



The R.I.L.U. Thesis on Trade Unions

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INTRODUCTION BY WORKERS POWER

The documents contained within were translated by Dave Hughes.

We print below three of the crucial founding documents of the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU but also known as the Profintern). All three documents - the Programme of Action, the theses on Workers' Control and the theses on Factory Committees - were passed at the first congress of the Red International of Labour Unions held in Moscow in July 1921. (The Programme of Action has been retranslated from the Russian for this journal, the two theses are based on the printed English texts, revised in the light of the Russian original)

At the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1920, Zinoviev spoke of the need to form a new, revolutionary trade union international. In April of the same year, the Russian trade unions joined the Communist International and appealed for all revolutionary trade unions to follow suit in order to fight the re-constituted International Federation of Labour Unions. The IFLU, based in Amsterdam, was committed to class-collaboration and to peaceful non-political trade unionism. Against this international alliance of the trade union bureaucracy, the executive of the Comintern called, in April 1920, for unions with revolutionary programmes to become sections of the Comintern in preparation for the formation of a revolutionary trade union International.

However, there was a major obstacle to the building of a united, international and communist-led opposition to the Amsterdam leaders. This was the extent of the differences, amongst adherents to the Comintern, on how communists should work in trade unions. The First Congress of the Comintern had not concerned itself with the question, although the executive committee of the Comintern had characterised and explained the capitulation of the trade unions in its April 1920 appeal in this way: "The old trade union leaders will again try to push the unions onto the bourgeois road ... What was it in the old trade unions that in fact led to their capitulation to the bourgeoisie? A narrow craft spirit. Division into small units. An exaggerated respect for bourgeois legality. Emphasis on the labour aristocracy and contempt for the mass of unskilled workers. High membership dues which an ordinary worker could not afford. The leadership of the unions concentrated in the hands of the bureaucratic bosses who developed into a caste of officials. The advocacy of a neutral attitude to political questions, which amounted, in fact, to support for bourgeois policy."

Talking of a "fresh wind blowing through the musty trade union offices", they called for a new movement, opposed to the old craft spirit and directly committed to fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat, alongside the Communist Parties. It was not until its Second Congress, however, that the Comintern deliberated upon the principles and strategy of communist work in the trade unions.

The thesis, "On the Trade Union Movement, Factory Councils and the Communist International" adopted at the Congress were, of necessity, primarily concerned with correcting ultra-left and syndicalist positions on trade union work which were predominantly in certain sections of the Comintern. In America & Britain in particular, adherents of the Comintern were opposed to work in the reformist trade unions. They insisted that the existing unions could never be won to communist leadership. Against this position the dafter of the thesis, Karl Radek, had to emphasise the necessity of work in the mass trade unions, in order to wrest control of them from the labour bureaucracy. Of course a split was not ruled out if "a refusal to split would be tantamount to abandoning revolutionary work in the trade unions". Under such conditions communists should be prepared to form new, rival trade unions if and only if, they succeeded in convincing the broad mass of workers that this was necessary.

Having emphasised this point against the syndicalists it was necessary to insist that factory committees could not be posed as an alternative to the unions. "Trade Unions organise the working masses for struggle on the basis of the demands for higher wages and a shorter working day throughout the country. Factory committees are organised for workers' control over production, for the fight against economic chaos, they cover all the workers in a factory, but their struggle can only gradually assume a nationwide character."

The theses did not leave the matter there. The factory committees were seen as the crucial organs in the struggle for workers' control, for organising the class for power. While not immediately an alternative to the official structures of the mass trade unions, Radek posed the struggle for mass-based factory committees, struggling for control against the employers, as the central question of communist industrial strategy. In this way we can talk of Radek and the Communist international fusing Marxist politics with the experience of the syndicalists before the first imperialist war, that is factory committees, opposition to the bureaucracy, primacy of direct rank and file action.

From the time of the Second Congress, July and August 1920 when Radek's theses were adopted against the votes of the American and British delegates, work started in earnest to organise the First Congress of RILU. Such work would have been impossible without the decisions on strategy taken by the Comintern. But of themselves, the decisions of the Second Congress did not solve the problem of focussing a programme of action which could lay the basis for the struggle for communist leadership in the unions.

The work to build the RILU conference involved both organised struggle to win support, and the elaboration of a programme and theses to guide the new international. The manifesto to all trade unions on the decision to form RILU declared unequivocally, "The Amsterdam Federation is an agency of the bourgeoisie in the workers' camp." It urged the working masses to, "Take into your own hands these powerful organisations, not shrinking from the most resolute struggle against those who are distorting the workers' organisations into instruments of bourgeois policy." Trade union delegates to the Second Congress were to return to their own countries and work for their trade unions to support RILU, creating organised supporting minorities where this was not possible. In Britain, for example, a London bureau of RILU was created, composed of Robert William (the leader of the Transport Federation when it scabbed on the miners on Black Friday) Purcell, Cook, Bamber, Wilkinson and Coppock, under the chairmanship of Tom Mann. At the 1921 TUC it proposed the establishment of Industrial Unions, the reorganisation of the TUC and affiliation to RILU. It was the London bureau of RILU which was to lay the basis of the Minority Movement.

The First Congress of RILU met in the period immediately after the Third Congress of the Comintern (held in June 1921). The Third Congress proposed a draft Action Programme to the RILU Congress which was debated in Commission and plenum and finally passed in the form published below. The section on women was added to the Comintern's draft proposals by the RILU Congress. Commissions reported to the Congress on Workers' Control from theses proposed by Tsiperovich (and published below). The theses on Factory Committees (also below) were proposed by Hekkert. The Congress also debated work amongst women with reports from Blok of Sweden and Clara Zetkin.'

The debates of the Congress showed that despite the Second Congress of the Comintern, the syndicalist tendency was still strong amongst revolutionary trade unionists. Bill Hayward, for the IWW and with the support of the French and Spanish delegates, proposed not only that the new International should break with the existing unions, but that it should also remain entirely independent of the Comintern. As a result the First Congress of RILU had to fight this tendency, and debate and focus a programme for intervention and struggle.

The Congress (which had 380 delegates from 41 countries) debated for, three days the question of the relation between the RILU and Comintern. A resolution proposed by Rosmer and Tom Mann, and calling for "the closest possible link with the Third International" was passed. In addition it agreed to reciprocal representation on the leading bodies of Comintern and RILU. That this formula was clearly a compromise can be seen from the last paragraph, of the Comintern's proposed draft of the relation between Communist Parties and revolutionary trade unions, which we print below. This was omitted from the text of the Programme of Action passed by the RILU Congress.

The three documents we publish below are central to the history of the Communist movement.

The Programme of Action, which flowed from clearly enunciated general principles concerning the impossibility of trade union neutrality, the reactionary nature of the Amsterdam International, stands to this day as an example of a Communist Programme of Action. Starting from the attacks and crisis facing the workers' movement, it outlines a linked chain, of demands and forms of struggle to defend the living standards and organisations of the class within the process of organising the working class for power. It is not a limited, trade union programme; it concretises the struggle for workers power in the face of capitalist offensive and trade union betrayal.

The central thrust of the programme - the reorganisation of the unions on an industrial and workplace basis, around a communist programme of struggle - has lost none of its relevance. It was to be refocused and re-elaborated in the programmatic statements of the Fourth International in the 1930s. Likewise the major demands raised in the programme, work or full pay, abolition of business secrecy, the struggle for control over production, the defence of women's right to work, the formation of the organs of workers' self-defence, opposition to all participation and profit-sharing - a chain of demands leading inexorably to the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat - remain central to the armoury of communist militants in the trade unions.

The programme was elaborated and explained in a pamphlet penned by S.Loovsky and published in November 1921. The pamphlet, entitled, "The Programme of Action of the Red International of Trade Unions" was an indispensable accompanying handbook to the published programme. Proceeding from the new period of capitalist development, the need for new forms of struggle by the working class, it explains the body of analysis, the basic principles and major demands presented in the Programme of Action.

The spinal cord of the Programme of Action is the struggle for workers' control. The RILU Congress passed theses on the question that developed the method and principle demands posed in the Programme. The theses talk specifically of what is termed, "primitive workers' control" sporadic attempts to supervise speed and supply, to investigate the plans and claims of the employers, even to maintain production against the will of the employers. The primitive stage of workers' control proves the ability of the working class to organise and order production, the potential of the class, but it cannot answer the problems posed to the workers' movement when faced with the inevitable capitalist disorganisation. The working class must either assert control over production as a class, i.e. through the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, or face the 'disintegration of its 'primitive workers' control' at the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Such a programme for the struggle for workers' control has nothing in common with the piecemeal reformist projects of the Institute for Workers' Control. Neither does it have anything in common with those who see Socialism and "Workers' Control" in terms of the extension of state ownership. That is why the resolution can state, "Workers' control is antagonistic to bourgeois nationalisation of industry and state ownership".

The RILU theses underline that any struggle for workers' control in the factory, in pursuance of sporadic or immediate needs of the workers, poses objectively the question of which class shall rule - a question that cannot be answered finally within the confines of individual factories or industries. Hence the impossibility of separating the struggle for workers' control from organising the class for the socialist revolution. But it was evident, and remains so to this day, that the traditional structures of the labour movement are incapable of waging the struggle for workers' control. They are structured and controlled with other purposes in mind. In order to carry through the struggle for control, new organisations, galvanising the energy of the rank and file, were necessary. Hence the RILU resolution on factory committees.

The factory committee should not be confused with the existing shop steward committees in Britain. Their express purpose was designated by RILU as the struggle for control of production. As the tempo of the social revolution increased so then (and only then) could the factory committees become the basis for the reconstructed trade unions. The theses document the specific tasks of the factory committees in the struggle for control, a struggle that must pose at its successful conclusion the control of supply, of finance, of import and export by the working class. These are demands that must not be confused with demands on the capitalist state to limit the inflow of foreign produced goods in 'order to save jobs within a tariff-protected British Capitalism.

These documents are of great relevance to the tasks of communists in the current period.

Internationally, the Stalinist and Social-Democratic trade unions stand as a crucial prop of the capitalist order. Against their programmes of class collaboration communists must reply with a programme of struggle. Such a programme cannot be elaborated except on the basis of the method, the principles, and the major demands outlined in these documents.

THE ACTION PROGRAMME

Proceeding from the above principles, from the condition of the international trade union movement, the economic crisis, the intensification of the class struggle, growing social conflict and the imperative necessity of preparing the unions for the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the First International Congress of Red Trade Unions adopts the following programme of action.

The acute economic crisis spreading all over the world, the catastrophic fall in wholesale prices, the overproduction of goods combined with an actual lack of sale, the aggressive policy of the bourgeoisie towards the working class, their determination to reduce wages and force the workers' movement backward, the growing exasperation of the masses on the one side and the impotence of the old trade unions and their methods on the other - pose new problems for the revolutionary trade unions all over the world. New methods of economic struggle are required. Called forth by the decomposition of capitalism, a new aggressive economic policy for the trade unions is necessary in order to parry the attack of capital, strengthen existing positions and pass over to the offensive.

The basis of the tactics of the trade unions is the direct action of the revolutionary masses and their organisations against capital. All the gains of the workers are in direct proportion to the degree of the revolutionary pressure of the masses: By 'direct action' we mean all forms of direct pressure of the workers upon the employers and the state: boycott, strike, street demonstrations, the occupation of the factories, forcible opposition to the removal of finished manufactured goods from the enterprises and other revolutionary actions which lead the workers to the overthrow of capitalism, uniting the working class for the struggle for socialism. The task of the revolutionary trade unions is, therefore, to turn all forms of struggle into a weapon of education and fighting preparation of the working masses for the social revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The last year of struggle showed, with a particular vividness, all the weakness of strictly trade union organisation. The membership in several unions of the workers of one enterprise weakens their struggle. It is necessary, and this should be the starting point of a tenacious struggle, to pass from organisation based purely on trade to the organisation of unions based on industries. All the workers of one enterprise should belong to one union - that is the fighting slogan in the field of union organisation. The fusion of related unions into one union should be effected in a revolutionary way, putting the question directly before the members of that union in the factories and mills, and also before district and regional conferences, as well as before national congresses.

Each factory and each mill should become a citadel of the revolution. Old forms of communication between rank and file members of the union and the union itself, such as money collectors, representatives, proxies and others should be substituted by the formation of factory committees. The factory committee must be elected by the workers engaged in the given enterprise, independently of the political creed they profess. The task of the supporters of the Red International of Trade Unions is to involve all the workers of a given enterprise in the election of their representative organ. The attempt to elect the factory committee exclusively from adherents of the same party, and the casting aside of the broad, non-party rank and file workers, should be severely condemned. Such a body would be a party cell and not a factory committee. The revolutionary workers should, through cells, committees of action and their links with the rank and file members, influence and act upon the general meeting and the election of the factory committee.

The first question to be put before the workers and the factory committee is the maintenance of the workers, discharged on account of unemployment, at the expense of the employers of a given branch of industry. No worker should be thrown on the street without the enterprise taking responsibility for guaranteeing their livelihood. The owner must be

compelled to pay full wages to the unemployed. Not only the unemployed, but above all the workers in the factories, must be organised around this, it must be explained at the same time that the problem of unemployment cannot be solved within the capitalist regime and that the best means of struggle against unemployment is the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The closing of the enterprises, and the cutting of the number of working days in the week is" at the present time, the most important weapon with which the bourgeoisie force workers to accept cuts in wages, an increase in the working day and the abolition of collective agreements. The lock-out is becoming an ever more important form of direct action on the part of the employers against the organised working class. Therefore, the unions must lead action against 'Closures, and for the right of investigation, on the part of the workers, in to the cause of .the closure. For this purpose special control committees, composed of workers, should be instituted to oversee raw materials and orders. They should verify the quantity of available raw materials necessary for production, and also the financial resources of the enterprise deposited in the banks. Specially elected control committees must investigate, in a most thorough manner, the financial relations between a given enterprise and other concerns. For this it is necessary to place the abolition of commercial secrecy before the workers as the practical task of the day.

One of the most important forms of struggle is the occupation of the factory by the workers and the continuation of production against the will of the owners. Such a continuation of? production is particularly important given the chronic shortage of goods, therefore, unions must not allow the premeditated closure of factories and mills. Depending on local conditions of production, the political situation, the tension of the social struggle. The occupation of enterprises can and must be accompanied by other methods of pressure on capital.

In the occupied enterprise management must rest in the hands of the factory committee and representatives of the union specially appointed for this purpose.

The economic struggle should be conducted under the slogan of the raising of wages, improvement of the conditions of work and defence of the vital interests of the workers. The exhaustion of the working class during the period of the war must now be "Compensated for by an increase in wages and the improvement of work conditions. The reference by the capitalists to foreign competition, as an excuse for not meeting these demands, should not be given consideration, the revolutionary trade unions approach the question of wages and conditions not from the point of view of the competition between rapacious capitalists of different nations, but solely from that of the preservation and the defence of the living labour force.

In the post war period, the employers have utilised every possible means to create divisions in the ranks of the working class. They utilised, in full measure, the women work force in the time of war and are now attempting to further use this cheap labour force to push down the level of men's wages. Along with this, in order to struggle against the employers workers in several countries have stood on the principle of expelling women from industry and excluding' them from the unions. Such conduct must be met with a decisive rebuff on the part of the Red Trade Unions. Revolutionary trade unions must struggle for equal conditions of work for women and men and equal pay for equivalent work.

The drive of the capitalists to reduce wages during the economic crisis must be met by a united response from the revolutionary trade unions in order to prevent a general wage cut being achieved through separate wage cuts in industry after industry'. Workers in the public service industries for example mining, railways, electricity and gas, should be drawn into the struggle at once in order that the struggle against the onslaughts of capital should touch the very nerve of the economic organism. Here it is advisable to use all forms of resistance, from partial and intermittent strikes to a general strike embracing basic industries on a national scale. Such planned action is a mighty weapon against the reactionary attempt of the bourgeoisie of every country. Trade unions must closely study the world situation, selecting the most suitable moment for their economic action. They must not forget for one moment that international action is only possible with the formation of real revolutionary class conscious international trade unions, having nothing in common with the Yellow Amsterdam International.

The belief, fostered in the masses by the opportunists of all countries, in the sanctity of collective agreements must be

sharply and decisively opposed by the revolutionary trade union movement. Collective agreements are no more than armistices. The employers always violate them, given the slightest opportunity; Respectful attitudes to collective agreements show how deeply bourgeois ideas have penetrated into the minds of the leaders of the working class. Revolutionary trade unions, while not rejecting collective agreements, must realise their relative value and must clearly address themselves to the question of the methods to be employed when it is advantageous to the working class to break such agreements.

In the fight against individual and collective employers, the workers' organisations must, while adapting to national and local conditions, utilise all the experience of the struggle for the emancipation of the working class; Every large strike needs not only careful preparation but also the organisation, from the very start, of special cadres for the struggle against strikebreakers and opposition to provocative attacks from all sorts of whiteguard organisations encouraged by the bourgeois state. The Fascists in Italy, the "security police" from the last war in Germany, the civil white guard organisations of ex-officers and non-commissioned officers in France and England, all these organisations, though different in form, pursue an identical task. They have the aim of disorganising and forestalling the decisive actions of the workers not only by replacing the striking workers but by smashing their organisations and physically destroying their leaders. The organisation, in such conditions, of special strike militia, special self-defence squads, is a matter of life and death for the working class.

During the strike the workers' organisations should not only 'struggle against the employers' strikebreaking organisations, but take the initiative by stopping the movement of all freight, both raw materials and finished goods, both in and out of the striking factory. In this the transport unions should play an especially prominent role, with them lies the responsibility of stopping the freight, which can be done easily with the full support of all the workers of a given locality.

All the economic struggles of the working class in the coming period should centre around the slogan, 'Control of Industry'. This control must be effected without waiting until governments and the ruling classes have initiated a form of fake control. We must conduct a stubborn war against all attempts on the part of the ruling classes and the reformist leaders to create labour associations in which labour and capital cooperate, or control commissions shared jointly by workers and employers. This control of industry must be brought about by direct action; only then will it give definite results. The revolutionary trade unions must come out with determination against the tricks and fraudulent schemes paraded as 'socialisation' by the leaders of the old trade unions with the cooperation of the ruling class. All the talk on the part of these gentlemen about peaceful nationalisation has for its sole task the sidetracking of the workers away from work for the social revolution,

To divert the attention of the workers away from their immediate revolutionary task and to awaken in them petty bourgeois aspirations, the capitalists and reformists are bringing forward the idea of profit-sharing, i.e. to return to the workers a really insignificant part of the surplus value they have produced. This plan of corrupting the workers must be met with severe and merciless criticism. Not 'profit-sharing' but 'the abolition of capitalist profit', this is the slogan of the revolutionary trade unions.

In order to paralyse and nullify the fighting force of the working class, bourgeois governments militarise individual concerns or even whole industries under the pretext of defending the national interest. Under cover of preventing, as far as possible, economic crises, they introduce, in the interests of capital, obligatory courts of arbitration and conflict commissions. Still in the interests of capital, some countries have introduced a direct tax on earnings with a view to throwing the Weight of the war wholly onto the shoulders of the working class, the tax-collectors being the employers themselves. It is incumbent upon the trade unions to lead a ruthless and merciless battle against these state measures that exclusively serve the interests of the capitalist class.

While conducting the fight for the improvement of the conditions of labour, raising the standard of living of the masses, and establishing workers' control over industry, we should always keep in mind that it is impossible to solve all these problems within the framework of the capitalist system. For this reason the revolutionary trade unions, while gradually forcing concessions from the ruling class, compelling it to enact social legislation, should always clearly explain to the

workers that only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat can solve the social question. For this reason not a single case of mass action should pass, from this point of view, without leaving a deep mark. It is the duty of the revolutionary trade unions to explain these conflicts to the workers, leading the rank and file always towards the idea of the necessity and inevitability of the social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

[* see footnote] Every economic struggle is also a political one; that is a general class struggle. Such a struggle can only acquire a really revolutionary character, no matter how many workers it may involve, and be carried through for the greatest benefit of the entire working class, when the revolutionary trade unions act in perfect unity with the Communist Party in each respective country. To divide the theory and practice of the struggle of the working class into two distinct parts is extremely detrimental, especially at the present moment. Every offensive requires the maximum concentration of forces which is only possible by exerting the greatest revolutionary energy, it must not be divided into two separate policies, one for the Communist Party and the other for the Red Trade Unions - such a policy is doomed to failure in advance. Therefore the unity of action and organic coordination between the Communist Party and the trade unions is the preliminary condition leading to success in the struggle against capitalism.

*Printed in the text recommended by the Third Congress of the Comintern to the constituent World Congress of Red Trade Unions; does not appear in the printed RILU text.

RESOLUTION ON WORKERS CONTROL

1. The analysis of modern economic conditions irrefutably proves, that the productive forces are in sharp and irresolvable contradiction with the prevailing relations of production, During the, world war this contradiction was evident only to the most advanced sections of the proletariat, however, the acuteness of the post-war world crisis, affecting equally the victorious, the vanquished, and the neutral countries, brought home this lesson to the great majority of the proletariat. The continued threat of war, despite the treaty :of Versailles; the general and chronic crisis, despite the absolute, necessity of restoring industry, have put society as a whole, and particularly the world proletariat, face to face with the question of its very survival. With the first attempt to solve this question it becomes absolutely clear that the above mentioned contradictions have now reached such a degree, that the bourgeoisie, the Class which hitherto directed industry, has now become its disorganiser. The bourgeoisie no longer assist the development of production, but on the contrary puts obstacles in its way, and becomes a fetter on production.

The working class is the first to sharply experience the unbearable burden of this contradiction, because it is more than any other Class tied up with production in great industrial centres, workshops and factories, and also because the contradiction mentioned above leads to the wholesale slaughter of the battlefield or to wide spread starvation during periods of unemployment.

For these reasons the working class is forced to understand the role of the bourgeoisie in the organisation of industry, to find out how it fulfils this task. From this arises the need for the workers themselves to re-organise production, to meet their own needs. This response to direct necessity, which in reality means a prologue to the resolution of the contradiction of the capitalist system by force (ie the path to the social revolution), takes in fact the form of workers control over production. '

2. The primitive stage of workers control reveals itself in sporadic attempts of the workers of each concern to supervise the work, the supply, and condition of the machinery of production; to determine whether the closing of the factory, or the curtailing of production are really based upon necessity and are not a result of the disruptive intentions of the owner. But 'very soon the workers become convinced, that supervision and control alone are not sufficient to prevent the capitalist from disorganising the work in the factories. The system of artificially curtailing production or completely closing their factories, adopted by the capitalists of different countries, shows very well the limitations pf this form of control. Equally insufficient are the spasmodic attempts made by workers of some concerns to continue production at all costs, even against the will of the factory owner. In such attempts, as in Russia after the March revolution, or not very long ago in Italy, Germany, England and other countries, the basic feature of the new position of the working class

in industry is manifested. From the position? of a passive and exploited force, considered merely as a machine or as the appendage of one, the working Class rises to the position of pioneer of the idea of the organisation of production, to the position of the direct inheritor of the bourgeoisie, which because of its class interests, has now become the disorganiser of production.

To the old type trade unions, whose activity was limited to the fight for only slight improvements under the existing capitalist system, such a change in the minds of the working masses causes an indisputable blow. Tied together through its bureaucracy with the bourgeois apparatus, and entirely dependent upon it, the old trade unions are powerless to grasp the new problem of production put before the working Class, or to find a practical solution for it. This is why with particular force and rapidity new organisations are now growing up which, still using the weapon of the old trade unions - the strike for revolutionary purposes, already strive to take over industry. The activity of the shop committees is now not limited only to the strike, but is mainly expressed in taking over some functions of the factory owner, especially in the branches of supplying the factory with raw materials, fuel and later with financial means, or the confiscation of factories sabotaged or left by the owners. This is the reason why at this stage of workers control the bourgeoisie and its apologists - the leaders of the old trade unions make the fiercest attempt to oppose to revolutionary workers' control, so-called "industrial democracy", joint commissions of factory owners and workers, profit sharing schemes and other "democratic" tricks based on the theory of equal rights between labour and capital based on leaving the means of production in the private ownership of the bourgeoisie. This idea of "equality", carefully cultivated by the English' trade unions, which received its final expression at the 10th Congress of trade unions in Germany (1919) and which still dominates the French General Confederation of Labour, is in practice nothing but an attempt to fool the working class through the distortion of the meaning of revolutionary workers' control; to turn it aside from immediate revolutionary problems to the entirely outlived bourgeois ideas of the yellow International of trade unions.

4. Of the same significance are the attempts of the yellow leaders of trade unions to pose "government ownership" against revolutionary workers' control. The bourgeoisie is supporting this because it cleverly uses the principle of this pseudo-socialisation in its own class interests. They willingly obscure the fact that government ownership does not mean social ownership, but only the transition of production from the private management of a group of class representatives to management by the entire class. The theory of state control consists in an administration composed of elected representatives either of the government and the workers or of the owners, the government and the workers. The representatives of the government are always considered as representing the entire population, and workers as representatives of a class. Here the falsity of the principle of democratic control reveals itself as utterly unacceptable to the revolutionary workers because their idea of workers' control necessitates the negation of today's government, which is but a weapon of the bourgeoisie. Thus they reject the bourgeois democratic principle and advocate instead that of the workers' state expressing the real needs of the toilers. Workers' control is antagonistic to bourgeois nationalisation of industry or state ownership. Any attempt to combine state ownership with workers' control, whilst actually conserving the power of the administration of industry in the hands of the bourgeoisie, will result only in the putting of the responsibility for existing problems on the working class. On the other hand, such attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable may bring about the disintegration of the new revolutionary nucleus of the trade union movement on the shop floor. This is a major danger because of the tendency of the union bureaucracy to take advantage of every weakness and lack of co-ordination in the activity of the revolutionary nuclei to subject them to its disintegrating influence.

5. No less dangerous is the pseudo-revolutionary opinion, wide spread among the workers of different countries, that the proletariat can achieve positive results from control even before the overthrow of the capitalist state. The sad experience of the Italian workers' control, betrayed by the treacherous leaders of the proletariat, has emphatically proved the sheer nonsense of this opinion, and revolutionary workers in different countries must avoid the repetition of such experiments. In this connection it is particularly vital to realise that the application of workers' control in its fullest expression is impossible unless it includes the financial function as well as technical supervision; Only the full application of financial control reveals to the worker the fundamental basis of the capitalist system. In the process of financial control the workers learn in practice the dependence of their factory upon the banks and national and international financial trusts. The disclosure of the commercial, industrial and particularly financial secrets gives the

proletariat an exact picture of the prime source of the overwhelming sabotage on the part of the bourgeoisie. It reveals the main lever of the system which engineers lockouts, the curtailing of production by establishing short time work and other methods artificially bringing about unemployment, the cutting of wages, the disruption of labour organisations, etc.

6. The struggle for financial control leads the working class to the immediate and decisive clash with the bourgeoisie whose political power is to a certain extent based on financial power. At this stage, control inevitably takes an openly political aspect and requires political leadership. Meanwhile, the increasingly frequent cases of seizure of factories, and at the same time the impossibility of managing them without having at their disposal the financial apparatus, clearly puts before the workers the urgent problem of getting hold of the financial system, and through it, of the whole of industry. At this stage of workers control, the contradiction stated in the first clauses resolves itself into the struggle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, ie in the social revolution. In the process of this decisive struggle, the duration and difficulty of which depends on the level of organisation and culture of the bourgeoisie in each country, it is no longer merely a question of controlling the factory owner in order to paralyse his evil "intentions", to break his sabotaging activities, or to continue production, at all costs etc. The question before the proletariat now is to take industry from the capitalists and to take as a class, into its own hands and under its own responsibility the management of the industrial resources of the country. At this moment workers' control develops into a militant attempt of the working class to direct the organisation of production, in factories, shops, mines and railroads not only in the interest of separate groups of the working class, but for the benefit of the whole proletariat of a given country.

7. The victory of the proletariat is inevitable because the bourgeoisie has no longer the force to direct industry with its own hands. This brings the proletariat to the difficult task of state reconstruction amid very adverse conditions, primarily because the preliminary stages of workers control were necessarily destructive of industrial machinery. To exercise management over production in such a situation on the morrow after the revolution becomes a particularly difficult task. The sabotage of the bourgeoisie and its obsequious flatterers, concealed until now, becomes open and systematic. The factories, shops, government institutions, schools and universities are left without directing staffs. Not only must the working class physically defend the revolution, but also give its best workers to the task of administration. In such a moment the role of mass organisations, including not only the advance guard of the proletariat (the communist party), but broad sections of the nonparty masses, is especially important. The economic organisations of the proletariat must penetrate to the very heart of the working class through the creation of nuclei in each factory and in each workshop. This is why the question of relationship between the trade unions and factory committees is now of the utmost importance. Experience has shown that factory committees are of great value, especially where trade unions are either weak or captured by opportunistic leadership. But the work of shop committees must not be localised, otherwise it will easily be paralysed or sidetracked by the bourgeoisie. The advance guard of the working class must direct the work of factory committees into nation-wide channels. This shows the necessity of utilising the machinery of the trade unions for new aims, to win the leadership of the factory committees and turn them into mighty weapons of mass control and ownership of production.

8. But the unions can assume this work only under two conditions: 1) that their structure changes from craft lines to industrial, permitting them to unite all workers and employees of any branch of industry; 2) when, in opposition to the yellow counter-revolutionary trade-union bureaucracy in each industry, there is created firm and determined revolutionary nuclei to counteract the corrupting policies of the bureaucracy, and to retain the organised masses in the factories on the path of revolutionary struggle for control over production and permanent management of industry.

In their vigorous fight against Amsterdam, which attempts to turn the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat into the channel of futile and fruitless control within the limits and interests of the capitalists system, the Red unions must pay special attention to the practice of workers' control which is the best preliminary school for the proletariat striving to take power in its own hands. The logical conclusion of this is that preliminary to the social revolution the slogan of workers control must be put on the order of business of every gathering of workers, not only with the object of revolutionising them, but to give them the political and economic education necessary for the immediate future. The maintenance of the proletarian rule after the social revolution depends on this preparation, because the social revolution

and the maintenance of proletarian power are determined by the preparation and ability of the proletariat to conquer and submit to its will the mechanism of production (ie whether it will be able to solve not only politically but also economically, the basic contradiction mentioned in the first clause). This task can easily be achieved by suitable preparation, primarily because the workers gradually learn to manage the factory, then they clearly see the correlation between different branches of industry and learn to supervise them on a nation-wide scale. Thus, after the social revolution, when it inevitably has to proceed with the nationalisation of the whole financial system, industrial transport and important sources of raw material etc, the proletarian government will have enough workers capable not only of fighting for the social revolution, but building on the inherited ground, a new socialist commonwealth, new organs of distribution and management of industry.

At this stage workers' control assumes the form of participation of the trade unions in the shaping of new economic organs and management of production through the latter, ie it transforms itself into one of the organs of economic reconstruction and control of the working class through the Soviets and the economic organs.

RESOLUTION ON FACTORY COMMITTEES

1. For the purpose of carrying out the above stated tasks (resolutions on workers' control), factory committees must be built along determined lines. A question arises whether factory committees ought to be organised within or outside the labour unions? In Germany and England wide labour circles were of the opinion that factory committees must be organised outside? of the unions, that they should take over from the craft unions and entirely displace them. This opinion holds that the form of craft organisation is not adaptable to the needs of struggle, but should they be re-organised "along the industrial lines, they might, together with factory committees, become able to cope with the problem.

2. The factory committees cannot take the place of the trade unions. Only in the course of the struggle can they go beyond the limits of the separate shops, factories and mines on the basis of separate industries, creating a common machinery for carrying on the struggle.

Hence trade unions have already become central organs of the struggle, although they do not embrace such a great number of workers as the factories committees could do, representing free organisations accessible to all the workers of a given concern. The division of functions of the factory committees and the trade unions? must result from the historical development of the social revolution. The trade unions organise the workers for an increase of wages or shortening of working hours on a national and state-wide scale. The factory committees, being organised for the purpose of controlling industry, embracing the workers of a given concern and their struggle, will only gradually assume a national and state-wide scale.

In so far as the rank and file of the trade unions succeed in combating the counter-revolutionary tendencies of the bureaucracy and transform the unions into revolutionary bodies, the factory committees will become the nuclei of the trade unions in the factories.

3. The organisation of the factory committees by separate industries and their utilisation for the immediate struggle for working class interests cannot but influence the present structure of the trade unions. The activities of the factory committees shatter the old forms of the trade unions built on the craft principle and hasten their transformation into unions organised by industries.

4. By turning trade unions and factory committees into a powerful weapon for social revolution, revolutionary workers are thus preparing these mass organisations for the great task which they will have to face after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the task of becoming the bulwark of the new organisation of economic life on the basis of socialist principles.

The trade unions, reconstructed on an industrial basis and supported by factory committees, will familiarise the workers with industrial problems, will prepare the more experienced among them for the management of the concerns and effect

control over the technical experts. Thus, under the general direction of the workers' government in co-operation with other economic organisations of workers, the trade unions will carry out the fundamental principles of a socialist commonwealth.

The concrete tasks before the factory committees are as follows:

I) To draw the unemployed into the process of production, for the fulfilment of which task it is necessary a) to clearly determine the potentialities of production, to take account of the available supplies of raw and accessory materials in production and take them under control; b) to shift the available labour force into such branches of industry in which a shortage of hands is felt; c) "to secure sufficient aid to the unemployed on the owners' account until they resume work; d) to establish connections with the distributive organisations in order to get acquainted with the exact necessities of the working masses and conform production to these needs.

II) The organisation of the distribution of fuel in order to secure regular work in the concerns and an adequate standard of living for the workers, ie organise a systematic supply of fuel for the different concerns as well as the households of the workers."

III) The suspension of all unproductive work, especially the manufacturing of arms, ammunition, and articles of luxury.

IV) The establishment of control over transport in order to prevent overtaxing transport by unproductive shipping such as a) transport of war materials; b) export of capital; c) export of equipment from closed concerns; d) export of food-stuffs for purposes of speculation. First of all, provision should be made for the supply of food and articles of mass consumption: raw material, fuel and accessory materials necessary in production; the conveyance of the working population to the place of work should likewise be provided for.

V) The establishment of financial control in order to make possible the valuation of capital and cash of concerns; of control over banking and other financial operations, and generally of control over banks.

VI) The establishment of financial control over the supply and distribution of foodstuffs; by establishing communications between the toiling population of the town and the country. Special attention should be paid to the organisation of mutual' exchange between town and country of agricultural and factory goods. which the toiling population is in need of.

VII) The organisation of control and the fixing of prices on agricultural and factory products which the toiling population is in need of.

VIII) The establishment of control over export and import: a) in the first place preference must be given to the import of commodities necessary for the working masses and to the maintenance of production; b) the import of luxury should be prohibited; c) the export abroad of foodstuffs and capital, as well as articles necessary for local production should be likewise prohibited.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. Workers' control is the necessary school in the work of preparation of the large masses for the proletarian revolution.

2. Workers control must be the war cry for the workers of every capitalist country, and must be utilised as a weapon to disclose the financial and commercial secrets.

3. Workers' control must be widely used for the purpose of transforming the old trade unions into fighting working class organisations.

4. Workers' control must be used for the reconstruction of the outlived trade unions on the basis of industries, the former becoming harmful for the workers' revolutionary movement.

5. Workers' control is distinct from bourgeois schemes of "mixed committees", nationalisation, etc., and to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie it opposes the dictatorship of the proletariat.
6. When establishing any form of workers' control or seizure of concerns, great attention must be given to the necessity of attracting the most backward proletarian masses to the discussion of the issues at stake. At the same time, a careful selection of the more capable workers must be made during the process of workers' control with the view of preparing them for the leading positions in the task of re-organising industry.
7. For the efficient functioning of workers' control in each locality, it is necessary that the trade unions direct the work of the factory committees, while the trade unions must coordinate and combine the work of the local control committees of the same industry in such a manner as to avoid any attempt to create "factory patriotism" On the ground of localised control.
8. For the guidance of the work of the factory committees the trade unions must from the outset issue special instructions, discussing the questions of workers' control, carry on a propaganda in the daily press and in the factories not only by explaining the necessity of workers' control, but also giving detailed reports of the results of workers' control in different concerns, call for that purpose joint meetings, conferences etc.
9. With a view of carrying out these aims in unions which do not accept the principles of the Red International of the Trade Unions, it is necessary to organise strong revolutionary nuclei which will lay special stress on the reconstruction of the unions on an industrial basis and will keep the revolutionary character of the struggle for workers' control.

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