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*(S. A. Dridzo)*

*The*  
**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL  
of TRADE and INDUSTRIAL  
UNIONS**

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# The International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions

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The international organisation of the trade union movement is proceeding much less quickly than the international organisation of the Communist Party. It is already a year and a half since the foundations of the III. Communist International were laid and the centre for revolutionary activity for all Communists and revolutionary-class elements of the world labour movement was created, whereas the trade unions have remained right up to the last moment unorganised in a single international organisation. More than that, just at the moment when the II. International has become a corpse from which the most opportunist parties are fleeing, and when its most ardent supporters are compelled to admit that it is completely bankrupt, an international federation of trade unions is being formed instead of which stand those who were the most active participants in the II. International and who supported the war policy of their Governments.

The trade union movement is lagging behind the Communist Movement. The trade unions are the army, the loosely massed columns of the proletariat, while the Communist Party is the advance guard, the pioneer fighting detachments of the working class. The later international organisation of the trade unions means that the connection between the advance guard and the army is broken. This is a sad, but an undoubted fact in all countries in Europe and America. This break between the advance guard and the army is explained by the slow development of the social revolution, the continued domination of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the painful form which the class struggle is assuming in Western Europe and



America. A sharp struggle is proceeding within the labour organisations, part of which stand solidly for the old capitalist system and serve as a defence of bourgeois dictatorship.

This backwardness and reaction of many trade unions in capitalist countries found their expression in the formation of an international centre which is but a rather bad edition of the II. International, and whose function is to realise on an international scale that co-operation of classes that was so „successfully“ realised during the war.

What is the reason of the backwardness of the international proletarian movement? What forms of international organisation existed previously among the trade unions? What has been done and what should have been done to fight against the international of strikebreakers as the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions is, and what should be the relations between the newly established III. Communist International and the international organisation of trade unions? These are the questions which we have to solve.

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Trade Unions arose as organs of the working class to counterbalance the growing exploitation. In its early form the trade union was a union of workers in a certain craft having for its object to assist its members employed in a definite category of labour. As the capitalist system grew and developed so the form of organisation of the trade union changed also, and with that the scope and character of its work also changed. It is necessary to observe however that the form of organisation of the trade unions always lagged behind the form of organisation of capitalism which during the last nine years has developed such powerful organisations, like trusts and syndicates, the competition among which, as is known led to the world war.

While capitalism in the course of its development assumed new forms of organisation which facilitated it in exploiting labour and subjecting to itself the apparatus of the State, the trade unions lagged behind like a shadow,

in many countries preserving the old forms of organisation, with all their close corporative character, narrowness and limitations. In counteracting the increasing exploitation, in striving to raise the standard of living, to improve the conditions of labour, and secure the principle of collective agreements the trade unions always acted on the basis of capitalist relations, and as the unions grew and became internally consolidated the idea of an unbreakable tie between the trade unions and the existing order of things became stronger. The older the trade union movement became and capitalism the more powerful, the more clearly and definitely did the idea become of the necessity for the existence of capitalism and the co-operation of classes as a condition for the improvement of the standard of living of the workers.

The capitalists of England, America and Germany, thanks to their strength and their dominant position in the world market were able to make frequent concessions to the workers and were able to imbue them with the firm conviction of the stability of the capitalist system. The national greatness of the country, and particularly the economic importance of industry in world economy, influenced the minds of the workers and subjected their class interests to the badly understood interests of the moment.

It would be a mistake to believe that the bourgeoisie kept the workers enslaved only by material necessity; the modern bourgeois state has created a tremendous arsenal for the spiritual enslavement of the working class. The schools, science, the church, religion, literature, philosophy created by capitalist society, all represent weapons for the perversion of the minds of the workers. One must confess that the spiritual weapon is much more powerful than those methods which a bourgeois government adopts to subject the will of revolting workers. This spiritual dependence of the workers on bourgeois ideology was in greatest evidence during the war when the trade unions became, not only a material support of war policy, but developed a complete theory of class co-operation, the essence of which was that the workers are interested in preserving the bourgeois State and

the capitalist system, and should subject their interests to the interests of the whole, i. e. the bourgeoisie.

The history of the trade union movement during the war is the history of the conversion of the trade unions into supernumerary organs of the bourgeois State, an apparatus of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Just as during the imperialist war the bourgeoisie split up into two hostile coalitions each fighting for world hegemony, so did the trade unions in the respective groups split into two hostile camps, not because they had different points of view on principle, but because they based all their theory and practise on the principle of national defence and on the support of their own capitalism at the expense of the other.

The war disclosed the extraordinary degree to which the trade unions were dependant upon bourgeois ideology. The exclusive domination of national motives in the trade union movement is the fundamental reason for the collapse of those international connections that had been made previous to the war.

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There were forms of international connection in the Trade Union movement previous to the war. The majority of trade unions participated in the international socialist congresses, thus demonstrating their association with the socialist movement and the international solidarity of trade unionism of the various countries. This connection with the socialist movement however was purely formal, for the trade unions on the eve of the war were opportunist and stood on the right wing of the socialist movement. The purely formal connection of the trade unions with social democracy was evident from the fact that although the trade unions in Germany were regarded as social democratic they nevertheless conducted a definite policy often in opposition to that of the social democrats.

This purely formal connection between the international trade union movement and the International Bureau certainly could not satisfy the demands for unity among the trade unions of the various countries and so at the begin-

ning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century we saw the rise of the international secretariat whose function it was to inform the workers of various countries on the labour movement in other countries. The International Secretariat at the head of which was Legien was not an international organisation in the full sense of the word. Organisation presupposes unity of action and power to act, while the Secretariat of Trade Unions was engaged in nothing else but issuing literature and did not even dream of any international action. It was a centre which was not responsible to its constituents each of whom maintained their own independent existence. On the eve of the war the trade union movement embraced nearly 10,000,000 workers divided into loosely connected territorial organisations whose work was confined chiefly to its own national questions. Its internationalism was an abstract principle rather than a guide in every day policy. The work of the International Secretariat during the many years of its existence prior to the war better than any thing else shows its bankrupt character. For the thirteen years of its existence the Secretariat did nothing more than publish several reports and a few pamphlets. It was more like a post office or an international inquiry bureau than the international centre of the working class movement.

The trade unions were inter-connected not only through their national centres. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century various international unions arose whose defects however lay in their being craft unions pursuing narrow limited aims. The international unions existing on the eve of the war — metal workers, miners, textile workers, transport workers, painters, capmakers, woodworkers, builders, tailors, and bootmakers etc. were all constructed on the principle of information bureaux. The national interests stood above international interests, and these international organisations were the germs of international organisations rather than active international fighting centres of their respective category of labour. During the many years of existence of some tens of international unions, it is impossible to recall a single international campaign, not a single example of international action. It is true that there were

attempts at international boycott, collection of money for workers on strike in other countries, agreements on conditions of labour, agreements on the transference of membership from one country to another, and a number of other examples of international solidarity, but one has to confess that the outstanding feature of the pre-war trade union movement, was that international solidarity was but in its embryonic stage. The preponderance of national questions over international questions, and the subordination of class interests of the moment is brilliantly illustrated by the war.

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The war broke all the three threads that connected the trade union movement of the various countries. Simultaneously with the collapse of the II. International and its conversion into a tool of the Entente, the Trade Unions formed diplomatic coalitions — Allied, and Central European, according to the particular government they existed under. The formal advantage lay with the Central European coalition, for the reason that the International Secretariat was in Germany, and Legien following the example of Vandervelde strove to use the name of the International Secretariat for purposes having nothing in common with international solidarity. Just as Vandervelde refused to surrender the president's hammer, and used his title of President of the International Bureau for sanctifying the lofty war aims of the Entente, so did Legien set the international into motion in defence of the „just and sacred“ war of his government.

The International Secretariat together with the International Bureau ceased to exist with the commencement of war operations. The leaders of the trade union movement Legien, Huber, Jouhaux, Appleton and Gompers were the civil generals whose task it was to carry out the moral mobilisation of the masses. In justice to these gentlemen one must admit that they carried out their instructions brilliantly. The Trade Unions, these mass organisations of the working class, became the main bulwark of the

bourgeois State, and its support in its struggle, not only against the external but also against its internal enemies.

The activity of the leaders of the trade union movement in this direction consisted in discrediting the leaders of the enemy countries by accusing them of being the servants of their governments, and on the other hand denouncing every anti-government action of their workers as a „crime“. The break up of the revolutionary movement, and implanting and fostering chauvinistic instincts in the masses was brilliantly carried out by them. The bourgeoisie could not have dreamt of better executioners of their desires.

The Allied trade union leaders made an attempt to set up a trade union international, for which a conference of Allied trade unions was called in Leeds in 1916. The task of this conference was to draw up a programme of social legislation, condemn the trade union movement of the Central Empires, and to set up its own international secretariat of trade unions. Of these tasks the conference carried out only one — it made a demonstration against the criminal association of the German and Austrian trade unions with their governments. The irony of the story lay in the fact that those who condemned the association of workers' organisations with their governments were just those who themselves led the workers in their own countries into shameful slavery to their bourgeoisie.

The individual international trade union organisations by no means cut a prettier figure. They split up according to the coalition on whose territory the centre of their organisation was situated. Thus the International Bureau of Textile workers and Miners being situated in England, maintained the policy of the Allies; while the International Bureau of Metal workers and Builders having their centres in Germany adopted the policy of the Central Empires. The peculiar feature of the whole period of the crises in the international trade union movement is the almost complete disappearance of the old groupings and tendencies. Former revolutionary, syndicalists, pure and simple trade unionists, „new-patented“ trade unionists, supporters and

opponents of socialism all, with few exceptions, became patriots of their fatherland and politically resembled each other like peas in a pod. Betrayal of the interests of the workers brought uniformity among the most divergent tendencies.

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The end of the war compelled people to think of the re-establishment of international connections, and this raised the necessity for the bourgeoisie to strengthen that co-operation of classes that was developed during the war. The re-establishment of international relations proceeded along two lines; the first by means of the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations, and second the International Federation of Trade Unions.

The fundamental idea laying at the basis of the Labour Bureau is to convert the working class into a shareholder in the international trust called the League of Nations. The League of Nations, as is known, was the flag around which pacifists and socialist simpletons of various countries rallied. According to its founder, Mr. Wilson, the League of Nations was to have been the supreme international tribunal which was to establish justice and truth in the whole world. Of course it was understood that the League could only carry out its lofty aims with the victory of the Allies. For that reason support of the Allies was a first condition for the creation of the League of Nations. This assistance was forthcoming from the trade unions of the Allied countries, and it is natural that as a reward they demanded the participation of labour in the League of Nations.

It is true that this demand was conceded to a minimum degree. During the war the European and American Gomperses pictured this participation somewhat differently. They wanted to take part in the Peace Congress itself, and to convene an international trade union congress at the place where the Peace Congress was to be held in order to bring pressure on the diplomatists. A number of other combinations were intended in order to secure the carrying of their "own programme" through their governments. But as soon as



the war ended the Entente governments made their lackeys understand that their mission was ended, and the Peace Congress could very well do without them. Besides this they were given to understand that to convene an international trade union congress at the place where the Peace Congress was taking place would be very inconvenient, and that it would be much more desirable if they found a spot somewhat further away for their little excursion. Allied diplomacy however, was opposed to the entry of Labour in the League of Nations only where questions had to be *decided*, but had no objection to it coming in where questions were to be *discussed*. Thus the International Bureau of Labour was established, which was to demonstrate the unity between Capital and Labour, *discuss* questions of labour legislation, *speak* of reforms, *propose* innovations, but to leave the *decision* to the more competent and more interested bourgeois government. The international Bureau of Labour is remarkable for the fact that it includes representatives of the trade unions of the Central Powers, although this inclusion cost the latter dear. The Bureau is composed of six representatives of Labour, six representatives of employers, and twelve representatives of „neutral“ governments; at the head is the well known traitor Albert Tomas. This Bureau of Labour is a symbol of achievement of the Social-patriots of various countries as a result of their chauvinist war policy. Four years of flunkeyism and treachery, four years of co-operation with the bourgeoisie and talk of new relations on the basis of defence of national safety produced a powerless insignificant Bureau of Labour whose decisions are obligatory on no one, which nobody desires. The mountain of class co-operation brought forth a mouse.

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Simultaneously with the setting up of the Bureau of Labour of the League of Nations the leaders of the bankrupt trade unions commenced to reorganise the Trade Union International which they had destroyed. Immediately after the conclusion of the war an international trade union

conference was convened at Berne, at which the representatives of the Allied trade unions Jouhaux, Appleton, and Gompers gave battle to Legien and his supporters. This conference was nothing in the world like a labor gathering, because its main work was devoted to attacking the German chauvinists for supporting their government. It was assumed that for the Germans to support their government was bad, while being lackeys of the Entente governments was conducting „labour“ policy. This miserable quarrel ended in a complete victory for the Allied patriots. Legien was removed from his post, and the Secretariat was transferred to Holland. The Entente trade unionists triumphed over the trade unionists of the late German Empire.

The second International Trade Union Congress was held in Amsterdam, to which the German and Austrian trade unions were permitted with equal rights as worthy members of the congress. An international organisation was formed at Amsterdam, as well as a bureau, and the trade union leaders who for many years called the workers to mutual extermination formed an international union. For what purpose? On the basis of what programme? What have these deadly enemies united? What has compelled Legien, Appleton, Huber, and Gompers to unite? These questions naturally arise in the minds of every participator in the present day labour movement.

In the first place it is necessary to point out that their striving to set up an international organisation of trade unions is a reflection of the tremendous demand of the workers of all countries for the re-establishment of class unity destroyed by the war, and to set up an organisation which could in a period of storm and stress conduct a defensive and offensive struggle against the capitalist class. Of course the Amsterdam Federation was not created for this purpose, but the old trade union leaders very well understood that if they did not hasten to set up an international organisation, one would be set up *without and in spite of them*. Thus the main reason for the re-establishment of the international by the hands of its assassins was the fear for their own future.

That our explanation is the correct one is seen from the fact that the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions was formed without any programme. After such a tremendous war, after such colossal sacrifices made by the workers of all countries it should have been natural for real representatives of labour organisations to estimate the effects of the great shock, to give some reply to the great questions which interest the workers of all countries at the present moment, and to show the way out of the cul-de-sac into which the imperialist bourgeoisie have led humanity. But the Amsterdam Conference did nothing of the kind, it silently avoided all the burning questions affecting the present day labour movement believing they could screen themselves from history by silence. The Amsterdam congress only troubled to create a centre, and to place at its head the old friends of the Entente; all other things were removed to the background. This aim was achieved; the warm defender of British Imperialism, Appleton, the worthy defender of the French bourgeoisie, Jouhaux, and several other not less representative persons of the dying social-patriotism came to the head of the International Federation. They united in order to retain the banner of the international organisation in their hands, and to use it for the purpose of class co-operation.

It was precisely with this that the International Federation began its work. The very people who restored the class organisations destroyed by the war bound these organisations with the general staff of international imperialism — the League of Nations. The International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations are connected by personal and intellectual ties, and on the field of class co-operation can be seen the distinguished figures of Jouhaux, Appleton, Gompers and other heroes of the rear.

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What has the International Federation of Trade Unions done during the period of its existence? Absolutely nothing. One cannot consider the mere existence of the

International Federation as activity. One can take no account of the vapid and colourless resolutions which the International Federation passes from time to time and sends into space in order to remind the world of its existence. An international, like a national labour organisation can exist only when it has a definite militant aim, when it knows what it wants, and when, ranging itself against the whole of the bourgeois world goes directly for its aim. There is nothing like this about the International Federation. There is no class definiteness about it. It desires, by means of manifestoes, appeals, by persuading the bourgeoisie, to secure the improvement of the conditions of the proletariat. This is the programme upon which stand all bourgeois reformists, all the advanced bourgeoisie and the most backward leaders of the most backward labour organisations.

When the International Federation does at last express itself on some question its every word expresses trifling opportunism and compromise. In January 1920 the Amsterdam Federation expressed itself in favour of the socialisation of industry, and in its First of May manifesto to the workers of all countries it put forward two demands; the socialisation of the means of production, and the carrying out of the Washington Congress resolutions. But how can the socialisation of the means of production be carried out? By persuading the bourgeoisie, or by revolution? Nothing is said about this in the remarkable First of May manifesto. Further, how are the resolutions of the Washington Congress to be carried out? That is, assuming that it is the last word in social legislation. How is this all to be done? Alas! No reply is forthcoming, in spite of the fact that this is the period of the severest class struggle in the world's history. At the moment when the leaders of the Amsterdam Federation see how the bourgeoisie of all countries insist on their privileges, when the experience of Soviet Russia and Hungary cries aloud to the heavens against the hope that the bourgeoisie will make any voluntary concessions, when the bourgeoisie of all countries represent a united block conducting a mortal struggle

against all the strivings of the working class for emancipation, to speak of the socialisation of the means of production in May 1920 without indicating how this is to be done, to put forward the demand for the carrying out of the resolutions of the Washington Congress, that labour-bourgeois talking shop, and at the same time call their organisation a labour organisation, is not *only senseless, but conscious treachery*. It is no wonder therefore that the Amsterdam Federation composed of slaves of national governments, cannot speak in any other language than the language of slavery and treachery.

Under these circumstances, what does the Amsterdam Congress really represent; A guiding centre of class unions? A revolutionary staff in the struggle against capitalism? Nothing of the kind. It is the centre of reactionary national unions whose task is to confuse class distinctions on an international scale as they have done on an a national scale, and to create the illusion that an international labour organisation exists, to spread the idea of class co-operation, and class peace, — in a word, it is the international centre of labour reaction, and is the most reliable support of international imperialism. It is necessary to prove that such a centre must be destroyed, and the trade union centre of labour reaction must be opposed by a trade union of working class revolution.

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Immediately after the February Revolution, at the first attempt at forming an All-Russian centre, the Russian trade unions stood on the point of view of the necessity of forming an international fighting centre of trade unions. Already at the III. Conference of Trade Unions held 20—28 June 1917 the necessity was recognised of forming an international trade union organisation. The First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions went further, and in the general resolution on the tasks of the trade unions in the period of proletarian dictatorship the Congress resolved that: „The Russian Trade Union movement cannot carry out its tasks without entering into close contact with the

international trade union movement. The Congress regards it as its duty to co-operate to the fullest extent of its power in the revival of the international trade union movement and to make the calling of a general international trade union congress, as well as international congresses of individual trade unions, an immediate question. As a first step in this direction the Congress resolve to convene an international trade union congress in Petrograd on the 5th. of February".

This resolution, however remained on paper. No conference was called for the reason that immediately after the October Revolution, not only did capitalist Europe fling itself with gnashing teeth against Russia and against the Russian proletariat, but even the European socialpatriots hurled thunder and lightning against the „madness and criminality“ of the Russian proletariat. The leaders of the European and American labour movement under no circumstances would permit the initiative of calling an international congress to be taken by the Russian workers, and for that reason they hastened to create their own organisation, which is a mere substitute for international working class unity.

It was evident from the first days of the existence of the Amsterdam Federation that the path of the revolutionary class unions of Russia and the labour lieutenants of the League of Nations lay in different directions. But our negative attitude to the Amsterdam Federation took definite expression only in connection with the organisation of and convening an International Conference of trade unions and employers organisations at Washington.

The betrayers of the working class went to the extreme in their endeavour to consolidate their practice of class co-operation on an international scale. The All-Russian Central Council of Trade unions could not remain silent in the face of this corruption of the trade union movement, and addressed manifesto to all the trade unions in Europe and America denouncing the treacherous policy of the leaders of the international trade union movement.

„They are going to Washington“ wrote the Central

Council of the All-Russian Trade Unions in their manifesto of the 8th. October, „to work out a programme of international labour legislation. After twenty million workers have been sent to destruction, these people now worry about labour legislation! Is this in order to raise fresh crops of cannon fodder to sacrifice on the altar of their imperialist fatherland? They desire to work out a programme, and like faithful servants, wait in the ante-chambers of their patrons, Wilson, Lloyd-George and other experts in the art of crushing the working class! These eunuchs think, that the bourgeoisie whom they served, out of gratitude for their past services, in confusing the minds of the workers, will bring them liberal labour legislation on a plate and say „here are some concessions for your good conduct.“ These little people with slavish minds forget that individual persons may receive presents, but that a whole class cannot take a „tip“ or be satisfied with a sop. Many of the labour leaders hanging on to the skirts of Wilson have particularly flexible spines; as the working class does not possess such a spine, hanging round ministerial ante-chambers is foreign and repulsive to it. This is a request to accept the proletariat as a poor relation in to the limited company for the exploitation of small and weak nations, which in the language of the international marauders is called the „League of Nations.“

They desire to secure international labour legislation by means of friendly negotiations with those who have spent all their lives and energy in securing international capitalist legislation. They desire to secure advantages for the workers not by means of their organised, independent, revolutionary class power, but by means of behind the scenes negotiations, cunning combinations and diplomatic intrigue. Petty deceivers! Where have they seen the bourgeoisie grant the most petty, most insignificant social reform without the direct action of the masses? In what country is there a capitalist class that voluntarily makes concessions and surrenders part of its profits and income for the sake of the beautiful eyes of bankrupt labour leaders? There is no such country. Such a State and such a class do not



exist. The capitalist class will guard their privileges with all the fibre of their beings, and no waiting on ministers doorsteps, no slavish humility on the part of the working class will compel the bourgeoisie to change its nature."

"Workers you are being deceived! Watch the hands and the actions of your leaders. Ask them what the League Nations has given the proletariat; ask them who crucified the Hungarian Soviet Republic: ask them who placed arms into the hands of the Rumanian assassins; ask them whose orders and with whose money were thousands and thousands of Hungarian workers murdered; ask them who supports Koltchak and Denikin, who organises white guard conspiracies in Russia, who supplies money and arms to the Russian monarchists who are exterminating the Jewish population, who pays all these Russian progromchiks, with whose aid are the fields and valleys of Russia drenched in the blood of tens of thousands of workers and peasants; — ask them all this, and when they tell you tales about the League of Nations, about agreements with the bourgeoisie, that the consumptive II. International composed of traitors can restrain world imperialism, that the ruthless dictatorship of capital can be softened by an international armistice, and that all this will be in the interest of the proletariat and socialism, — answer them in the firm determined voice of a revolted proletariat; tell them what the fighting experience of the Russian trade unions says, — „Dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat; League of Nations or the III. International, — there can be no middle course."

Out of the road deceivers and hypocrits, the Social Revolution is coming!"

From this estimation of the activity of the leaders of the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations, and consequently of the International Federation it is perfectly clear that another centre of the trade union movement is essential. The All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions therefore took the next step and sent out an invitation by radio to all the trade unions in the world in which it „invited all economic organisations standing for real revo-

lutionary class struggle for the emancipation of labour from the exploitation of capital by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat to close their ranks against the international league of plunderers, break with the compromising International and together with the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions organise a real international conference of revolutionary-socialist trade unions and labour syndicates. All economic labour organisations standing on the platform of revolutionary class struggle are asked to reply to our call and to enter into direct connection with us."

This appeal served as a starting point of a movement in favour of creating a new centre of trade unions uniting the revolutionary class unions of all countries. In view of the circumstances which arose, considerable time elapsed between the declaration of the need of creating such a centre and its realisation. The mere desire of the Russian trade unions was not sufficient, and it was necessary to wait until the revolutionary masses of all countries converted the old trade union organisations from weapons of reaction into weapons of the social revolution.

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Simultaneously with the struggle of the Russian trade unions on the social revolutionary front the labour organisations in Western Europe and America become revolutionised, The labour masses streaming into the unions brought about a change in the old decrepit organisations. The trade union bureaucracy who reigned unchallenged in the unions during the war, began to feel that their position was becoming unstable. In England a movement for direct action is growing up in the old unions. The Miners' Union, Transport Workers' Union and the Railwaymen's Union formed a triple alliance and put forward demands which the bourgeoisie cannot concede. A series of gigantic strikes has shaken England, and if the government has come out of it unharmed, it is only due to the fact that the leaders strove to substitute fighting by agreements, and at all costs to find compromises. Within the old trade unions in England there is growing up a shop steward

movement which however is rather a number of groups of revolutionaries of like opinion than the factory committees in the Russian sense of the term. The British shop steward organisations exist simultaneously within and outside of the trade unions. They stand for the revolutionary class struggle, the violent overthrow of the capitalist system, put forward the Soviet System as a substitute for the parliamentary system, and put forward the demand for labour control. Although the British Shop Steward Movement is not yet sufficiently formed and its ideas not yet clearly defined, it is nevertheless a revolutionary class protest against the trade union bureaucracy and its hope of a peaceful solution of the age long conflict between capital and labour. If the as yet weak shop steward committees were confronted by a completely unanimous trade union movement then the revolutionisation of the British labour movement would be a matter of the distant future. But the fact is that the trade unions themselves — not the leaders but the broad masses, — are pressing to the left with the progress of events. The shop steward committees in their struggle rely on the sympathy of the masses; and as Macdonald said in one of his speeches, the left wing in the British Movement is very weak in normal times, but acquires considerable weight and importance immediately a serious social conflict arises. In order to render a complete picture of the British trade union movement it is necessary to point out that the Irish Trade Union Congress resolved to affiliate to the III. International and that a number of Irish trade unions are leaving the British organisations owing to their compromising tactics. The seven million workers organised in trade unions in England represent the following picture; — at the top there is the bureaucracy, nine-tenths of whom are hopeless compromisers; at the bottom there are the discontented worst paid section of the workers comprising the militant sections of the shop stewards movement and in the centre there are the average workers tied by training and a mountain of prejudice to their fatherland but gradually, under the influence of the severe lessons of life

emancipating themselves from the delusion of a peaceful, gradual and constitutional solution of the social conflict. At all events there are sufficient elements of the new trade union movement in England for the new international centre to rely on at least a section of the organised British workers. This was proved by the conference called in London on the 11—12 March on the initiative of the workers' committees. Nearly 200 delegates were present at this conference including representatives of eleven local branches of the Railwaymen's Union, three branches of the General Labourers Union, six branches of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, six branches of the Scientific Instrument Makers Union, four branches of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, four South Wales Miners' branches, two branches of the Yorkshire Miners, two branches of the Electrical Trades Union, branches of the Builders Workers Industrial Union and a number of branches of other unions and political parties. All the resolutions of this unofficial conference were saturated with the revolutionary class spirit. The resolution on the nationalisation of the mines says, „the continued existence of the capitalist system of production is leading to the ruination of the mines. The conference calls upon the workers to set up an industrial apparatus through which they can take control of the means of production and distribution into their own hands.“ The conference expressed itself in favour of direct action and a general strike as a means of securing satisfaction of the miners' demands. It also carried a resolution of greeting to Soviet Russia, and congratulated the Red Army on the brilliant victories it has achieved in its struggle against the united forces of the capitalist governments, and expressed its solidarity with the Russian Workers' Soviet Republic. In a special resolution the conference expressed regret at the inactivity hitherto displayed by the British workers in connection with the attack of world capitalism on Soviet Russia. Besides this the conference demanded the independence of Ireland, sent greetings to the workers of Egypt and India, and demanded the withdrawal of British troops

from, and the granting of independence to these countries. It declared against raising the productivity of labour under the capitalist system, and in a special resolution declared that the existing parliament and organs of local government suited the requirements of the capitalist system and served as a means for the legal enslavement of the workers. Soviets, or Workers Committees are recognised by the workers of all countries to be the best weapon for the overthrow of the capitalist system, and the best organ of administration in a Communist Republic. Besides other resolutions the conference resolved to welcome the III. Communist International formed in Moscow and to call upon all the organisations represented at the conference to accept the Communist platform and affiliate to the III. International. The conference urges upon all these participating in the conference to see to it that their organisations leave the II. International and the Labour Party and affiliate to the III. International. These resolutions indicate that within the British labour movement there are small but nevertheless revolutionary groups of workers who have completely broken with the II. International.

The situation in *France* is somewhat different. The patriotic attitude taken up by the Confederation General du Travail during the war called forth protests from a number of syndicates already at the end of 1914. In December 1914 Pierre Monat, the editor of the syndicalist organ „Vie L'Ouvriere“ resigned from the C. G. T. and published a warm protest against the war policy of the former revolutionary syndicalists. A „Trade Union Defence Committee“ was formed in Paris around which grouped all the internationalist elements in the trade union movement. This committee is part of the „Committee for the Reestablishment of International Connections“ which is composed of two sections — trade union and socialist. At the end of the war the left wing was considerably strengthened, and at the congress at Lyons, September 1919, the minority received one third of the votes. From September 1919 the influence of the left wing slowly but surely grew, and a large number of unions including the Paris Metal

Workers, Railwaymen, various local miners unions, builders, leather workers, textile workers and a number of department organisations expressed themselves in favour of affiliation to the III. International. When the decision of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions to set up a new centre for the revolutionary class unions became known in France, it met with great sympathy from the left wing unions, and the daily organ of the revolutionary minority, „Vie L'Ouvriere“ at the head of which were Monat and Rossmere, spoke categorically against the Amsterdam International and for the new Trade Union International.

In *Italy* the situation is different, first because for a long time two organisations have existed, one revolutionary syndicalist — The Italian Syndicalist Alliance — and the other the reformist General Confederation of Labour. But the stand of the Italian proletariat, its revolutionary anti-war position, compelled the moderate leaders of the C. G. T. to conduct an international policy in agreement with the Socialist Party. At the end of 1919 the revolutionary syndicalist unions expressed themselves in favour of affiliation to the III. International, while the C. G. T. not only avoided giving a definite reply to the questions raised by the revolutionary epoch, but participated in the Berne and Amsterdam Conferences and even in the Washington Conference. This opportunist policy of the C. G. T. roused considerable dissatisfaction among the masses, and various unions began to ask their Centres why they did not affiliate to the III. International. The Executive Organ of the Confederation, in March 1920 made vague replies to these questions from which one could gather that it did not wish to say anything definite for or against the III. International. Meanwhile various unions passed resolutions wholly conforming to the platform of the III. International. Thus for instance, the general conference of the Italian Metal Workers Union which took place in the beginning of 1920 definitely expressed itself in favour of affiliation to the III. International. This was the general temper that reigned in the majority of the Italian unions in the middle of 1920.

In *Spain* also two organisations existed, one patriotic

headed by Ventsente Bario, and the other which arose during the war — revolutionary syndicalist. The new organisation had its base in Barcelona, with its industrial proletariat and old anarcho-syndicalist trade unions. For the last two years the National Confederation of Labour of Spain, as a result of its revolutionary tactics, has dominated almost the whole of the trade union movement of Spain. Out of the million organised workers in Spain, 800,000 belong the revolutionary syndicalist Confederation of Labour, while only 200,000 belong to the opportunist labour unions headed by Ventsente Bario. The programme of the General National Confederation of Labour of Spain includes the violent overthrow of capitalism, and revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie and the compromisers who co-operate with it. At its last congress, the General National Confederation of Labour of Spain resolved to affiliate to the III. International. In view of the fact that the congress was held semi-illegally and the government had forbidden a discussion of the question of the dictatorship proletariat on the threat of dispersal, the congress did not pass any resolution on this question. One thing is clear however, and that is that three quarters of the organised workers of Spain stand for the revolutionary class point of view and are prepared, not in words but by action to fight against the capitalist class.

In *Germany* the trade unions have all the time been unanimous, that is if the weak Hirsch-Dunker and Liberal unions are not considered. The Free Social-Democratic unions entered the war with a membership of 2½ million of which only a third remained after the end of 1915; But at the end of the war we see in Germany, as in all countries, a tremendous growth in the revolutionary movement. In the middle of 1920 the membership of the German trade unions stood at nearly 8 millions.

The German trade unions were the most powerful apparatus and the main buttress of the military policy of Hindenburg and Ludendorf, and in spite of the defeat of Germany the influence of the trade union bureaucracy remained even after the war. The excellently organised and



centralised trade unions of Germany are to a very high degree adapted to crushing the revolutionary spirit of the workers. Here the struggle is much more difficult than in other countries. The trade unions are the buttress the Scheidemann regime, and during the Capp affair, and the government crises connected with it, the deciding factor in constructing the ministry was the trade union leader Legien. As a result of the reactionary policy of the German unions there arose an opinion in favour of the revolutionary elements leaving the trade unions which in spite of their revolutionary exterior are deeply reactionary and play into the hands of the governing bureaucracy. Besides the Labour Unions having a membership of 60 to 70 thousand there are in Germany revolutionary-syndicalist organisations with a general membership of nearly 200,000, and it is possible to find in these organisations strong support for an international centre of revolutionary class unionism. Inside the Legien unions there is at the present moment a solid minority which is fighting against the old policy. The Metal Workers Union with a membership of 1,800,000, the Textile Workers Union with a membership of 450,000, the Leather Workers with 200,000 members, and the Berlin Council of Trade Unions are already in the hands of the Independents which means that they will soon pass into the hands of the communists, for the inconsistent and halfhearted policy of the Independents compels the workers, not only formally, but actually to break with the old compromising and halfhearted policy.

It is sufficient also to recall the severe struggle which the rank and file members of the trade unions in the Rhure Basin conducted against the Scheideman and Noske regime to be able to say that ground for a revolutionary class struggle in Germany is sufficiently prepared; it is only necessary to be able to take advantage of the revolutionary energy of the mass, and this can be done least of all by forming separate unions isolated from the masses.

In *Austria* the trade union movement is in the hands of the social-compromisers, but during the last year the communists have done tremendous work. Communist frac-

tions have been formed in all the unions, and a special bureau has been formed in connection with the central committee of the Austrian Communist Party for the purpose of co-ordinating the work of the communist fractions in the unions.

In *Hungary*, after the victory of the reaction, the old social-compromisers came to the head of the unions and endeavoured to continue their policy under the white terror, but the victorious counter-revolution does not even allow the social-patriots to develop. The ruthless white terror compels even the most backward Hungarian workman to understand that it is necessary to choose between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In *Checo-Slovakia*, a decree of the Government made it compulsory for every worker to belong to a union. With the aid of this decree the Government succeeded in crushing many revolutionary unions by the influx of backward elements into the unions. The majority of the official organisations stand for the Amsterdam Federation and the II. International. The minority stand rather solidly for revolutionary-class struggle.

In *Ugo-Slavia* (Serbia etc.) the General Federation of Labour stands in close contact with the Communist Party and for the III. International.

The last trade union congress in Esthonia voted for the platform of the III. International and in white Finland the general trade union centre and the large unions also stand for revolutionary-class struggle.

The last conference of the Norwegian trade unions which took place in Christiania at the end of July 1920 resolved to affiliate to the III. International. In Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and in all other European countries there are important minorities who stand for revolutionary-class struggle.

The position in *America* is very peculiar. The powerful American Federation of Labour is entirely in the hands of Gompers and Co. Side by side with this body there is the revolutionary organisation — the Industrial Workers of

the World whose influence lies chiefly among the unskilled labourers. The I. W. W. is undoubtedly a revolutionary organisation, but its theory and tactics suffer from many serious defects, as a result of which it embraces only some hundreds of thousands of the millions of the American proletariat. In spite of the fact that the whole apparatus of the A. F. of L. is directed towards crushing the revolutionary ferment in the American unions, the unions are nevertheless becoming revolutionised. Within the large trade unions a serious movement is growing up against the theories, and particularly against the practice of the A. F. of L. and its leaders. Besides this there are many large unions in America who do not belong to the A. F. of L. and which are becoming revolutionary under the influence of the sharpening social struggle.

In *Canada* the strike movement of 1919 affected the whole of the trade union movement. It particularly affected the revolutionary unions, and in a number of towns during the strikes in April—May 1919 the strike Committee became the only authority in the town. American trade unionism, which intellectually and organisationally had the Canadian movements in its hands, became discredited among a large section of the workers. The Canadian movement became not only formally independent of the American unions, but also intellectually independent of the bourgeoisie.

The trade union movement in Australia and other British colonies is divided, in some cases intellectually and in others organisationally, into two camps — for and against revolutionary class struggle, for and against co-operation of classes. This division has reached even such countries as Java, India and Japan, where the movement has only just arisen, where the trade unions arise as a result of the severe revolutionary strikes, and where as a result of the very conditions of the struggle the movement cannot take any other stand than that of revolutionary class struggle. Thus the world trade union movement, which in the middle of 1920 united more than 30 million workers, varies very greatly. Many trade unions are nothing more than *organised representatives of the bourgeoisie within the labour*

*movement*, and the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour Bureau of the League of Nations are the general staff directing the organised operations of the bourgeoisie against the trade union movement. It naturally follows therefore that the task of the day is not only theoretically to condemn the policy of compromise and class co-operation, and advocate affiliation to the III. International, but to give it form by setting up a revolutionary-class centre of the trade union movement. This was done in Moscow in July of the present year.

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The arrival in Russia of British, Italian and other trade union delegates for the purpose of studying conditions in that country, served as a starting point for the negotiations for the creation of a new trade union centre. The preliminary negotiations with the representatives of the left wing of the British trade unions showed that there was common ground for reaching an agreement between the class unions of various countries. On the initiative of the Executive Committee of the III. International a meeting took place on the 16th of June 1920 between the representatives of the British trade unions (Robert Williams and Alfred Purcell), the Italian Federation of Labour (L. Darragona and Joseph Bianci), the Italian Federation of Metal Workers (E. Colombino), the Italian Federation of Agricultural Workers (Anri Dugoni), representatives of the All-Russian Central Committee of Trade Unions (A. Lozovsky, M. Tomsy, G. Tsiperovitch, and V. Schmidt) and the President of the Executive Council of the III. International (G. Zinovieff).

The first meeting was held for the purpose of discovering to what extent there was unity of opinion on the fundamental questions of the international trade union movement. It became clear that the views of the Russian trade unions were only partly acceptable to the representatives of both the British and the Italian movement. The differences arose on the following points: — (1) the relations between the future trade union centre and the III. International, (2) The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, (3) and

the relations to the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions. Both the Italian and the British representatives assumed that the relations of the new trade union centre should be decided at an early international congress of revolutionary class unions. It appeared also that the representatives of three countries present variously understood the theoretical and practical meaning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In connection with the Amsterdam Federation, Dagoni declared that "many members of the Italian trade unions did not belong to the III. International but to the Amsterdam International, nevertheless they conducted a severe class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and therefore to identify them with the yellow international would rouse a protest on the part of the Italian masses". Nobody of course desired to identify the Italian workers with the yellow international. The fact that the Russian delegation described the Amsterdam Federation as "yellow" was undoubtedly a correct definition of its political character. If there was any opposition to so describing the Amsterdam International, it certainly did not come from the rank and file of the British and Italian trade unions, but from the central organs who still belong to that body.

In spite of a number of disagreements on principle, it was nevertheless found possible to agree on the following (1) the necessity of forming a new centre of revolutionary class unions, (2) to call an international congress of left trade unions, (3) to elect a committee to make preparations for the congress, (4) to work in close contact with the III. International. These four points served as a basis for further negotiations after the departure of the British representatives.

In the beginning of July of the present year there were present in Moscow representatives of the Italian, Spanish, Bulgarian, Ugo-Slavian, and French trade unions, British Shop Steward Committees, the Syndicalists and Labour Unions (Arbeiter Unionen) of Germany, the I. W. W. of America and Australia. Official and unofficial negotiations and meetings with these brought to light a number of radical differences on points of principle, for the discussions

at these meetings centred round (1) Dictatorship of the proletariat, (2) Politics and Economics, (3) The necessity for a political party for the proletariat, (4) Relation to the III. International, (5) Proletarian government and the Soviet System, (7) Splitting off from or conquering the mass unions. These questions as we see touched the very foundations of the trade union movement, and it is essential to clear them up before anything in the nature of an international organisation can be formed.

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Dictatorship of the Proletariat was contested from two points of view. On one hand it was shown that in Western Europe Dictatorship of the Proletariat, i. e. the violent suppression of the exploiters, and the subjection of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie to the proletariat as was done in Russia, is impossible, and that it was still less possible too to subject the less class conscious workers to the advance guard of the working class. Several representatives of the Italian Federation of Labour argued that the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat was not at all clear and for that reason this should not be made the central point of agreement between revolutionary-class union. This point of view was shared by Dagoni and partly by Darragoni. „Trade unions“, said comrades in discussion, „are non-party organisations including supporters and opponents of dictatorship of the proletariat, and it would therefore be better not to speak of it in the preliminary declaration, but to leave the question to the international congress.“ After a long discussion the Italian delegates proposed to formulate this point in the following way: — „to propagate the method of proletarian dictatorship as a final and transitional means of defence and consolidation of the conquests of the proletarian state against the bourgeois reaction.“ That it is necessary to propagate the idea of proletarian dictatorship is beyond the slightest doubt, nevertheless one of the most fundamental questions of modern labour policy must not be placed in this academic fashion. The German syndicalists, the British and

American representatives of the I. W. W. and the Shop Stewards approached the question from quite a different point of view. They questioned the necessity of any form of dictatorship. They regarded dictatorship, not as the dictatorship of the proletariat, but as dictatorship over the proletariat and categorically protested against establishing this principle. One must state that these representatives were not unanimous on this question. While the German syndicalists and representatives of the Labour Unions would not hear of dictatorship in any form, the representatives of the I. W. W. and the Shop Stewards admitted the possibility of the dictatorship of „proletarian organisations“ although they thought that the revolution will be brought about by the industrial unions which will not have to set up any dictatorship. In vain did we point out that whatever kind of organisation will overthrow the bourgeoisie, it will nevertheless, for the protection of the working class, become a power to crush, not only the resistance of the exploiters, but also the resistance of the workers who follow it, — the industrialists and syndicalists were firm on one thing, — dictatorship of the proletariat may be necessary for Russia, but it is absolutely unnecessary for Western Europe and America where the proletariat will be able to make its revolution and manage to protect its gains without it.

After four joint meetings with the industrialists and syndicalists the latter proposed a resolution worked out jointly by them which was to be the basis of the new international trade union organisation. The main points of the resolution are as follows: — “ (1) Recognition of revolutionary class struggle as a fundamental principle. (2) The violent overthrow of the State and capitalism by adopting the dictatorship of proletarian organisations as a temporary and transitional measure for the attainment of Communism.”

The insufficiency of these two points as a platform was quite evident. One must not limit oneself to the recognition of revolutionary-class struggle, one must demand the practice application of it; on the other hand it was impossible to agree to the formula of the overthrow of the



State unless there was a definite indication of what kind of State was meant, the bourgeois State or State in general. All this indefiniteness was quite natural, for the industrialists and syndicalists not only could not agree with us, but they could not agree among themselves, so much were they divided for and against dictatorship of the proletariat, and they were therefore compelled to accept an indefinite resolution in order to satisfy every body. As a matter of fact they achieved the very opposite, for their resolution satisfied nobody. In substitution of this indefinite formula the representatives of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions proposed the following point on the dictatorship of the proletariat: — „The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must be opposed by the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transnational, but resolute measure as the only means by which it is possible to crush the resistance of the exploiters, and secure and consolidate the gains of the proletarian government.“

This formula was adopted by all except the syndicalists, and representative of the I. W. W. and the Shop Stewards.

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The confusion in connection with the dictatorship of the proletariat arose from the fact that the syndicalists and industrialists approached the question from the standpoint of the old anarchists on politics and economics. In the first place they opposed dictatorship because they regarded it as politics, and they regarded it as politics because the dictatorship was carried out by a political party. This old dispute between Marxism and anarchism, — arose now because the representatives of some labour organisations (syndicalists, industrialists. I. W. W.) opposed politics in the old anarchist spirit. „All politics“, said the representatives of the German syndicalists, „distract the workers from the direct struggle and should therefore be abandoned“. „A political party by its very composition is foreign to the workers and strives to dominate them, and this represents a great danger for the social revolution. The industrial unions

will make the revolution not only without a political party, but in opposition to it". The representatives of the I. W. W. judging parties by their American experience, stood for approximately the same point of view. For them also the weapon of the social revolution was the industrial unions, and it did not even occur to them that any other organisation could play, even an auxiliary rôle. The Shop Stewards' representatives took a middle course, and stood for the necessity of co-ordinating all the parties that belonged to the III. International, but they did not carry this to a logical conclusion. In reply to our argument that it is impossible to separate politics from economics, that there was not a single great economic conflict that was not at the same time a political conflict, that to divide the social struggle into an economic and political struggle meant the weakening of the proletariat, they said that the experience of Western European and American parliamentarism proves that politics corrupt the workers and that the political struggle distracts them from their class aims. All the while they confused politics with parliamentarism. Comrade Rossmer, the representative of the French syndicalists adopted a healthy point of view. He pointed out that in the first place if the proletariat made a revolution it must be able to defend it; it must beat off all attacks of its enemies and finally crush them. For this purpose it is necessary to have a dictatorship. Secondly he pointed out that the Communist Party and the revolutionary unions must march side by side, and that only on such conditions could the victories of the working class be secured.

It was difficult to unite these conflicting tendencies, — from the denial of the necessity of a political party — to the recognition of the necessity of the inseverable connection between the party and the unions, on a single platform. It was still more difficult to reconcile the point of view of the Russian trade unionists on the supremacy of the party over the unions with the various views explained above. The discussions showed one thing, and that was that those elements of the labour movement which denied the political struggle, which denied the necessity of a poli-

tical party of the proletariat, and the closest bond between the communist party and the trade unions, could not enter the new international trade union centre, because the whole idea of the international organisation of the revolutionary unions lay in gathering all the economic and political organisations of the working class into one body — the III. International — for defensive and offensive operations against the capitalist class. This point of view was shared not only by the representatives of Russia, Italy, Bulgaria, Ugo-Slavia, and Georgia, but also Rossmers, the representative of the French syndicalists, and even Pestanne the representative of the National Federation of Labour of Spain, an organisation which stands entirely for the anarcho-syndicalist point of view. Pestanne said that he could not imagine such a relation between the party and the unions as existed in Russia in Spain, for the reason that in Spain the unions are a great force while the communist party is only in its embryonic stage. He opposed the subordination of the unions to the party, but was in favour of the closest contact between the party and the unions on a national and international scale. Neither the representatives of the British Shop Stewards or the American I. W. W. objected to co-operating with the communist party, but the German syndicalists and the representatives of the industrialist Labour Unions were categorically opposed to any co-operation.

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The proletarian State was subjected to severe criticism by the anarchist wing at these meetings. It was not for nothing that they introduced the point on the overthrow of the State in general. For these syndicalists and for several representatives of the I. W. W. the State was a sort of Beast of the Apocalypse. The bourgeois State had so impressed them with its power that they imagined that a State by its very construction must always be a tool of oppression of the working class. They presumed that after the revolution, and after the break up of the State and its institutions, the proletariat will not erect anything in its place, because any

newly constructed State, independently of the will of its creators, will by its very nature begin to show exploiting tendencies. Here of course we have to deal with a purely anarchistic understanding of the meaning of State as a non-class growth; and to the extent that the syndicalists and the industrialists approached the question of the State from this point of view they were quite unable to understand the nature of the proletarian State. For them a proletarian State was a contradiction of ideas, and they asserted that a proletarian State could not exist. Such a view of the State is a logical outcome of their view of the *Dictatorship of the proletariat, for dictatorship of the proletariat and the proletarian State are one*. The writer of these lines, in the discussion on this anti-state principle, resorted to the following illustration in order to prove the inconsistency of the argument. „We will presume that the I. W. W. after a strike and revolt siezed the factories and works in America, drove the bourgeoisie and the troops that were on their side out of the large centres, began to organise production and socially distribute products. But although the bourgeoisie has been conquered, it has not yet been dispersed, the fight still continues. How will the I. W. W. arrange matters, so that on the one hand it will be able to proceed to the organisation of production and the social distribution of products, and at the same time defend itself against the armed force of the international bourgeoisie? Would they make use of the existing commodities and material recources in order to supply the people with their necessary requirements? Will they set up some kind of apparatus for conducting the struggle against the exploiters? If they will do this, — and the victorious working class cannot refrain from doing this or else they will lose all their gains in a few days, — then they are by that setting up a centralised labour government no matter whether the revolution had been carried out by a party or by the I. W. W. itself. Thus the question of a proletarian State is not an abstract theory, but a question of practical politics, for the social revolution is not „beyond the hills“ in Western Europa and America, and every labour organisation must

find a reply to the question, how can the bourgeoisie be conquered?"

The opponents of State in any form found it difficult to reply to a concrete example of this sort, for however much one cares to argue against the State, no sensible worker will deny the necessity of setting up an apparatus with which to consolidate the victory of the working class and for the final rout of the bourgeois counter-revolution. For this reason on this question as on others there was no unity in the camp of the syndicalists and industrialists, — the Russian revolution has taught many to be very critical of old theories and to abandon all that contradicts the acts of life.

Of course in all the discussions we laid emphasis on the point that the proletarian State is not an end but a means to an end, that we are anti-State, but not in the sense that we deny the necessity of State in any form but in the sense that we set up a State for the purpose of smashing the resistance of the bourgeoisie, and after it has served its purpose, to place it in the museum of history. The proletarian State is a temporary and transitional phenomena, not in the customary, but in the historical sense of the word, i. e. it is a weapon of struggle of the working class for a whole historical period. With the disappearance of classes the State in all its forms will also disappear, and society will only preserve the organs of production, distribution and statistics necessary for serving the requirements of the masses.

These comrades also raised doubts concerning the Soviet System. They asserted that the Soviet System is not applicable to Western Europe, and that the industrial unions and the shop stewards committees will perform the function of the Soviets there. Of course it is difficult to discuss what form the dictatorship of the proletariat will take in Western Europe. In all probability some other kind of organisation will arise in England, Germany and America which will serve as the battering ram to break up the old world and also as the apparatus for carrying out the functions of organisation and construction. The form in

which the apparatus is clothed is not important. The demand for the Soviet System means that the old bourgeois-democratic parliamentary form of State is breaking down and that a new form is arising in its place which embraces the wide masses and the proletarian organisations. The future will show whether the British shop steward committees or the industrial unions will play this part or not, what is important, is that the social revolution cannot be realised unless organisations similar to the Soviets are set up. We need not argue what these organisations shall be called.

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One would have thought that the question of the relation to the III. International would not raise much discussion, nevertheless this was very heatedly debated at all the meetings. In the first place the Italian and German syndicalists doubted the desirability of affiliating to the III. International, but attention was centered on the relations between the newly formed international organ to the Communist International. The representatives of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions were of the opinion that the trade unions should organise sections within the III. Communist International. From this it follows that the III. Communist International should be the general staff of all the militant revolutionary class organisation of the proletariat.

All the delegates except the Bulgarians opposed the Russian delegation. The Italians, French, and English, approaching the question from various points of view were inclined to the opinion that an independent international organisation should be set up which while being connected by ideas and organisation with the III. International, nevertheless should lead an independent existence. The representative of the German syndicalists and of the Australian I. W. W. were against all connection with the III. International and argued that the trade unions under no circumstances will associate with a political organisation. It is characteristic that the same point of view was held

by the representative of the German Labour Unions, Otto Rhule, who represented the German Communist Labour Party, the distinguishing feature of which is that it denies the necessity and usefulness of politically organising the working class. On this question, as on other questions the syndicalists and the I. W. W. differed. On this occasion it was due to the I. W. W. supporting affiliation to the III. International, and formal affiliation would compel them at all events to express themselves in favour of co-operating with the III. International. The objection to forming sections within the III. International was based on purely formal grounds, — the delegates stating that they had no authority from their organisations to do this, but it was clear however that this formality was merely an excuse for the Italians, French, Americans and the British to turn down the proposal of the Russian delegation. Finally it was decided to agree to inter-representation on the executives of both bodies and to submit the question for final decision to the International Congress of revolutionary-class unions which should take place at an early date.

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The question that raised most discussion was that of the tactics of the communist revolutionary elements within the trade union movement in connection with the old mass unions. The question was, — should the old unions be split or captured? Considerable differences were revealed among the delegates on this point. Recognising their weakness in comparison with the German „free“ unions which embrace nearly 8,000,000 members, the German syndicalists and representatives of the German Labour Unions declared that the present day „free“ unions of Germany were hopeless, that it was necessary to destroy them, and only by destroying them it will possible to conquer the bourgeoisie. The representatives of the I. W. W. held the same viewpoint. In their opinion the American Federation of Labour is an invincible fortress. The only thing to do was to abandon it and set up a separate organisation outside of it. They further asserted that the reactionary character of the American



Federation of Labour is bound up with its very construction, and to think of fighting the treacherous policy of Gompers inside the unions was an utopia. All this evidence of the invincibility of the trade union bureaucracy created a curious impression. On one hand these comrades were preparing to bring about a social revolution in their country, i. e. they calculate on overthrowing the powerful American Capitalist class with its excellently organised State apparatus and in its place to set up the power of the working class, — and on the other hand they speak of Gompers with such holy horror as if to drive Gompers and the other traitors out of the trade unions was a much more difficult task than overthrowing the mighty capitalist class of America. Both the German and the American comrades were clearly illogical, for it is ridiculous to think that it is possible to bring about a social revolution in Western Europe without or in spite of the trade unions. To leave the unions and to set up small independent unions is an evidence of weakness, it is a policy of despair, and more than that, it shows lack of faith in the working class. One must choose between two positions, either the social revolution is inevitable, that the working class is pressing towards the overthrow of capitalism, and the trade unions, however reactionary they may be at present, will change their character under the influence of the revolutionary mass, — or the social revolution is a matter of the distant future, — in that case no unions, however revolutionary their programmes may be, will much use. Those comrades who despaired of capturing the working masses floundered in this contradiction all time. It is obvious that a conference of representatives of trade unions of various countries could not adopt a point of view of despair, and it was resolved to „condemn the tactics of advanced revolutionary elements leaving the existing unions. On the contrary these must take all measures to drive the opportunists out of the unions, carry on a methodical propaganda for communism within the unions, and to form communist and revolutionary groups in all the organisations for conducting propaganda in favour of our programme“.

This point was severely attacked not only by those who supported a split from the unions on principle, but also by the British Shop Stewards, who like their American and German comrades, desired to have their hands free on the question leaving and splitting the trade unions. But the conference could not sanction such a desertion of the mass organisations of the workers. That the conference took up the correct point of view is proved by the Second Congress of the III. International which sharply opposed the tactics of leaving the unions. The mottoe put forward by the Communist International, and which is our mottoe also is *"Not the destruction, but the conquest of the trade unions."*

It may have been possible on other questions to compromise in order to secure agreement, but on this cardinal question of international labour policy no compromise was possible. The matter should not be regarded from the point of view of the interest of this or that group, or from the peculiar conditions of this or that country, but from the general interests of the social revolution. If this method of regarding the question is adopted, then it will be clear that neither the Communist International nor the trade union organisations affiliated to it could put forward any other mottoe, because for the revolutionary elements to leave the unions would mean playing Legien's and Gompers' hand, it would relieve the unions under their influence of the restless elements. The revolutionary class unions must not and will not render Legien, Appleton, Jouhaux and other traitors such a service.

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These conferences ended in the acceptance of a declaration which should serve as a basis for gathering all the revolutionary class unions into one organisation. This declaration was discussed for a whole month, and is the result of a compromise between various tendencies. In view of the extreme importance of the declaration we quote it here in full:

"We the undersigned representatives of Russian, Italian, Spanish, French, Bulgarian, Ugo-Slav and Georgian trade

and industrial unions called together by the Executive Committee of the III. International consider: —

„That the position of the working class in all countries created by the imperialist war from day to day demands more distinct and energetic class struggle for the final cessation of exploitation and the establishment of the communist system;

„that this struggle must be conducted on an international scale with the closest organisation of all the workers — not in craft groups, but in industrial organisations;

„that so called social reforms, like the reduction of the working day, increases of wages, regulating conditions of labour etc. under certain circumstances ease the struggle of the classes, but are in themselves unable to solve the social problem;

„that in the majority of the belligerent countries the greater part of the trade unions — neutral, or non-political unions — during the deplorable years of the war became the servants of imperialist capitalism and retarded the final emancipation of Labour;

„that the working class must gather all the trade union organisations into one powerfull revolutionary-class association which, working side-by-side with the political organisation of the international communist proletariat, and in close contact with it, could develop all its strength for the final victory of the social revolution and the establishment of a world wide Soviet Republic;

„that the possessing classes are sparing no efforts to crush the movement for the emancipation of the exploited;

„that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must be opposed by the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a transitional and resolute method, which alone is able to crush the resistance of the exploiters and consolidate the gains of the proletarian government;

„that the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions is unable, with its programme and tactics to lead to the triumph of the above mentioned principles, and cannot secure the victory for the proletarian masses of all countries;

therefore resolves:

(1) To condemn the tactic of the advanced revolutionary elements leaving the existing unions. These on the contrary should adopt all measures to drive out of the unions the opportunists who have co-operated with the bourgeoisie by supporting the imperialist war, and who continue to serve the interests of capitalist imperialism by participating in the activities of the pseudo League of Nations.

(2) To conduct communist propaganda within the trade unions in all countries, and organise communist and revolutionary groups in every organisation for the purpose of propaganda for the acceptance of our programme.

(3) To organise a militant international committee for the reorganisation of the trade union movement. This committee will function as the International Council of Trade Unions and will act in agreement with the Executive Committee of the III. International on conditions that will be laid down by congresses. All trade and industrial unions affiliated to the Council should be represented on it. One representative of the International Council of Trade Unions should be included in the Executive Committee of the III. International and a representative of the latter should be included in the International Council of Trade Unions.

Signed:

*A. Losovsky*, All-Russ. Cent. Coun. Trade Unions.

*L. d'Aarragona*, General Confederation of Labour, Italy

*A. Pestanne*, National Confederation of Labour, Spain

*N. Shablin*, General Syndicalistic Labour Unions, Bulgaria

*A. Rossmer*, Rev. Synd. Minority Gen. Con. Labour, France

*Mikado*, Communist Minority Trade Unions, Georgia

*Milkitch*, Gen. Con. Lab. Ugo-Slavia (Serbia, etc.)

A close reading of this document will show that it suffers from a number of defects. In the first place the declaration does not sum up the period through which we are living at the present moment; it does not describe the activity of the Amsterdam Federation of Labour, but only says that it is incapable of doing anything with its programme and tactics. The declaration does not sufficiently

brand these trade union leaders who stand at the head of this organisation. It limits itself to general declarations on the necessity of driving the opportunists from the governing positions in the unions. But the main defect in the declaration lies in that it does not sufficiently define the relations to the III. Communist International, because inter-representation on the respective executives presupposes the existence of an organisation parallel with the III. Communist International which unites the revolutionary class unions. Such a division of organisation may lead to the alienation of the trade unions from the centre of the world communist movement, particularly if such a state of affairs lasted for any length of time. The interests of the revolutionary-class movements demands that there should be more clearness on this point as on all other questions.

What is the reason of the vagueness and incompleteness of the declaration? It is the fact that several of the organisations represented, — The General Confederation of Labour of Italy, the unions which Robert Williams and Albert Purcell represent, — still belong to the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, and that the leaders of even the revolutionary-class unions of Western Europe lag behind the revolutionary masses.

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Thus, on the 15th of July 1920 an International Council of Trade Unions was formed in Moscow. What does this newly created organisation rest upon? The numerical strength of the International Council of Trade Unions is as follows;

	members.
All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions .	5 200 000
General Confederation of Labour Italy . . .	2 000 000
National Confederation of Labour Spain . . .	800 000
Revolutionary Syndicalist Minority France . .	700 000
General Confederation of Labour Ugo-Slavia .	150 000
General Labour Syndical Unions Bulgaria . .	90 000
Communist Minority Georgia . . . . .	15 000
Total	<u>8 965 000</u>

We thus see that the newly created centre of the international trade union movement embraces more than 8 000 000 organised workers. But this figure does not by a long way exhaust the real strength of the new organisation. Although the I. W. W. and the representatives of the British Shop Stewards refused to sign the declaration quoted above owing to their attitude on the dictatorship of the proletariat and splitting the old unions, nevertheless these organisations have no where else to go; *they cannot but go with the International Council of Trade Unions.*

They cannot join the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, they are not in a position to form their own international organisation, and as they are revolutionaries and proletarians they will have to go together with the Communist International and consequently with the International Council of Trade Unions. As for the left unions in England, Robert Williams and Alfred Purcell gave the Russian and Italian delegates power to sign the declaration on their behalf. But on its final revision their names were not included, The writer of these lines and the general secretary of the General Confederation of Labour of Italy sent them the following radio:

„In view of the considerable revision of the declaration which we drew up together we have decided not to include you among the signatories, in spite of the fact that you had given permission to do so. Inform us by radio whether your organisations have agreed to affiliate to the International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions? Bring the question of the new international centre of the trade union movement before all the unions standing for energetic revolutionary class struggle, direct action and the dictatorship of the proletariat.“

Although no reply to this radio has up to the time of writing been received, (August 10th.) nevertheless one can say without fear of error that out of the 7 000 000 organised workers in Great Britain there must be many tens of thousands standing for our point of view.

If we add the whole of the trade union movement of Esthonia, Norway, Finland, the revolutionary unions of

Germany, Austria, and Holland, a number of revolutionary unions in Canada and America, and the Irish trade unions, we get more than 10 000 000 organised workers upon whom the International Council of Trade Unions can rely in its revolutionary struggle. This is not much if one bears in mind that the programme of the International Council of Trade Unions is the programme of the III. International i. e. social revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat; but it is much if one remembers that the new international centre of the trade Union movement has *just commenced its existence*. In contrast to the Amsterdam Federation the new centre embraces a unanimous revolutionary mass, while the former has many millions of workers out of the 18 000 000 who belong to it who are conducting a revolutionary struggle against compromise and opportunism, and for the social revolution. The International Council of Trade Unions only exists a few weeks and yet a tremendous army of workers has already rallied to its banner. This is the sign of the times. All the organisations which stand for the co-operation of classes wither and collapse every day. This was the fate of the II. International, that will be the fate of its double the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions. On the other hand these organisations which stand for revolutionary struggle and civil war grow and develop to the extent that the class conflict becomes more intense. As the development of the revolution finally destroyed the II. International, from which even the most moderate parties are fleeing as if from a plague spot, so is the Amsterdam Federation doomed to destruction. The revolutionary epoch does not tolerate half-heartedness and indecision. Every labour organisation must choose *with whom and against whom* it is going to take its stand, — with the Amsterdam Federation, the last bulwark of the bourgeoisie and social reaction, — or with the International Council of Trade Unions, the complementary and inseparable part of the III. Communist International, the world centre of the Social Revolution. It will not be difficult to make the choice. We are convinced that the day is not far off when the workers, on a



national and international scale, will take their deceived and deceiving leaders to the front door of their organisations and firmly and resolutely say to them „we've had enough of you, clear out!“ They will do this because the cleaning out of the ranks of labour is a preliminary condition of victory.

Petrograd — Murmansk, 8—12 August, 1920.

*A. Losovsky.*

## Appendix I.

### *Minutes of the first Conference of Representatives of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Great Britain, Italy and Russia.*

The minutes of the Conference of the Representatives of the Revolutionary Trades Unions of Great Britain, Italy and Russia, held in Moscow in the Union House the premises of the Moscow Council of the Trade Unions, the 16th of June 1920 on the question of organisation of the Red International of Trade Unions.

Chairman G. Zinovieff.

Secretary C. Ziperovitch.

The delegates present: G. Zinovieff (Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Third Communist International); *Great Britain*: Robert Williams, Transport Workers Federation, A. A. Purcell, the Parliamenting Committee Trade Unions Congress, *Italy*: Daragona and Cuiseppe *Bianki* delegated by the Italian National Confederation of Labour, Enrice Dougoni, Italian National Federation of Landworkers, Emilie Colombino, Italian Metal Workers. *Russia*: A. Lozovsky, M. Tomsy, G. Ziperovitch, V. Schmidt, members of the Presidium of the All Russian Central Council of the Trade Unions, G. Melnichansky, delegated by the Moscow Council of Trade Unions.

Comrade *Zinovieff* explained the point of view of the Executive Committee of Communist International on the question of the International unification of the Trade Unions. He pointed out the serious danger, threatening the revolutionary movement of the world proletariat owing the destructive work of the Amsterdam International, which is still gathering around itself millions of workers. The yellow Amsterdam International of Trade Unions is not by

any means merely a technical organ of the International movement. Bound strongly through the socialist opportunists Jouhoux, Legien, Appleton and others with the League of Nations, first of all through the Washington Labour Bureau, the Amsterdam International is a political weapon in the hands of the Entente, the strongest it ever possessed. The task confronting the proletariat is to tear this weapon from its hands. But how shall this be done? By the creation of a Communistic Centre in the heart of the Amsterdam International, in order to blow it up from within, by the formation of an independent International of *Red Unions* as a contrast to the yellow Amsterdam International: or by the organisation of a trade union section of the third Communist International which under the direction of the latter should commence a campaign against the Amsterdam International under the banner of Communism.

Comrade *Zinovieff*, declared that the Executive Committee of the Communist International according to the decision of the I. Congress has chosen the latter point of view, as the only sound one for the present time, and named several countries, some of which have already agreed to this point of view, and some are ready to agree to it in consequence of outside circumstances. Thus, for instance, all the Trade Unions of Soviet Russia have already joined the Third Communistic International in accordance with the resolution of the third Conference of the Russian Trade-Unions. The Scandinavian countries, Bulgaria, some of the most powerful German Unions and their Associations (viz: the Metallist Workers Association, the Railway Employes, the Central Council of the Berlin Trade-Union) of view, as well as the Triple Alliance of the railwaymen, miners, and transport and workers in Great Britain and the W. W. W. in the United States of North America e.t.c. are inclined towards this view. That is why, in the opinion of comrade Zinovieff the organisation of the Trade Union Section of the third Communist International would be highly important and practically easy to realize, and at the present time, in order that the second Congress may deal with an actually accomplished fact, the organisation of this section as an antithesis to the

yellow International would not only make clear the attitude which the Trade-Unions, and syndicates adopt towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but also give a strong impetus to the growing separation of the working masses of the whole world from the yellow International, which is spending its energy in support of the counter revolutionary Entente.

Comrade *Williams*, agreeing with the essential thesis developed by comrade Zenovieff and urging the growth of sympathy in the ranks of the British Trade-Unions towards the third International pointed out that the present Conference cannot definitely resolve the problem in question, as not all delegates present are authorised to do so, and on the other hand it is necessary to carry out a considerable amount of preliminary work in order that the first steps towards uniting the revolutionary Trade Unions and Syndicates should be firmer and more efficient. Accordingly comrade Williams proposed firstly to confirm the opinion expressed by com. Zinovieff on the position of International Trade Union movement and to accept his criticisms of the Amsterdam Congress and the yellow International of Legien, Jouhaux and others; and secondly immediately to appoint a provisional Committee composed of the delegates present at the Conference in order to convoke as soon as possible an International Conference of the Trade-Unions standing on the platform of the third International. This Conference should be authorized to decide concretely as to what form the Red International of Trade-Unions should take.

Comrade *Zinovieff* read the first clause of the resolution, which was translated into English and Italian and after that proposed to consider it. (Appendix no. 1.)

Comrade *Dougoni* declared that he must decline to sign this resolution firstly because he is not authorized by his organisation to do so and secondly because he does not agree with some of the expressions used in the clause of the said resolutions. Many members of the Italian Syndicates do not belong to the third International and are members of the Amsterdam International and yet they are conducting fierce class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Their identification with the yellow International may call forth a protest on the part of the Italian workers.

Comrade *Losovsky* pointed out that the authority to sign the resolution does not play any essential part in the appointment of a *provisional Committee* for the preparation of an International Conference which shall decide the question of its relation to the third International and the Amsterdam Conference.

Comrade *Zinovieff* had no objections to make against the softening of some sharp expressions and proposed to read the whole resolution. Com. *Darogoni* agreed to the proposal of Williams and asked at the same time to clear up more precisely the connection between the Red Trade-Unions, that will join the section of the Communist International, and their National Centres. If, for instance some Union joins the third International, does that mean, that the said Union should automatically leave its National Federation because the latter continues to be member of the Amsterdam International?

Com. *Tomsky* asked, whether the English and the Italian Delegation are ready to appoint at once a provisional Committee composed of the representatives of the Russian, British and Italian Delegations with the object of conducting propaganda for organization work, and also of preparing for an International Conference, proposed by Williams and standing in the closest connection to the Communist International.

All the delegates present give an affirmative reply to the question put by com. Tomsky and *proposal made by Williams was accepted.*

Comrade *Lozovsky* gave his view on the question raised by comrade Darogoni. He pointed out that the admittance of a Union to the third International through the Section by no means compels it to leave its own National Federation but it is obliged while remaining a member of the said Federation to prepare the latter to pass to the International of the Red Trade Unions by working constantly in this direction. He is bound as well to aim at splitting all the working masses off from the Amsterdam International

Federation of Trade Unions, using for this object all the practical questions, the answers to which are determined by the character of their relation to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade *Zinovieff* on the question raised by comrade Darogoni pointed out that an analogical position has been observed at Zimmerwald. The delegates taking part at that congress were not obliged at the time to previously resign their membership of the second International, although Russia had even at that time taken this decisive measure, the justice of which has been later on fully confirmed by life itself.

Comrade *Lozovsky* thought it necessary to make all possible efforts to shorten the stage of preliminary organizational work. There is no time for waiting. The trade union movement has lagged considerably behind the political movement. The isolation of the trade union organizations from the decisive actions of the political vanguard of the revolutionary working class is keenly felt in many countries. It is necessary therefore, that all unions, holding to a determined point of view on the revolutionary class struggle by their adherence to the third International, should clearly and decidedly demonstrate to the working masses the gulf existing between them and the Yellow International Federation of Trade Unions. That does not mean, of course, that these unions will not take part in their own international congresses. On the contrary such a participation is obligatory for them. For that reason Lozovsky proposed to charge the Proportional Committee, which should be appointed immediately to begin working for the organization of an International Conference of Trade Union Federation, Syndicates and Trade Unions. At the same time he pointed out that according to the information published by the International Department of the Central Council of Russian Trade Union, not only Russian but also the Trade Unions in Spain, Argentina, Brazil and most of the Polish Trade Unions have already joined the third International. The same desire has been expressed by the representative of the Bulgarian Trade Unions „tesniak“ communist, the comrade Nedelkoff now staying in Moscow.

Comrade *Darragoni* said, that having heard the above explanations he withdraws his previous declaration.

Com. *Zinovieff* pointed out that the Conference will not elaborate a detailed plan of the new organization of International revolutionary Trade Unions, but shall establish immediately the following principles: whether it is necessary or not to begin at once with the organization of the Red International Trade Unions in one or another form on the basis of the resolutions passed by the third International. As far as the Russian Trade Unions are concerned this question has been decided in the affirmative. Now it is the turn of the Trade Unions of the other countries and first of all, of course, of the Italian and English Trade Unions. If the delegates at present do not feel sufficient empowered and able to a definite decision on this essential point, this question shall be transferred for consideration and decision on the workers of the European countries.

Comrade *Williams* read the following declaration to the first clause moved by comrade *Zinovieff*:

"The present private Conference of the Revolutionary leaders of the militant Trade Movement of Great Britain, Russia and Italy recognizing that the existing Trade Union International is incapable of directing and controlling the class struggle and crushing the international bourgeoisie through the dictatorship of the proletariat, resolves to convene a more complete and representative Conference of revolutionary Trade Unionist for the establishment of a true Trade Union International free from any connection whatever with the capitalistic League of Nations and with the so-called leaders of the labour movement who have acted the part of social-patriots and chauvinists during the world war and continue to maintain the same policy up till the present time."

The above declaration was accepted by all the members of the Conference instead of the first clause proposed by com. *Zinovieff*.

Comrade *Tomsky* proposed, in view of the departure of the English delegation, to charge two members of the Italian Delegation and two Russian Delegates among those



present at the Conference to finally work out the declaration. The proposal received full approval and consent of comrades Williams and Purcell and was accepted.

It was agreed that the Revision Committee meet on the following day. This committee has to work out the final form of the declaration and to confirm the minutes of the Conference.

The same Committee was charged with the drawing up of the proclamations addressed to the Trade Unions of all countries in accordance with the resolution proposed by comrade Zinovieff.

## **Appendix II.**

### *Declaration of Principles.*

„We the undersigned representatives of Russian, Italian, Spanish, French, Bulgarian, Ugo-Slav and Georgian trade and industrial unions called together by the Executive Committee of the III. International consider,“

„that the position of the working class in all countries created by the imperialist war from day to day demands more distinct and energetic class struggle for the final cessation of exploitation and the establishment of the communist system;“

„that this struggle must be conducted on an international scale with the closest organisation of all the workers, not in craft groups, but in industrial organisations;“

„that so called social reforms, like the reduction of the working day, increases of wages, regulating conditions of labour etc. under certain circumstances eases the struggle of the classes, but are in themselves unable to solve the social problem;“

„that in the majority of the belligerent countries the greater part of the trade unions — neutral, or non-political unions — during the deplorable years of the war became the servants of imperialist capitalism and retarded the final emancipation of Labour;“

„that the working class must gather all the trade union organisations into one powerfull revolutionary-class association which, working side-by-side with the political organisation of the international communist proletariat, and in close contact with it, could develope all its strength for the final victory of the social revolution and the establishment of a world wide Soviet Republic;“

„that the possessing classes are sparing no efforts to crush the movement for the emancipation of the exploited;“

„that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must be opposed by the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a transitional and resolute method, which alone is able to crush the resistance of the exploiters and consolidate the gains of the proletarian government;“

„that the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions is unable with its programme and tactics to lead to the triumph of the above mentioned principles, and cannot secure the victory for the proletarian masses of all countries;“

resolves;

1. To condemn the tactic of the advanced revolutionary elements leaving the existing unions. These on the contrary should adopt all measures to drive out of the unions the opportunists who have co-operated, and who now co-operate with the bourgeoisie by supporting the imperialist war, and who continue to serve the interests of capitalist imperialism by participating in the activities of the pseudo League of Nations.

2. To conduct communist propoganda within the trade unions in all countries, and organize communist and revolutionary groups in every organisation for the purpose of propaganda for the acceptance of our programme.

3. To organize a militant international committee for the reorganisation of the trade union movement. This committee will function as the *International Council of Trade Unions* and will act in agreement with the Executive Committee of the III. International on conditions that will be laid down by congresses. A'l trade and industrial unions affiliated to the Council should be represented on

it. One representative of the International Council of Trade Unions should be included in the executive Committee of the III. International and a representative of the latter should be included on the International Council of Trade Unions.

Signed:

*A. Losovsky*, All-Russ. Cent. Coun. Trade Unions.

*L. d'Aarragona*, General Confederation of Labour, Italy.

*A. Pestanne*, National Confederation of Labour, Spain.

*N. Shablin*, General Syndicalistic Labour Unions, Bulgaria.

*A. Rossmar*, Rev. Synd. Minority Gen. Con. Labour, France.

*Mikadje*, Communist Minority Trade Unions, Georgia.

*Milkitch*, Gen. Con. Lab. Ugo-Slavia, (Serbie, etc.).

Moscow, Juli 15. 1920.

### **Appendix III.**

#### *Provisional rules.*

##### **I. Title.**

The body formed by the representatives of trade union of various countries shall be known as: *The international Council of Trade and Industrial Unions.*

##### **II. Aims and objects.**

The international Council of Trade and Industrial Unions aims at

1. to carry on an insistent and continuous propaganda for the ideas of the revolutionary class struggle, social revolution, dictatorship of the proletariat and mass revolutionary action with the object of destroying the capitalist system and the bourgeois State.
2. to fight the disease of class co-operation which is weakening the labour movement, and against the hope that a peacefull transition from capitalism is possible.
3. To unite all the revolutionary elements in the world trade union movement and to conduct a determined struggle against the International Bureau Labour of the

League of Nations and against the programme and tactics of the International Federation of Trade Unions in Amsterdam.

4. To take the initiative in organizing an international campaign on the outstanding facts of the class struggle and organize the collections of funds for the support of strikes and great social conflicts etc.
5. To collect all material concerning the international labour movement and to keep all the organisations affiliated to the International Council of Trade Union informed as to the movement in other countries.
6. To publish books, leaflets, pamphlets affecting the international movement.

### III. Composition of organisation.

This is composed of representatives of Russia, Italy, Spain, Ugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, France, Georgia, one representative for each country and one delegate for each general national centre which belongs to the International Council of Trade Unions. The Council also includes a representative of the Executive Council of the Communist International. The Council also elects an Executive Bureau of three persons including a general secretary and a delegate to the Executive of the Communist International.

### IV. Bulletin.

The International Council of Trade Unions shall publish its own organ in four languages entitled „The Bulletin of The International Council of Trade Unions“.

### V. Conferences.

Only those trade unions or minorities of trade unions who conduct a revolutionary struggle in their country and recognise proletarian dictatorship are entitled to representation at international conferences. General national centres, trade unions, separate unions, and international federations may be represented on the following basis: — general national centres of trade unions, separate unions and minorities or unions whose membership is less than 500 000 have the

right to send two delegates. Organisations having a membership greater than 500 000, may send an additional delegate for every 500 000 members. International federations of trade unions like textile workers, metalists etc. send a delegate with a consultative vote. National federations are allowed representation on the condition that their general trade union centre is not taking part in the conference.

With regard to those trade unions who have not yet clearly expressed themselves on the question of proletarian dictatorship (I. W. W.) the Council instructs the Executive to issue an appeal to these asking them to submit this question to all their local organisations and invite them to take part in the International Conference.

#### VI. Headquarters.

Until the meeting of the International Conference appointed to take place on January 1 1921, the headquarters of the International Council of Trade Unions shall be Moscow.

### Appendix IV.

#### *To the Trade Unions of all countries.*

Comrades,

The growth of the trade union movement of all countries caused as a result of the incredible disaster imposed upon the international proletariat by the war, raises the question before the workers of all countries of establishing an international general staff of trade unions. The every day facts of the class struggle show that outside of the international struggle there is no salvation. Class stands against class as never before. All the strength of the international bourgeoisie, all its means and resources are accumulated in one international class organisation. The bourgeoisie has its general staff in the League of Nations and has in its possession the whole of the colossal apparatus of the

modern capitalist State so that at the first signs of danger it may throw in the whole of its strength and resources. The degree of class consciousness and organisation which international capitalism has attained can be seen from the events in Soviet-Russia and Hungary. Soviet-Hungary was crushed by the triumph of the exploiters of all countries, and if Soviet-Russia has up till now not been crushed, it is not the fault of international capital but its misfortune. But the bourgeoisie is strong not merely because of its class consciousness, organisation and complete understanding of the unfolding international struggle, it is still stronger as a result of the lack of class experience of the masses and above all because *it relies upon the workers organisations in its struggle against the workers. This is strange but true.*

What indeed have the trade unions of the large and small countries done during the years of the war? How did they carry out the traditions of international class solidarity and proletarian fraternity? The trade unions in the large majority of cases were the main supporters of the military policy of their governments, they co-operated with the bourgeois nationalist scum of their countries and roused the lowest chauvinist instincts among the workers. If the war was prolonged for such a long period, if we miss millions of our brothers from our ranks, if Europe has been converted into an enormous graveyard and the masses driven to desperation, then a large share of the blame falls upon these leaders of the labour movement who betrayed the masses and instead of hurling forth the battle-cry „Proletarians of all countries unite“, shouted „Proletarians of all countries murder and strangle each other.“

And so the very people who, during the course of many years, were the servants of their governments and who employed their energy for the mutual extermination of the peoples, these people have commenced to reconstruct the Trade Union International which they destroyed by their treachery. The experience fighters for the interests of the bourgeoisie Messrs. Legien, Oudegust, Jouhaux, Appleton. Gompers and others gathered in Bern

and Amsterdam and after long nationalist quarrels and chauvinistic accusation, set up an international Federation of Trade Unions. What is the basis of this federation? What is its program? How does this International organisation regard the epoch of acute social conflicts through which we are living? How does it to extricate humanity out of the cul-de-sac into which it has been led by the imperialist bourgeoisie? We can find the answers to these questions in the fact that the inspirers and leaders of this Federation of trade unions in Amsterdam are at the same time the most active participators in the notorious labour of bureau the piratical League of Nations which is composed of representatives of organized employers, trade unions and neutral bourgeois governments. As is known, the chief function of this bureau is to continue and strengthen the co-operation of classes which lies at the basis of the militarist policy of the imperialist countries for the further exploitation of the workers by international capital.

From this it is perfectly clear that the Amsterdam Federation is simply a screen to conceal the „yellow“ leaders of the trade union movement, who, having definitely gone over to the side of the imperialists, now as during the war, strive to use the organized power of the workers unions in the interest of capital society. The natural results of such an unnatural union of interests of two completely opposite classes, is the complete fruitlessness and insbility of both, the Amsterdam Federation and the Paris Labour Bureau of the League of Nations, to the slightest degree to defend the interests of the working class because these organisations defend the interests of the bourgeoisie.

A striking example of this fruitlessness is the relation of the international Federation to Soviet Hungary and Soviet Russia. It allowed the first to be crushed without the slightest protest and if now they are making weak attempts by organising a boycott to bring Horthy, whose policy of white terror unceremoniously compromises the whole idea of class co-operation — to his senses, then it is done only in order to enter into compromises with this



very execution. The attitude of the Amsterdam Federation is exactly the same and up till now it has not even attempted definitely and resolutely to express itself against intervention in Russia although it knows perfectly well that such indefiniteness is especially important and desirable for the Entente.

This conduct of the Amsterdam Federation is the logical outcome of its policy and the composition of its national sections. An organisation composed of social patriotes and betrayers of the interests of the workers of various countries cannot create anything else but an international union of deceit and treachery.

The trade union movement of the world together cannot satisfy itself simply by assenting this fact. The social struggle is becoming more acute. Civil war has long ago broken through national frontiers. In this bitter struggle of two hostile worlds of two systems the revolutionary class unions take their place, and can do nothing else but take their place side-by-side with the communist parties of the various countries. It is self evident that the Amsterdam Federation of the unions playing this subordinate role to the League of Nations, cannot serve as the guiding centre of the revolutionary class trade union movement. It is necessary to act up such a centre, such a general staff as a counter-balance to and in spite of the Amsterdam centre. This centre was formed on the 15th of July in Moscow by the trade unions of Russia, Italy, Spain, Jugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, France, and Georgia under the title of „The international Council of Trade and Industrial Unions“. The new general staff already uniting nearly 3 million members, commenced its activity by appealing to the Unions of all the world to break away from those who are conducting the criminal policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, and to stand under the banner of a ruthless class war for the emancipation of the oppressed humanity.

The International Council of trade and industrial unions carries not peace but a sword to the bourgeoisie of all countries. This defines the essence of our activity. Our program is the violent overthrow of the Bourgeoisie, the

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establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a ruthless class war on an international and national scale and a close unseverable alliance with the communist International.

Those who think that the working class may solve the social question by means of negotiations and agreements with the bourgeoisie, those who think that the bourgeoisie will voluntarily surrender the means of production to the proletariat and that it is only necessary to secure a parliamentary majority, those who suppose that in the period of the break-up of all the relations and the fate of the world is being decided, that the unions can remain „neutral“, those who in a period of civil war through which we are living, preach civil peace, let them know that we regard them as *our class enemies* and that we will conduct ruthless war against them and against the organization which they have set up.

The international council Trade and Industrial Unions and the Amsterdam Federation are on the opposite side of the barricades. On the one side of the barricade there is social revolution, on the other — social reaction. A proletarian, an honest revolutionary can make the choice without difficulty.

Long live the world proletarian revolution!

Long live the dictatorship of the proletariat!

Long live the International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions!

Long live the III. International!

*The International Council  
of Trade and Industrial Unions.*

Moscow, August 1<sup>st</sup> 1920.

## Appendix V.

### *Moscow or Amsterdam.*

By A. Losovsky.

1. At the present moment there are two international trade union centres; one in Amsterdam, bound to the II. International with its theory and practice, and the other in Moscow connected by ideas and organisation to the III. International. Between the two existing trade union internationals there is the same chasm as there is between the Second and the Third Internationals.

2. Trade union organisations standing on the revolutionary class point of view and particularly those belonging to the III. International cannot belong to the Amsterdam Trade Union International because their presence in the Amsterdam international ties the left unions with the League of Nations through the Executive Committee of the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions which in its turn is bound to the International Labour Bureau at the head of which stands the betrayer of the Interests of the working class — Albert Thomas.

3. For those unions which already belong to the III. International and who took part in its last congress the question of leaving the Amsterdam Trade Union International is no longer a debateable, but a practical one. It is a matter of carrying out the resolution of the Second Congress of the III. International which says: — all unions belonging to the III. International must also belong to the International Council of Trade Unions. Not a single trade union can remain within the III. International if it does not enter the International Council of Trade Unions.

4. The exit of trade union centres from the Amsterdam International does not by any means mean that a split must take place in international trade union organisations, like the metal workers, textile workers, typographical workers etc. Industrial unions of various countries standing on the revolutionary class position must not only remain within their international organisations, must take the initiative in

calling international congress on, and otherwise raising the question of the class struggle. They must at every conference and congress raise the question of joining the International Council of Trade Unions, of direct action, of dictatorship of the proletariat and the centralisation of the international struggle against international capital. If the revolutionary union finds itself in a majority at that conferences it must remain inside the international organisation striving to influence the corresponding unions of other countries in order eventually to gain the majority.

5. The exit of trade unions and revolutionary sections of international organisations will take place all the sooner and the less painfully when the questions of international trade union policy are brought before the masses. Every worker organized in a trade union should understand that the ties between his union and the general trade union centre of his country and the unions and centres of other countries is not a matter of the formal affiliation to one or other organisation, but a vital question of national and international class struggle upon which depends the success the struggle of the international proletariat for socialism.

6. Thus the new international organisation of revolutionary class unions demands of every trade union really standing for the class struggle and the dictatorship to rouse the interest of the masses in the international labour movement and to associate the struggle against the centre of resistance of the world bourgeoisie, — the Amsterdam Trade Union International with the pressing questions of the day affecting his union and the whole trade union movement. Only in this manner will the national limitations, which many even revolutionary-class unions have not yet outgrown, be overcome.

### **Addendum.**

After this pamphlet had already been set up and print a radio was recieved from Moscow dated Sept. 8. to the effect that the following organisations had afiliated to the International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions: —

1. British Shop Steward and Workers Committees.
2. Transport Workers Federation of Holland and Dutch Indies.
3. The Germain Syndicalists.
4. The Syndicalists Unions of Italy.

The afiliation of the British Shop Stewards and the German Syndicalists to the Internation Council of Trade and Industrial Unions is the result of the further conferences that took place in Moscow after the conclusion of the II. Congress of the III. International. Thus the representatives of the British Shop Stewards and the German Syndicalists finally accepted the point of view which the Russian delegates urged. One can only welcome this afiliation, as in this manner the unity of the left wing of the Trade Union movement of the whole world is secured. The debates which took place at the preliminary conferences were of great importance, for it is essential that the workers should understand the differences which exist, not only in the trade union movement as a whole, but even in the left wing. The existence of an International revolutionary organisation of trade unions is only possible on the basis of a clear and definite programme. Such a programme can only be drawn up when the existing differences and misunderstandings are removed and a unanimous understanding of revolutionary problems is reached between all the sections of the revolutionary trade union and industrial organisations. Unanimity among the representatives of revolutionary trade union organisations has already been reached, we must now see to it that the tens of millions of organized workers in all the world accept the same point of view. The victory of the social revolution will then be assured.

*A. Losovsky.*

Christiania, Sept. 9th. 1920.