

The Tasks of the Communists in the Trade Unions

The following resolution was adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist International on February 25, 1928.

In regard to the problems of the revolutionary trade union movement, it must be again emphasized that maximum flexibility, ability to take into account the concrete and special condition of the country, rapid change of forms of organizational work in accordance with changes in conditions of work and in the organization and tactics of employers and their reformist agents, must be the keynote of organizational work. It must not be forgotten for a moment that the fact that organizational work in the revolutionary trade unions and minority movements is badly conducted is due largely to the inadequacy of the work of the Communist Party in the trade union movement and that it leads to isolation from the everyday struggles of the masses and conse-

quently to a weakening of contact with the masses.

Organizational Work.

Notwithstanding the fact that organizational work must be carried on in different ways in each country and in each branch of industry in accordance with circumstances, it is possible to lay down general lines of organizational work for all the countries. The organizational work of Communists in the trade union movement of all countries must be devoted towards:

1. The capture of the most important branches of industry, the most important industrial districts and big factories and works.

2. Drawing into trade union work a maximum number of workers employed in each enterprise.

3. The establishment of trade union organization on a factory basis for which purpose it is necessary to capture the local trade union apparatus.

4. Obtaining control of factory

councils wherever they exist, forming such committees where they do not exist, and transforming factory councils into the primary organizations of the industrial unions.

5. Having all the most important questions of the trade union movement brought immediately before the workers for discussion in the factories.

6. Special efforts must be made to preserve the class character of factory councils and to counteract the efforts of employers and social democrats to transform factory councils into instruments of class collaboration.

7. Organizing the fight against bureaucratic centralism, and for broad trade union democracy, i. e. for the extension of the rights of local trade union organizations, election of trade union management bodies on the basis of proportional representation, annual election of management bodies and officials, etc.

8. Placing the revolutionary trade union movement of all countries on a sound financial basis. Forms and methods of financial contributions must be determined in accordance with the conditions and the character of the movement in each country.

9. Securing the adoption of the principle of building from below upwards in the structure of revolutionary minorities and independent trade unions.

10. Struggle against bureaucratization of central apparatuses and transference of the whole weight of the work to factories and works.

11. Drawing immigrant workers into trade unions on the basis of complete equality and strenuously combating hostility towards foreign workers. At the same time revolutionary trade unions must, by conducting work of mass education among their members, who are about to emigrate to another country, secure that these workers shall become organized and thus prevent them from being in the hands of the em-

ployers and the reformist bureau-

cracy in the countries to which they are emigrating.

12. Strengthening the organization of unemployed; struggle against the expulsion of unemployed from trade unions, and for keeping up a connection between unemployed expelled from trade unions and their organization.

13. Drawing women and young workers into trade unions and their promotion to active trade union work.

14. As a rule working from everyday concrete demands to general questions, and not vice versa.

15. Once and for all breaking the habit now prevailing in all countries of devoting inadequate attention to the work of fractions in revolutionary and reformist trade unions, and also to trade union departments in Party committees. Concentrating the attention of all parties on the practical application of the decisions of the Second Organizational Conference of the Executive Committee Communist International.

(To Be Continued).

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(Continued from Previous Issue).

In regard to the organizational tasks of the Communists in countries where the trade union movement is split, it is essential first of all to deal with the work and shortcomings of the independent revolutionary trade unions in these countries (France, Czechoslovakia, and others). In these countries it is essential:

1. Energetically to recruit new members first and foremost among unorganized workers, taking particular advantage of periods of mass movements.

2. To carry on a struggle against fluctuation of membership by the establishment of fighting funds, mutual aids funds, etc.

3. To reconstruct the trade unions on an industrial basis without forcing the pace, however, and without resorting to mechanical fusions.

4. To combine the factory councils of all enterprises forming part of

one concern or trust for joint action of leaders.

against concentrated capitalism, each individual factory council, however, to retain its separate existence.

5. To devote special efforts to establish various mixed committees, councils of action and other united front organs in conjunction with the workers in reformist factory trade union organizations, as well as with the unorganized workers on the basis of definite concrete tasks.

6. To develop a militant trade press, to publish special revolutionary trade union literature, to help in the establishment of Unity Clubs, etc.

Where Minority Exists.

For countries where there is an organized opposition minority (Great Britain) the most important organizational tasks are:

1. To draw as many complete trade union organizations and trades councils as possible into the opposition movement.

2. To carry on a struggle in the local bodies on questions of wages, policy, industrial peace, etc.

3. Unceasingly to explain the causes of the defeat of the recent industrial struggles and to drive home the lesson of the need for a change

4. To carry on a relentless struggle against the slightest infringement of trade union democracy, expulsions, etc.

For countries where an organized opposition does not exist and where work is carried on only by fractions (Germany, Austria and others) all the efforts must be directed towards:

1. Forming fractions according to industries, districts and on a national scale.

2. Appointing for every big enterprise a special trade union organizer for permanent work among the organized and unorganized.

3. Struggle against bureaucratic centralism in the trade union movement and for extension of the rights of local trade unions and trades councils.

Tasks for American Party.

In the United States where the overwhelming majority of workers are unorganized, where members of the existing trade unions are recruited mainly from the midst of skilled workers—the labor aristocracy, where the most important trade unions are undergoing a process of disintegration, all Communist work in trade unions must be directed mainly to-

wards organizing the unorganized masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The slogan "Organize the Unorganized" must not be a call to the corrupt trade union bureaucracy which rejects the task of organizing the working masses; neither must it be a one-sided call to the existing trade unions, but must be the basis of the activity of the Communist Party itself. The Communist Party must on its own accord organize trade unions in those branches of industry where workers are not organized at all or very inadequately organized (the steel, automobile, rubber, boot and textile industries, water-transport service, etc.).

At the same time Communists must continue and increase their activity in trade unions affiliated to the reactionary American Federation of Labor in order to form a strong left wing in it.

As many trade unions refuse to admit Negro workers to membership, the Communist Party must take the initiative in forming trade unions for Negro workers. Simultaneously, it must continue the struggle for the admission of Negro workers to the existing trade unions. Communists must put up a fight for the amalga-

mation of Negro workers' unions with the trade union organizations of the white workers in the same branches of industry.

In spite of the efforts of the corrupt bureaucracy to prevent the left wing from capturing the miners' union by cunning and violence, Communists must not leave this union. In view of the decline of the miners' union, however, the left elements must take the initiative in forming new local trade unions in coal mining districts where workers are not organized and in places where the miners' organizations have been destroyed or have fallen to pieces.

The whole purpose of the organizational work is systematically to win over the masses. It is from this point of view that every organizational measure, and every step in our practical work must be regarded. This is precisely why the ways and means of organizational work are so varied, and why it is impossible to lay down general and fixed rules for all countries. Organizational work requires a serious knowledge of the trade union movement and great flexibility in the application of revolutionary tactics.