young and old, the modern forms of lower consumption imposed on the people, the worsening of individual and collective working conditions so as to increase output and accelerate production, all form part of the policy of the capitalist monopolies.

In exposing the conditions of poverty under which the majority of workers exist, the Fourth Congress should show us many different aspects of their conditions. This can be done directly through the contributions made by delegates who could describe the present living and working conditions of the workers they represent.

29.- A barrage of propaganda is being directed at the workers by the monopolies. As the main beneficiaries of technical progress under the capitalist system, the monopolies aim to ensure their class privileges to the fullest extent. For this reason, the workers and trade unions must actively combat the insidious propaganda put out by the monopolies.

The monopolies are campaigning to have their idea of a so-called "industrial revolution" accepted; doing their very best to revive worn-out ideas of "class collaboration" under a new guise such as that of "people's" capitalism. Or they introduce problems which they claim as new, such as the question of human relations in industry.

Trade unions and the workers should consider the question of the technological improvements introduced in capitalist production, including automation, in relation to the effects of these new methods on the living standards, health and social and working conditions of the workers as a whole.

30.- After the Fourth World Trade Union Congress and on the basis of its work efforts will have to be made to ensure that things are called by their proper names in the working class movement, in order to prevent attempts to camouflage increased capitalist exploitation.

V.- GROWTH OF TRADE UNION AND WORKING CLASS ACTION
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, AND THE NECESSITY FOR UNITY.

31.- A social characteristic of the post-war period has been the growth of the organised workers' movement in all parts of the world. Despite the trade union division in many countries the workers are persistently joining the trade unions and rallying to defend their economic, social and trade interests. Never before has there been such a high number of organised workers in the world. At the moment there are more than 160 million manual and white collar workers of both sexes organised in a considerable number of trade union organisations.

Problems of united action and, in the first place, of trade union unity are very often extremely complex due to the variety and diversity of these trade union organisations.

32.- The business class and its governments in certain countries for a long period opposed the formation of workers' trade unions; today they can no longer do this under the same conditions nor by the same methods they did even in the recent past.

One of the ways by which the capitalist monopolies are seeking to maintain their class domination over workers is to encourage the rupture in the trade unions, wherever possible.

33.- The growth of the organised workers' movement in recent years has been more rapid in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and even in Latin America than in the industrialised countries of Western Europe and North America, where one notes in general a certain stability in the number of trade union members.

The most striking growth and the highest percentage of influx to the trade unions in the last ten years has been registered in the socialist countries.

- 34.- The fact that the working people of many countries are displaying a greater capacity to organise and fight both at home and on the international level, coupled with the increased domination of the capitalist monopolies in the section of the world where they still hold power, are leading to an aggravation of class conflicts which arise from the fundamental clash between the monopolies' interests and the interests and needs of the people.

Illustration of this can be found in the big strikes which have taken place in Great Britain, France, Western Germany, Italy, Finland, Japan, the U.S.A. and Latin America.

- 35.- The manner in which these strikes were organised and carried out provides much useful information which it will be one of the main tasks of the Fourth Congress to analyse.

The first and foremost observation to be made is that unity of action among the workers and their trade unions substantially raises the workers' chances for success in the class struggle.

On the other hand, every time the effects of the trade union division come to the fore, greater difficulties are encountered in working class struggles and the results of actions against exploitation by employers and governments are less certain.

- 36.- The possibility of united action followed by trade union unity does not arise from a need to give trade union members any form of ideological unity.

The need for unity is rooted in the experiences of the working class and in the nature and content of their struggles for basic everyday demands. In realising the fact that division among the trade unions serves to increase their exploitation, the workers themselves are creating the conditions for uniting their efforts. They are reaching a stage when they are able to show the need for trade union unity wherever it fails to exist.

The number of unorganised workers in capitalist countries, particularly among agricultural workers, is still high. In addition to encouraging recruitment into the unions, trade union unity also helps to establish trade unions where there was none previously.

Trade unions are instruments for action and should be open to all workers, irrespective of their political, religious or other opinions.

37.- The World Federation of Trade Unions adheres to its previous statements concerning possibilities which exist for the establishment of workers' unity. The use of united methods in the life and work of the trade unions should mark a confirmation of the nature of the trade unions which are mass organisations, independent of political parties, functioning on democratic principles with a programme that reflects the vital interests of men and women workers.

38.- As a result, the W.F.T.U. repeats that the establishment of unity of action, followed by trade union unity on local, national and international levels is possible without the preliminary laying down of conditions of an ideological nature which only too often lead to intolerable discriminatory practices. The practical basis for workers' unity lies in the community of their class interests. This is the point which really admits the

possibility of achieving local, national and international unity.

39.- In fact, we note at the moment, that wherever the trade unions are divided there nevertheless exists a community of identical or similar demands, common to all trade union organisations. Whenever the trade unions' demands programmes include fundamental common points, unity of action among the workers becomes inevitable as a result of their own wishes, thus paving the way for trade union unity.

40.- When one examines the many programmes of demands, advanced during the last three years by a big number of trade union organisations of most capitalist, under-developed and colonial countries, whether these organisations are affiliated to the W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U., the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions or autonomous, one notes the following demands in practically all programmes:

1. higher wages and the establishment of a guaranteed minimum wage;
2. a shorter working week, limited overtime;
3. elimination of the harmful effects of the introduction of automation and new technological processes in production;
4. application of the principle "equal pay for equal work", and removal of all discrimination in wages, access to employment and social advantages;
5. paid and longer holidays;
6. construction and improvement of workers' housing;
7. protection against work accidents and industrial diseases.

These demands concern men and women in industry, commerce and offices as well as in agriculture and on plantations.

The demand for a democratic land reform is also included in the action programmes of many trade union organisations in countries where the struggle against the exploitation of the peasantry by big landowners is necessary if the working people are to have better living and working conditions.

41.- In the question of the demand for "equal pay for equal work" and of removing discriminations affecting women workers and young wage earners, the W.F.T.U. does not believe that the duty of the trade unions lies solely in putting forward the necessary demands but they must also organise the fight to obtain these demands.

Too many trade unions fail to attach sufficient importance to the role of women workers and young people in production and in the struggles waged by the working class. To show worthwhile results, trade unions must be in close touch with the people and this means that each union must take into consideration the vast numbers of women workers and young people in industry whose specific needs should be included in the action for demands.

For this reason, following on the World Conference of Women Workers, the W.F.T.U. proposes that the Fourth Congress should launch an Appeal to young workers throughout the world and that all trade unions should assist in organising the World Trade Union Conference of Young Workers to be held in 1958, and take full responsibility for making this new initiative a success.

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A community of international action has been created in the last two years between national trade union organisations represented at the International Labour Conference in Geneva. This was done in defiance of discriminatory practices which still persist in the nomination of certain national trade union delegations participating in this Conference.

Each national trade union organisation and all existing international trade union organisations must agree that it is advisable to proceed along this road. The fact that every year representatives of National Trade Union Centres, affiliated to the W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U., the I.F.C.T.U. or without any international affiliation can meet in the Workers' Group of the International Labour Conference and at the Conference itself, must be considered as a valid indication of ways which exist to expand international trade union contacts and to seek unanimity of trade union action at this level.

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But this positive assessment should not prevent trade union organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. or autonomous from stating that the primary aim of the speeches made at the International Labour Conference by some leaders of the I.C.F.T.U. is to maintain discriminatory practices within the Workers' Group, and foster controversies between trade union representatives that are both harmful and obstructive in the presence of representatives of the employers and capitalist monopolies.

VI.- ON THE VIOLATION OF WORKERS' TRADE UNION RIGHTS, FOR THE EXTENSION OF THESE RIGHTS AND FOR THE DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONING OF TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS.

44.- The Charter of Workers' Trade Union Rights was adopted at the seventh session of the W.F.T.U. General Council, in Warsaw, in December, 1950.

This document is today still valid in principle and is as topical as ever.

The World Federation of Trade Unions ^{has} used this document as a means of action when it has had to defend trade union rights against characteristic attacks hitting at the very functions of certain trade union centres. (Chile, Cyprus, Argentina, Algeria).

45.- The shortcoming of the W.F.T.U. in defending trade union rights has been its failure to give the necessary publicity to these activities. Consequently, the work of the W.F.T.U. and that of national trade union organisations has not been sufficiently co-ordinated, with the result that when trade union rights were attacked they could not be defended adequately.

We have not given sufficient encouragement to the international campaign for the protection of workers and trade unions, ^{which are} victims of repression on the part of the employers and government. Our own international campaign for the protection of workers' trade union rights has also not been systematic enough.

46.- In addition to cases of violations of trade union rights which the W.F.T.U. has fought against directly in the recent period, indirect encroachments on trade union rights are rife. We are referring to discriminatory

practices used by the employers and governments when bargaining for working conditions, wages, and so forth. In some countries the employers and governments negotiate with trade union organisations where demands are concerned, but exclude from these talks those organisations which genuinely represent the desire of the working people.

47.- In many circumstances the employers and capitalist governments deliberately resort to discrimination against the trade unions. The employers always seek the kind of negotiations which are to their best advantage. It is necessary to expose these schemes which aim at protecting the capitalist monopolies in the face of the growing organisational strength of the working class as a whole. The workers must not allow themselves to be deprived of the right to voice their interests through freely elected trade union delegates.

48.- When, workers' actions make evasive tactics too complicated for the capitalist monopolies, the latter openly attack trade union rights and the trade union organisations showing the greatest fighting spirit. This policy represents a particular violation of trade union rights, apart from being an overt act on the part of the employers and governments to encourage and deepen the trade union split. Hence, wherever the trade union movement is divided, the effort to ensure that trade union rights are respected and put on a firmer foundation and that trade union organisations function in a democratic manner is inseparable from the workers' and trade unions' actions supporting unity.

49.- The protection of trade union rights is also linked to certain aspects of the struggle for international unity.

Reactionary government circles have reacted negatively to the Charter of Trade Union Rights published by the W.F.T.U. It is regrettable that certain I.C.F.T.U. leaders supported this negative attitude and took advantage of the publication of this Charter to accentuate their campaign and attacks against the trade union organisations in socialist countries and against the W.F.T.U.

50.- On the question of the functions of trade union organisations and the development of trade union activities in the socialist countries, a more open refutation will have to be made by the W.F.T.U. of the lies spread by their enemies. The present and continuing improvement of trade union activities in the socialist countries will have to be studied carefully by active trade union members and made known to the biggest possible number of workers. No capitalist country is in a position to grant their trade unions as many rights and such extensive power in the economic and social field as those held by trade unions in socialist countries. This impossibility is due to the incompatibility between the political and economic privileges of the capitalist monopolies and the expansion of the rights and power of the trade unions under capitalism.

51.- The W.F.T.U. is strongly in favour of trade union democracy. Wherever shortcomings or defects exist, whether in organisations affiliated to the W.F.T.U. or in others, these must be made good. The W.F.T.U.'s authority within the world trade union movement is enhanced when it appears both as the fraternal and well-qualified adviser of trade union organisations and at the same time as the vigilant guardian of the principles of trade union democracy.

52.- This cannot mean that the W.F.T.U. should interfere in the internal affairs of national trade union organisations. International trade union co-operation itself depends on the democratic principles of collaboration between trade union organisations, and the W.F.T.U. itself must apply these principles in its relations with all trade union organisations, whether affiliated or not.

53.- The wide experience gained in the international trade union movement in connection with the functioning of the trade unions has revealed the need to increase the number of trade union cadres in the various trades. The World Federation of Trade Unions should contribute towards training trade union cadres, bearing in mind that trade union activities, the running of trade unions and their democratic functioning calls for highly experienced workers in their leaderships. The training of leading trade union members is a necessity which is growing in proportion to the progress and development of the world trade union movement.

VII.- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRESS IN THE
SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

54.- In the period since the Third World Trade Union Congress the workers in socialist countries have achieved fresh and remarkable successes in the economic development of their respective countries. Living standards of the urban and rural populations in socialist countries are rising; this is linked with the social character of production. Social legislation in these countries is proof of the superior ability of the socialist system to bring about a continuous improvement in the conditions of the working people.

Not even the most reckless spokesmen of the capitalist monopolies are able to deny the vigorous growth of the means of production, the steady expansion of the home market and the social progress made in the countries of the socialist world. The provocations staged by the capitalist monopolies have been doomed to failure, one after the other, ever since the October Revolution in 1917, and then after World War II, every time they tried to slow down or hamper the great economic and social achievements of the working people in the socialist countries. The malignant power of the capitalist monopolies has definitely been broken in those countries where the people have built or are building socialism and have set out along the glorious road opened by the Russian workers and peasants forty years ago.

55.- This construction, with which the trade union organisations are closely connected, is no easy task. The trade union organisations in socialist countries are capable of frankly admitting these difficulties. They are putting forward their own suggestions and proposals for getting rid of them. Apart from the striking proof

which the working men and women of the socialist countries have given to the whole world, that its peoples can get along without monopoly capitalists, the great merit of these men and women is that they are drawing on their own reserves of creative energy to find the means of overcoming all the obstacles which they encounter in the course of their historic achievements.

The most typical example of the spirit of innovation and creative determination is provided in the vast programme being undertaken by the Soviet Union to reorganise her economic regions. The fact that economic organisation is in the hands of a socialist State, makes it possible to bring about big changes which will have immediate and favourable effects on:

- 1) the level and cost of production;
- 2) a more active participation by workers in directing the national economy.

56.- The international importance of this new Soviet experience, particularly where the international trade union movement is concerned, lies in the fact that the working people, through the intermediary of their trade unions are called upon to be both the creators and beneficiaries of these new forms used in the running of Soviet economy, which aim at greater and more rational development of all means of production and lead to higher consumption and thus to greater happiness for the people.

57.- Socialism has created unprecedented possibilities for economic development and, consequently, for the improvement of the material and cultural level of the workers. The upsurge of the national economy in the socialist countries is illustrated by the following figures:

In 1956, the Soviet Union had surpassed its pre-war level of industrial production 4 times, Czechoslovakia more than 2.7 times, Rumania 3.3 times, Hungary more than 3 times, Poland more than 6 times, Bulgaria 6.5 times, and Albania approximately 12 times. In the years of people's power industrial production in the Chinese People's Republic has risen almost 3 times.

Less than 10 years after the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic the remarkable economic and social achievements of the Chinese people have brought about a significant strengthening of socialism as a system of world importance.

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The fact that the trade unions in socialist countries are members of the W.F.T.U. increases its authority and responsibility.

The W.F.T.U. rallies in its ranks trade unions in socialist, capitalist and colonial countries. It is the only international trade union organisation where trade unions of different tendencies, corresponding to different economic and social systems, can co-operate fraternally in a permanent manner.

When international reaction and the capitalist monopolies attack the W.F.T.U. they do this chiefly because it includes trade unions from socialist countries.

The result is not a weakening of the W.F.T.U. and the trade unions in these countries, but rather a revelation of the full importance of the activities and role of the W.F.T.U.

These activities include the strengthening of fraternal bonds between the workers in socialist and other countries, bonds which the capitalist forces would like to prevent or destroy.

Since the Third World Trade Union Congress attempts have been made in this direction. They were motivated by reactionary hopes for a return to old times and by futile attempts to restore the power of capitalist monopolies in these countries.

59.- Men and women workers in the socialist countries are protecting their historic gains; their trade unions are playing a full part in this. Their prime aim is to overcome any temporary internal difficulties they may meet in making greater efforts to build socialism and perfect a system they have created by their own work and for their happiness. They are determined to frustrate all attacks made by the capitalist monopolies on their magnificent economic and social achievements, the progress and development of which are of direct interest to all the workers in socialist countries.

The guarantee for full success in this magnificent task is the solidarity present among the workers in socialist countries.

Workers throughout the world are gratified by the resumption of friendly and fraternal relations between the Yugoslav Trade Unions and those of the other socialist countries. That this has happened helps to strengthen economic co-operation among the socialist countries and extend solidarity among them as well as among workers throughout the world.

VIII.- THE TRADE UNIONS' AND WORKERS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEFENCE OF PEACE.

60.- The defence of peace rightly concerns all strata of the population and not merely those from which the trade unions recruit their membership. Workers By hand and by brain are duty-bound to join all defenders of peace. The World Council of Peace has established a broad, free and voluntary coalition of all individual persons and groups who are consistently fighting for the preservation of peace.

61.- The trade unions must increase their activity for peace. Generally speaking, the trade unions are not doing as much for peace as their responsibilities in this field require.

The working people fundamentally oppose warlike adventurism and the policy of excessive armaments which is a heavier burden for them than for other sections of the population. The trade unions' increased efforts to ensure peace should express this fundamental opposition.

62.- The desire of the overwhelming majority of working people for peace and disarmament can arrest the policy of excessive rearmament which is placing the means of war once again in the hands of the men and social groups in Western Germany who bore the greatest responsibility for the Hitlerite wars.

This armaments drive represents the greatest obstacle to social and human progress, as it diverts enormous sums of money as well as the most important scientific discoveries of our times to military purposes, instead of using them for the happiness of the peoples and mankind as a whole.

63.- It is in the best interests of all trade unions, regardless of their international affiliation, to work together to promote a vast campaign for disarmament.

They have already declared themselves in favour of the stopping of thermo-nuclear and atomic weapons tests.

They are calling for the excessive military expenditure weighing on national budgets to be diverted to other purposes.

They represent a powerful force which has not made its full weight felt in this field in all countries because they have not been able, so far, to act in unison.

Every national trade union organisation, while maintaining complete freedom from its own opinions on or assess general problems in connection with peace, such as the questions discussed in the U.N.O. or in bilateral or multilateral relations between States, must understand the need to form a broad coalescence of all trade union organisations throughout the world with the well-defined aim of disarmament.

64.- All trade unions whether in the capitalist or socialist world, are aware of the considerable material and non-material advantages which would accrue to the working men and women of their respective countries if the arms drive could be stopped and the nations reach preliminary agreement towards disarmament.

65.- Prompt removal of all obstacles impeding immediate joint trade union action on the international level is therefore necessary.

The World Federation of Trade Unions is acting in this direction and invites other international trade union organisations to end their regrettable hostility to the

idea of trade unions throughout the world joining together in an urgently needed action for peace.

10/1

IX.- THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRATERNAL TIES AND INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS BETWEEN ALL ORGANISATIONS FOR THE RESTORATION OF UNITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

66.- The establishment of international trade union unity is no easy task. This unity will be the result of a long struggle to overcome the obstacles which disruptive elements are consistently creating. The establishment of unity in the international trade union movement is of such great importance and can have such far-reaching consequences for working people throughout the world, that we must realise that the capitalist monopolies and reactionary government will do their utmost to prevent it.

67.- The workers quite rightly note that capitalist monopolies are able to unite their efforts internationally for the purpose of maintaining and increasing their already fantastic profits.

Since 1949, the year of the division of the international trade union movement, the profits of capitalist monopolies reached considerable proportions while workers' wages have always lagged behind the rising cost of living.

The workers themselves are demanding that a vast international coalition of all working class trade union forces should oppose the international coalition which the capitalist monopolies have set up for the purpose of combined action and exploitation.

68.- In order to attain this goal, which is entirely in the interests of the workers, the I.F.T.U. has made several proposals to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and to the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions for a joint meeting to examine the forms of action which would be in the best interests of

the working class and give their struggles the most effective international support.

Rejection of these proposals in 1955, 1956 and 1957 by the leaders of the I.C.F.T.U. gave rise to considerable discontent among their members who doubted the sincerity of their arguments. Anyone can see that this group of leaders is making no attempt to re-establish unity and build up the ranks of the international trade union movement, while on the other hand the capitalist monopolies have been able to co-ordinate their forces on an international level.

The workers and many trade union organisations which are not affiliated to the W.F.T.U., are not indifferent to this state of affairs. The trend in favour of unity is stronger and more consistent than the hostility and inclination for ideological controversies exhibited by certain leaders of the I.C.F.T.U.

69.-

In the present period trade union contacts must be increased between national organisations, irrespective of their international affiliation, or lack of any.

These relations are established and developed along the following principles, upheld by the W.F.T.U.:

- 1) - mutual respect and non-interference in internal trade union affairs of National Centres or trade unions representing different trades;
- 2) - equality in representation, discussion and exchange of information during the preparation of joint meetings;
- 3) - a thorough study of all common aspects of the action programmes of the trade unions attending bilateral or multilateral meetings, and an understanding that controversial subjects will not be discussed when there is no possibility of rapid agreement being reached on them.

For further headway to be made in this direction, systematic delegation exchanges must be arranged, and talks initiated on well-defined issues between national trade union organisations having different affiliations, in order to find ways of removing every type of opposition and misunderstanding detrimental to fresh international relations and the creation of a new atmosphere between National Centres of different affiliations.

70.- It is absolutely essential to investigate all the possibilities for international united action by the working class, on well-defined or even limited issues, whether these be concerning economic or social demands or on subjects such as disarmament and the stopping of thermo-nuclear and atomic weapon tests. The task of indicating where these possibilities lie for agreement between national trade unions of widely differing trends on clearly defined and limited issues, does not fall solely to trade unions affiliated to the W.F.T.U. We welcome every initiative directed at unity, coming from trade unions affiliated to other international organisations as well as from autonomous national trade union organisations.

The road to international trade union unity lies through the struggles of the workers. It is essential to convince the workers of the need for international trade union unity so that they may be brought actively into the unity campaign which must be organised on a world scale.

71.- While one must not labour under any illusion that trade union unity can be established tomorrow, on no account must one allow the idea to gain ground that it is unlikely or even impossible.

It would be wrong if trade union organisations were to reconcile themselves to the international division,

seeking a hundred and one pretexts to do nothing to restore unity.

That is why the idea that the existence side by side of the W.F.T.U. and the I.C.F.T.U. are an obstacle to unity, lacks objectivity and a realistic approach.

The real question is: Who is in favour of unity and who against?

The W.F.T.U. is for unity. We must again make a direct move for united action which can be established between all trade union organisations, whatever their ideology. In 1945 international trade union unity became a reality on the basis of a Charter of Unity which in the first place set forth principles of action.

72.-

The W.F.T.U. Executive Committee proposes to the Fourth World Trade Union Congress to launch an appeal to all national trade union organisations suggesting that joint consultations take place with a view to defining a minimum programme of action acceptable to all trade union organisations in all countries.

This minimum programme of action should be made known throughout the whole trade union movement from top to bottom so that it may be studied and amended if necessary.

After such consultations organised in a democratic manner, the minimum programme of action would become a model document for possible international agreement, which should provide for:

- 1) - joint international trade union intervention and action on current workers' demands;
- 2) - the creation of conditions for the establishment of a SINGLE WORLD TRADE UNION ORGANISATION.

All who support the restoration of international trade union unity, wherever they may be, will thus play their part in establishing a genuine CHARTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY of men and women workers throughout the world.

Prague, 26 August, 1957.
