

PRAHA, 24th December 1965

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To Fraternal National
Centres and Trade Unions
Abroad

AN APPEAL BY THE SOBSI

Dear Friends;

Of late, all press circles in the world have been paying much attention to the development of the situation in Indonesia. Particularly the propaganda machine of the imperialists and that of the domestic as well as the foreign reactionary forces has been circulating all kinds of slanders and false reports. Their motives for conducting such activities are primarily to arouse confusion in connection with the events relating to the 30th September Movement. Furthermore, they have been utilising this event for fanning up a campaign against Communists and against all progressive forces in general and for splitting up the national united front.

By launching such a campaign, which they regard as a means to save themselves from their final doom, the imperialists and the reactionaries have condemned the 30th September Movement alleging it as "a coup d'etat plot to overthrow the Indonesian Republic and to eliminate President Sukarno." They also stubbornly accused the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) and the revolutionary mass organisations such as the SOBSI, the Indonesian Peasant Front (BTI), the People's Youth, the Indonesian Women's Movement (GERWANI), the Concentration of Indonesian Students' Movement (CGMI) and all other Indonesian progressive forces in general, of being on a par with the 30th September Movement.

At present a reign of terror is raging in towns and regions where right-wing elements of the army hold power. Innocent inhabitants are falling victims to the cruel acts of terror which is causing insecurity for personal life. Irresponsible groups of mobs and paid gangs are being employed by the Indonesian reactionary forces to wreck and burn down offices of the PKI, of the SOBSI and of other revolutionary

mass organisations. Even the homes of their respective leaders are not spared from their criminal acts of destruction. Thousands of Communists, trade union activists, militant patriots and progressive and democratic minded persons have been arbitrarily arrested and cruelly tortured, while hundreds of them have been brutally murdered. In comparison with the bestial tortures suffered by the Indonesian people during the Japanese fascist occupation, the tortures carried on by the Indonesian reactionary forces at present are more horrible. Hammering nails into the shoulders of a captive as if fixing nails into a piece of wood is being regarded as a normal act. Shooting to death without much ado in broad daylight of workers who defy to work under pressure of bayonets is regarded as a matter of shooting a bird.

Meanwhile mass dismissals are being imposed upon all workers and employees who are regarded to be Communists or to be involved in the 30th September Movement directly or indirectly, the criterion of which is up to the reactionary forces to determine, or who are considered to be opposing the reactionary military rulers.

In several provinces the "dissolution" of the PKI and of revolutionary mass organisations, including the SOBSI, have been already proclaimed by the reactionary elements in power in the regions concerned. Newspapers regarded to be having sympathies for the PKI, and other progressive newspapers have been since banned for long immediately after the 30th September Movement, while on the other hand only right-wing newspapers under the control of the rightist elements in the army in the main have been permitted to appear freely. Press, radio and other means of mass communication are in general under the control of the reactionaries, particularly those in the ranks of the army. Military men are installed almost in all the government administration. In such a situation one can understand that it has become difficult for the real voice expressing the interests of the working class and of the other progressive forces in Indonesia to be heard in Indonesia and even more so abroad.

The presumption made (by some circles) abroad as if there was no resistance at all by workers and other strata of the people in face of such a situation stems from the fact that such actions of resistance are being concealed by the press and propaganda apparatus of the reactionaries and the imperialists, while at the same time the progressive forces in Indonesia at present are deprived of their own means of communication.

In fact, it is not only in the Central and East Java that the workers and other sections of the people are putting up fierce resistance, but in other parts of the country also such as in North Sulawesi, North Sumatra, West Sumatra, etc. Strikes have been launched by the workers employed in the transport, telecommunications, plantations and the mines. The people, particularly the peasants, who have been deceived and ill-treated by the anti-people clique of the ruling group too much and for too long a period already, have risen up and are in an organic way launching an armed resistance and fighting through other forms of struggle at their disposal. At present, the struggle of the workers and other sections of the Indonesian people, in resistance against the reactionary forces, has reached its highest form, namely, the armed struggle, though still in its initial stages. And they are engaging in this form of struggle after having experienced and having been tempered for a long period in democratic actions taking the form of demonstrations, strikes and the like. In such a situation the perspective of the revolutionary movement in Indonesia has never been so bright as it is today.

The imperialists, particularly those of the United States, and the reactionaries have certainly no interest in the spreading of news about the resistance being carried on by the Indonesian people, as the real state of affairs. They are struck with fear with the prospects of development that as soon as the broad masses of the people would get to know of these actions, the flames of resistance could be set ablaze in increasing intensity.

For the time, the imperialists and the reactionaries are arrogantly busy spreading news as if the rightists in the

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military "are in complete control of the situation" and as if all resistance by the people is absent. This arrogance is in fact a manifestation of their weakness. They are struck with panic in face of the fact that at any time the storm of revolution could rise in a rage to smash them into pieces.

The development of the situation in Indonesia, no matter how dark it is being portrayed by the imperialists and the reactionaries, does not show any serious crisis in the position of the PKI, the SOBSI and other revolutionary mass organisations. Its organisation remains compact; its policy remains revolutionary far from being opportunistic, it remains firmly united in the ideological field and its main leadership remains intact. Its leaders are at present working untiringly day and night to accomplish the honourable task, namely, to complete the national democratic revolution as the first stage for advancing towards socialism.

The reactionaries at home supported by the imperialists and foreign reactionaries may for the time be in a position of carrying on wild bestialities against the people and they may also for the time put on an air of arrogance and mocking. However, they should be warned that all this is just a sign of their final doom, from which they cannot escape. The wheel of history cannot be turned back.

In connection with the 30th September Movement, SOBSI is of the understanding that the objective of this Movement is correctly aimed at safeguarding the Indonesian Republic and President Sukarno and at foiling the plan of the reactionary generals. These generals are the compradores of the imperialists, particularly of the US imperialists, who in conspiracy with the American CIA have been engaged for long in preparing the grouping of forces, particularly in the military field, to overthrow the Indonesian Republic from within and to eliminate President Sukarno.

The stand taken by the SOBSI is in conformity with its stand of supporting any step which leads to the cleaning up of the apparatus of the revolution from elements opposed to the working class and to the people. SOBSI, with its 3.7 million members is convinced that such a stand is a correct one and is an important contribution to the safeguarding of the revolution and to

making it victorious in the interests of the working class and other broad masses of the Indonesian people.

SOBSI is of the opinion that the most decisive factor for the victory of the national democratic Indonesian revolution advancing towards Socialism is the struggle of the Indonesian working class and the Indonesian people themselves.

Solidarity of workers and peace-loving peoples throughout the world fighting against imperialism with the workers and people of Indonesia, based on the principles of proletarian internationalism, will be a very significant contribution to the revolution in Indonesia.

While expressing gratitude from the bottom of its heart to all those who have expressed their solidarity with the SOBSI and condemn the anti-democratic crimes of the Indonesian reactionaries, the National Council of the SOBSI appeals to the workers and trade union organisations in all countries throughout the world:

1. To condemn the cruelties being perpetrated by the Indonesian reactionaries, especially by those holding power in the military,
2. To demand the restoration of democratic freedoms and of trade union rights.
3. To demand the immediate and unconditional release of the fighters of the working class and of the patriots who are imprisoned for the alleged involvement in the 30th September Movement, since they are the fighters who firmly defend the preservation of the Indonesian Republic.
4. To render solidarity and in whatever form possible in conformity with the position of the organisations and the objective conditions prevailing in their respective countries.

With fraternal greetings,
National Council of SOBSI,



Suguri,

(Vice Chairman)

Press Communique

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No. 20, Prague, April 26, 1966

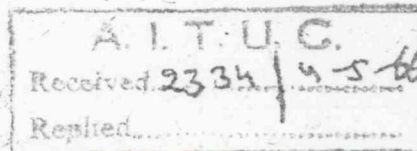
FOR THE LIBERATION OF ELOY TORRES

The Secretariat of the World Federation of Trade Unions today sent the following telegram to the President of the Republic of Venezuela.

May 4 marks the end of the fourth year of imprisonment of Eloy Torres, well-known workers leader and past member of the General Council of the World Federation of Trade Unions, who was arbitrarily sentenced by a military court.

The WFTU has already protested against this flagrant violation of basic judicial procedures in the sentencing of this leader, whose health is severely endangered by the ill-treatment and inhuman conditions he has suffered in the course of his long imprisonment.

Once again, the WFTU demands that the Venezuelan authorities immediately free Eloy Torres and the many imprisoned militant trade unionists and democrats, and close the detention camps of Tacarigua, Cachipo, Cabure and Utica which have been publicly condemned as places where torture is practised.

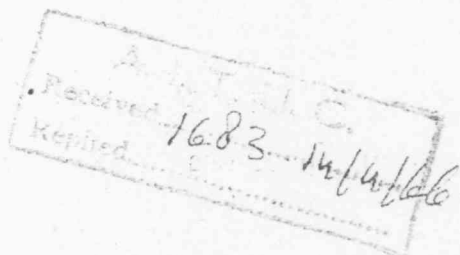


Press Communique

212-A PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS DEPT OF THE W.F.T.U.

No. 17 Prague 5, 1966

From April 24th to 30th:



Solidarity with the Dominican Republic

The 51st session of the Executive Bureau of the World Federation of Trade Unions unanimously adopted the following declaration calling on the workers and trade union organisations throughout the world to actively participate in the Week of Solidarity with the Dominican people from April 24 to 30, 1966

The 6th World Trade Union Congress which met in Warsaw last October, speaking for 159 million workers, firmly condemned the United States aggression against the Dominican Republic and stated its unanimous support of the gallant fight of the Dominican people for the restoration of democratic liberties, the defence of national sovereignty and the departure of the American troops which are occupying the country under the label of the Inter-American Force of the CAS.

The working people are in the front line of this heroic battle, they have conducted many actions, strikes and demonstrations for the satisfaction of their economic and social demands, civil liberties, the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and respect of the Dominican people's right to shape their own destiny.

The Executive Bureau of the WFTU sends fraternal and cordial greetings to the Dominican Confederation of Workers (FOURCA-CESTIIRADO) and to the other organisations which are leading the Dominican workers' fight for their demands and the right to freedom and independence of their country.

The imperialist aggression has taken a toll of 4,000 dead and caused terrible destruction. Every day more workers

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and patriots fall victim to the repression unleashed by the foreign occupation troops and their allies, Trujillo's notorious high-ranking officers.

The military intervention against the Dominican Republic testifies to the growing aggressiveness of American imperialism and constitutes a threat to Cuba and other Latin American nations. On September 21, the US House of Representatives adopted a decision under which it claims the right to land marines in any Latin American country where the United States fears its interests are in danger. This aggressive policy of intervention was confirmed by the American plan to form a so-called Inter-American Force under the cloak of the discredited Organisation of American States with the aim of suppressing the struggles of the Latin American people for national liberation.

The just and gallant fight of the Dominican people has aroused a vast movement of support and sympathy throughout the world. The first Conference of Solidarity of the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America, which met in Havana recently, condemned the military occupation of the Dominican Republic as a violation of the principle of self-determination of the peoples and non-interference in their domestic affairs, and it agreed to observe a Week of Solidarity with the Dominican People from April 24 to 30, 1966.

The Executive Bureau of the WFTU, in accordance with the decisions of the 6th Congress, which decided to observe an International Day of Solidarity with the fight of the workers and people of the Dominican Republic, calls on its national centres to participate in the preparation and organisation of that week in each country.

The Executive Bureau of the WFTU calls on all workers and trade union organisations throughout the world, irrespective of their affiliation, to make the week from April 24 to 30 a powerful world-wide demonstration of solidarity and support of the fight of the workers and people of the Dominican Republic, for the immediate withdrawal of the imperialist forces and the safeguarding of sovereignty and national independence.

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219-A

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Replied...

No 23, Prague, 16th June 1966

AGAINST ANTI-TRADE UNION REPRESSION IN THE SUDAN.

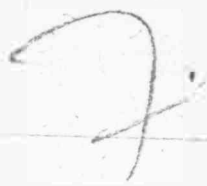
Pierre Gensous, the Assistant General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, today addressed the following telegram to the Sudan Federation of Trade Unions:-

Informed of the repressive measures against the Sudanese trade unions, the World Federation of Trade Unions, on behalf of its 137 million members, expresses its closest solidarity with the Sudan General Federation of Trade Unions and the people of the Sudan, in their bitter struggle for trade union freedoms and better conditions of life.

The WFTU strongly protests against the attacks on your Centre and on the Sudanese workers in their efforts to safeguard trade union rights.

The WFTU demands that the Sudanese government respects these rights, releases imprisoned trade unionists, re-instates dismissed workers and satisfies their justified demands.

We are shoulder to shoulder with you and are following closely the evolution of events in your country, determined to support you, as before, in your legitimate struggle.



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212-A

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A.I.T.U.C.
3240 6/7/66

No 25, Prague, 28 June 1966

FOR AN END TO PERSECUTION IN VENEZUELA

"Nowadays Venezuela abounds with prisons." This is an assertion made in a memorandum submitted this month to the International Labour Office by a delegation comprising Luis Padilla, WFTU Secretary, Moracio Scott Power, member of the WFTU Executive Committee and President of the Venezuelan United Workers Centre, and Jose Marciano, Secretary of the same organisation.

The memorandum exposes the violations of the right of trade union organisation, and the brutal repression, persecution and attacks to which the non-governmental workers' movement is being subjected. The memorandum requests action from the ILO in order to bring these abuses to an end. It asks that a commission be sent to Venezuela to confirm the authenticity of the facts, and that this should be followed by appropriate action.

After outlining the economic and social situation in Venezuela, and making reference to the fact that there are at least 500,000 unemployed and that poverty still reigns in the country despite a so-called agrarian reform which was nothing more than a fraud, the memorandum goes on to paint a detailed picture of the repressive policies being pursued by the regime. This "expresses itself in many and various forms, ranging from the brutal use of police coercion to the systematic violation of the Constitution, legal norms and the Rights of Man." The first target is the workers' movement, of course, which has made a point of maintaining a consistent class approach, independent of the State, the employers, political parties, the Church and any other form of outside interference.

In relation to trade union rights, the memorandum mentions the "continual violation of trade union premises, without warrant" and "the illegal arrest of union leaders." At the present time, more than 1000 people are in prison in different parts of the country, as political prisoners." Included among a large number of examples, is the case of Eloy Torres, a former leader of the Venezuelan Workers Confederation, who was sentenced to more than 8 years imprisonment after a perfunctory

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trial in 1962, and who then had to go on a hunger strike in protest against the treatment meted out to him by his jailers in the Racarigua Island prison. At places of work, if it is discovered that workers are members of a union affiliated to the CUTV, they are generally dismissed.

The right to strike, and guarantee against dismissal for union officials, are virtually non-existent for union affiliated to the CUTV. There have been innumerable cases of union officials being arbitrarily dismissed with the open collusion of the Labour Inspectorates, who "adopt a partisan attitude and take sides with the employer against the worker."

Even the very lives of the political prisoners are in constant danger, as witness the roll-call of deaths and disappearances. In an appendix, the memorandum goes into detail concerning the disappearance or execution of a large number of people, including Jose Gregorio Rodriguez, General Jesus Maria Castro Leon and Luis Emiro Arrieta. Disappearances and summary executions such as these are the work of the General Police Directorate (Dige-pol) and the Armed Forces Information Service (Sifa). A typical case is that of Alberto Lovera, who was arrested by Dige-pol in October 1965 and was later found dead, floating near the Barcelona coast with a pick chained to his body. Despite denials by the authorities, incontestable evidence laid before the Chamber of Deputies proved that Lovera was indeed arrested by Dige-pol.

Furthermore, it is common practice for the police to place detainees in secret confinement, which is itself only the prelude to disappearances and torture. With regard to the latter, there is no lack of evidence to prove that it exists, since even the papers have carried articles exposing it. To be sure, the evidence that we possess is only a small fraction of what occurs in reality. Gilberto Enrique Valera, a 21 year old student, he said, "...they began to interrogate and torture me in a most savage fashion... I was forced to strip and lie on a sheet of heated zinc. They were still beating me, especially with rifle-butts. I was burned in the neck with cigarette ends. They carried on beating me until...I fainted. These tortures were inflicted on me by members of the municipal police, the Security Police and Dige-pol, lead by a Dige-pol Inspector named Gonzales. After this, still naked, we were taken in front of some Americans who took photos and films of us." The memorandum refers to several similar cases, and exposes the "terrorist regime" that prevails in the concentration camps. These camps are situated in secluded places, such as Cabure, Urica and Cachipo, and are termed "anti-guerrilla camps" by the authorities.

A number of country areas, in particular Falcon, Lara, Trujillo, Portuguesa and others, have been subjected on seve

ral occasions to intense bombing and machine-gun fire. In the National Congress particularly, representatives of various different ideological and political trends have spoken out on this question. The memorandum quotes among others the names of senators Vice-Admiral Wolfgang Larrazabal and Miguel Acosta Saignes.

Thousands of people have been kept in detention for months on end without a charge being preferred, despite inquiries from the judges which in principle must be answered within 24 hours.

The memorandum exposes the inertia of the Judiciary in the face of offences committed by Digepl and the gross violations of the law and the constitution that have occurred following political pressure and official dictates. An example of this is the "court action pursued by the Executive in order to annul the official registration of the Communist Party of Venezuela and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left". This was finally ratified by the Supreme Court in spite of explicit legal norms to the contrary. Many members of parliament, such as Hector Rodriguez Bauza, Jesus Faria and Gustavo Machado, have been imprisoned in violation of parliamentary immunity.

In the case of Hector Rodriguez Bauza and Antonio Garcia Ponce, no proof whatsoever was forthcoming, but they were nevertheless found guilty simply because they belonged to a political party whose leadership was allegedly guilty of crimes against the state. Legally this charge would be considered an aberration, since it is based on the notion of collective responsibility under the law. Also despite the fact that the Code of Military Justice stipulates that the period of legal notice of prosecution must not under any circumstances exceed 30 days, in the case of these former members of parliament notice of trial has lasted 2 years.

In its final section, the memorandum gives a long list of prisons and concentration camps that exist throughout the country, and it goes on to say that when these detention centres are full the government uses the countless local administration offices and police stations that are to be found everywhere. Women and miners have been imprisoned and subjected to torture and the most scandalous of treatment. Whole families have been broken up, and different members sent to various prisons throughout the country.

Finally, the memorandum states that respect for workers' rights and the trade unions' integrity and freedom to operate, is closely linked with the necessity of releasing all the trade union and democratic leaders from prison, putting an end to persecution, allowing the unrestricted functioning of political activity and introducing effective progressive structures which will guarantee the principles that are enshrined in the Rights of Man.

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FOR THE RELEASE OF S.A. DANGE AND THE INDIAN
TRADE UNIONISTS

Louis SAILLANT, General Secretary of the W.F.T.U., yesterday sent the following telegram to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister:

Informed of the mass arrests of workers and trade union leaders, including Mr. S.A. Dange, the General Secretary of AITUC and Vice President of the W.F.T.U., following the struggle to obtain sufficient food for the population of Bihar State, the World Federation of Trade Unions vigorously protests against these arbitrary measures and requests your urgent intervention for the immediate release of S.A. Dange and the other militants and workers under arrest, and for the full respect of trade union rights and democratic liberties.

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No 38 Prague, 9th September 1966

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OPEN LETTER TO 135 OF THE WORLD'S GOVERNMENTS

Below we reproduce the full text of the letter that was sent on 2nd September to 135 of the world's governments by Louis Saillant, the General Secretary of the WFTU. We made an announcement regarding the letter on the same day.

World public opinion is greatly alarmed at the present state of affairs in Vietnam, and indeed in the whole of Indo-China, and is following the evolution of events with the deepest misgivings. In addressing this open letter to the governments of the world, the World Federation of Trade Unions, which was born in the conditions of the 2nd World War and is therefore fully conscious of its great responsibilities, wishes to draw urgent attention to the serious threat to South-East Asian and world peace.

We are convinced that your government is not indifferent to the fresh dangers of a generalised conflict breaking out, and that it is prepared to lend an ear to what the people are saying.

Everyday the most murderous and cruel weapons imaginable, including those that have been expressly prohibited by international protocols, are being used indiscriminately by the United States against the entire people of Vietnam.

In the South, whole villages have been rased to the ground by bombs or set ablaze with napalm. Chemicals have been sprayed over crops and gas has been released into the shelters where women and children have had to take refuge. As a result of search operations, villages and homes have been flattened, their occupants forced to evacuate, only to be confined behind barbed wire stockades. Wherever the American forces have been able to penetrate, they have transformed the region South of the 17th Parallel into one great slaughter-house and concentration camp.

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In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the almost constant air-attacks by United States aircraft continue to heap death and destruction on towns and villages, and this, it must be remembered, is an area with one of the densest populations in the world. Nothing has been spared, not even hospitals, schools or the places of worship of the various religions.

Whatever one's individual philosophical, moral or political leanings, everybody possessing a conscience has been revolted by the atrocities that have continued to grow in magnitude with the passing of each day, and that may finally spark of a generalised holocaust of terrifying proportions if the Johnson administration's blind rampage of violence is not halted.

By continuing on its stubborn way, the United States government tramples underfoot the 1954 Geneva Agreements and its own undertaking to 'abstain from the use of threats or force to disturb them'. The position of the United States is untenable both from the point of view of international law and the most elementary norms of human behaviour.

The United States' own acts give the lie, in the most conclusive manner, to the 'desire for peace' to which it lays claim, if only to deceive world opinion.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is fully within its rights in using all methods of defense - including the most up-to-date - against the American bombing raids over its territory.

The implacable progress of this war demands efforts for peace from all the governments and peoples of the world.

The history of the peoples' struggles for freedom and independence show that the wishes and rights of an entire people cannot be quelled by the use of force. The patently obvious failure of President Johnson's aggressive methods in Vietnam are further proof of this truth. Far from weakening, the Vietnamese people's resistance continues to go from strength to strength. It has earned the admiration of the world and the fraternal support of all progressive and peace-loving mankind.

Now, in these grave times in which we live, it is more than ever necessary to call things by their correct names: American intervention in Vietnam is an act of aggression. Public opinion long ago made its verdict known. Many prominent personalities throughout the world - even among the allies of the United States and in Congress itself in Washington - have referred to the lack of realism in Johnson's policies and have sought to draw public attention to the catastrophic consequences that will be the inevitable outcome if these policies are not brought to an end.

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There can be no real solution to the Vietnam problem without satisfying the aspirations of the people of that country, and respecting their inviolable right to freedom, national independence and peace. Such is the import of the official declarations of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

The strict application of the 1954 Geneva Agreements and of international law; respect of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man; the unconditional ending of the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; the withdrawal of all United States and allied armed forces; the dismantling of US bases; recognition of the National Liberation Front as the only genuine spokesman for the people of South Vietnam - these are the most urgent of their aspirations.

Far from losing face as has been suggested in some quarters, the United States, by complying with the wishes of the Vietnamese people, would be giving evidence of great realism and understanding. It would be fully compatible with the noblest traditions of the nation of Washington, Lincoln and, nearer our day, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Fully aware that it is expressing the heart-felt desires of its 140 million members, and of all the working men and women of the world, the World Federation of Trade Unions appeals to all the governments to recognise the grave burden of responsibility that rests on them at such a time as this, when the sacred rights of the people of Vietnam are being trampled underfoot. We appeal most urgently to the governments of the world to dissociate themselves explicitly from the war-policies of the United States, and to let them multiply their efforts and representations with a view to bringing the US government to halt these policies, which can only lead to a decisive rebuff.

Press Communique

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SIXTY YEARS OF TRADE UNION STRUGGLE

The most broadly representative of the Italian trade union centres, the Confederazione Generale Italiana di Lavoro (CGIL), is preparing to celebrate, on 20th October this year the 60th anniversary of its foundation. Here is the text of the telegram sent to the CGIL today by Louis Scilliant, General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

On this, the 60th anniversary of the founding of the CGIL, the great united trade union organisation of the Italian workers, the World Federation of Trade Unions sends its sincerely felt greetings to the officials, militants and members of all the unions affiliated to the CGIL, and, through them, to the whole of the valiant working class of Italy.

The World Federation of Trade Unions sets great store by your efforts to improve the lives and working conditions of the working class in your country. We warmly salute your tireless activities in strengthening the bonds of unity between all the trade union organisations of Italy. You have successfully found the correct path in your national conditions, the path that has lead to the implementation of the principles proclaimed by the Vith World Trade Union Congress in Warsaw.

You were among the founders of our World Federation of Trade Unions, and you have continued to occupy, ever since the Constitutional Congress, one of the foremost places among all those who fight under the difficult conditions of capitalism, and with such self-denial, for the broadest and most cohesive unity of the organised workers throughout the world. You have played a front-line role among those who are determined to unite their efforts for economic and social progress, against monopoly domination and for the strengthening of democracy. This same united international current welds all trade unions into a mighty movement against imperialism, against all forms of exploitation, for the independence of the peoples, and for peace and progress.

We wish you, Brothers, the greatest success in your present and future struggle.

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TOWARDS THE WORLD TRADE UNION CONFERENCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKERS AND PEOPLES

(Budapest, 14 - 17th December 1966)

The Permanent Commission of the World Trade Union Committee for Consultation and United Action against the Monopolies has announced to the different trade union organisations who will take part in the Conference, among them the WFTU, certain themes in order to enable them to hold preparatory discussion on them.

The following themes are being specifically proposed:

- trade relations between socialist and capitalist countries,
- colonialist and neo-colonialist exploitation of the resources of the developing countries,
- the consequences of monopolist integration and concentration on foreign trade,
- the real role played by GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and the problems arising from the Kennedy Round,
- the problems arising out of today's monetary system.

Wide attention is to be given to the positions and the actions of international trade union organisation at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, convened for 1967, where the WFTU, as well as the IOFIU and the IFCTU hold consultative status.

The specific demands which could lead to the realisation of unity of action for the trade unions with a view to undertaking effective action in these different spheres and to put a stop to existing discriminations especially the most flagrant ones, the blockade of Cuba and the DRV, are being stressed.

All these problems will be approached in direct connection with the specific needs of the workers, their struggle against the monopolies and for the satisfaction of their demands.

Louis Saillant, General Secretary of the WFTU, in an interview published by the HUNGARIAN TRADE UNION REVIEW in anticipation of the conference, stated: "The trade unions, whose job it is to defend the interests of the workers wherever they are at stake, have therefore been led in recent years to pay far more attention to international trade, to the conditions in which this trade takes place and the distortions which prevent a rational international division of labour and economic cooperation among all countries, in the mutual interest". He also suggests that within the Conference opportunity

be provided for organising meetings of trade union delegates on a continental or intercontinental basis. Thus for example the European and African delegates could examine the possibilities for developing solidarity and joint international struggle against the monopolies.

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Brother Josef Hlavicka, Secretary of the Central Council of Czechoslovak Trade Unions and head of the delegation which will take part in the Conference, declared that the Czechoslovak trade unions have welcomed the initiative of convening this Conference, on the principle that all countries, small and large, notwithstanding their social system and their respective resources, should benefit by the advantages of international trade to further their economic development and social progress. He declared that the Czechoslovak trade unions intend to demand that the Conference should, in view of the forthcoming World Conference on Trade and Development, convened for 1967, request the UNO that concrete measures be taken so as to give this second conference on the development of international trade a really world-wide nature.

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Brother Vasile Oltean, General Secretary of the Trade Unions International for Workers in Commerce, stressed in a interview that the workers in this trade have always given great attention to the problem of international economic and trade relations. Having outlined the substantial contribution made by the workers and trade unions in the socialist countries towards the action for the development of their foreign trade with the other countries of the world, Vasile Oltean went on to say that it is the task of the trade unions in the capitalist and developing countries to intensify pressure in demanding the governments of their countries to adopt policies of economic equality in their trade with other States, irrespective of their social systems. Such cooperation would be to the advantage of the economic development of their countries, it would increase the possibilities of employment and make for better living conditions of the workers. Such action would, further, be effective in decreasing international tension and in safeguarding world peace.

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