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The 15th Party Conference of the C. P. of the U. S. S. R.

The Result of the Work of the Trade Unions, and their Tasks in the Immediate Future.

Speech of Comrade Tomsky.

Comrades, I shall take the liberty of not dealing with theses point by point in my speech, but of enlarging on the most important points touched on in these theses, as a number of these theses are merely a development or repetition of what we dealt with at our last Party Conference. Above all I shall not concern myself in detail with the first, introductory part of the theses, for, in my opinion, they have already been dealt with exhaustively by Comrade Rykov. I pass immediately to that part of the theses which depicts the results of trade union development. Here, with your permission, I will quote a few characteristic figures.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE TRADE UNIONS AND THE BOGEY OF THE OPPOSITION.

The numerical increase of workers and employees in the Soviet Union last year was as follows: on April 1st, 1925, the number of workers and employees engaged in factories and institutions exclusive of single workers (for instance household employees — Editor), of persons occupied in working groups etc. amounted to 6,035,300 persons; on April 1st 1926 their number had reached 7,700,000 — thus the number of workers and employees occupied in the factories and institutions has increased by 27.5% in the course of this year.

During this period the number of trade union members shows the following development: on April 1st 1925 6,950,400 trade union members were registered, on April 1st 1926 8,768,200, i. e. an increase of 26.2%. Immediately after the publication of the theses, questions were addressed to me as to how it was that the numbers employed in factories and institutions was less than the number of trade union members. This is very easily explained: First of all, in the figures of the workers and employees engaged in factories and institutions, certain groups are not included, for instance seasonal workers, also groups of agricultural workers and the unemployed who remain members of our trade unions. There is another group of persons, not very important, it is true, who are counted among the trade union members but who are not employed in any factory; these are the proletarian students.

The Opposition represents things as though the number of Soviet employees, of the bureaucratic apparatus, of the non-proletarian strata were growing, as though the number of employees were in no way less than that of the workers. This causes the Opposition to take a special attitude towards the question and to draw a number of social and political conclusions. I will quote a few figures: The number of workers or-

ganised in trade unions increased during the period from April 1st 1925 to April 1st 1926 by 1,589,300, i. e. by 27.5%. This group is composed of the following elements: the Union of Agricultural and Forest Labourers increased by 79.9%; the Union of Paper Workers by 27.4%; the Miners' Union by 44.6%; the Woodworkers decreased by 8.7%; the Leather Workers recorded an increase of 14.1%, the Metal Workers of 29.1%; the Printers of 19.8%; the Workers in Foodstuffs by 27.8%; the Textile Workers by 25.2%; the Chemical Workers by 27.3%; the Workers in the Clothing Trade by 13%; the Union of Workers in the Building Trade increased its membership by 65%; the Seamen by 12.6%; the Railwaymen by 28%; the Transport Workers by 6.5%; the Post and Telegraph Workers by 15%. The non-industrial Unions show the following increase: Soviet and Trade Employees by 23.1%; the Union of Art Workers by 8.8%; Medical and Public Health Personnel by 18%; Educational Workers by 16%; Municipal Employees by 14%; Workers in Public Food Supply by 37.7%.

The purely industrial group increased by 23.7%, the agricultural group by 79.9%; the transport group by 22.7%; the group of employees by 19.4%.

As we see, the assertions of the Opposition in no way correspond with the truth. The groups most affected by the increase are the seasonal workers, workers in the building trade and agricultural and forest workers. The industrial group has increased more than the group of employees.

Which unions of the industrial group increase most rapidly? The miners, metal workers, railwaymen, paper workers, textile workers and workers in the food trade.

The Opposition maintains that in our country the number of workers in industry and traffic is less than three millions, the group of employees being not less than the group of workers. What share then have, in reality, the individual unions, the individual groups in the trade union movement? The metal workers represent 8.9% of all the workers organised in our trade unions; the textile workers 8.8%, the miners 4.4%; the workers in the food trade 4.8%; the leather workers 1.4%; the chemical workers 2.6%; workers in the clothing trade 0.8%, the paper workers 0.5%; the printers 1.3%; the woodworkers 1.8%, the agricultural and forest workers 10.5%; workers in the building trade 6.1%; workers in the sugar trade 1.2%. Altogether 53.1% are included in this group if we add to it the workers in the building trade and the agricultural and forest workers, (who must undoubtedly be counted among trade unions of workers; it cannot be said that these are non-proletarian trade unions). The traffic group (also a group of workers): railwaymen 11.1%.

seamen 1,8%; transport workers 2%. This group embraces 14,9% of the whole number of workers and employees organised in trade unions. The group of non-industrial trade unions, amongst which, in contrast to the usual custom, count the Union of Post and Telegraph Workers, embraces: Soviet and trade employees 12,2%; educational workers 7,8%; medical and public health workers 5%; post and telegraph workers 1,3% and art workers 0,9% — altogether 27,2%. Apart from this there are two other unions, the Union of Workers in the Public Food Supply and the Union of Municipal Employees, which altogether include 4,8% of the whole number of trade union members.

These figures, as we see, do not correspond with the assertions of the Opposition. Through this exaggeration of the number and proportion of the employees, the Opposition arrives at fundamentally wrong conclusions in that they maintain that the apparatus of State is in its composition and its standard of living bourgeois and petty bourgeois, that it is withdrawing from the proletariat and the village poor and approaching the Kulak and the N. E. P.-man. Let us follow up the conclusion of the Opposition: Is it possible for the non-industrial group, especially the much discussed Soviet employees — with regard to whom the Opposition still takes up the attitude of 1918 when even officers' wives and the completely declassed bourgeoisie tried to get employed in our apparatus of State, in the Soviet institutions — to tend towards the tenants, merchants and Kulaks? What is this Soviet apparatus to-day? Nine years have passed, a large number of juveniles have become Soviet employees. This is the first point. Secondly, in determining the social inclination of this or that stratum, of this or that group, we Marxists must apply an economic standard and not simply judge according to whether they do or do not work in Soviet institutions. What should this standard be? In my opinion, the most important standard for determining the social inclination of a group of people is, for the Marxist, their economic situation, above all their income from work. What are then the standard of living and the wages of this group? Can it be said that persons with a salary of less than 80 roubles tend, in their standard of living, towards the Kulak and the tenant farmer? In my opinion, the great mass of Soviet employees who earn less than 80 roubles cannot, in any way, be associated with tenant farmers and business men. How many of this group are there in our Soviet apparatus? I have only taken the Union of Soviet Employees, for I maintain, that if I take the numbers of the People's Commissariat for Education and of the Union of Medical and Public Health Workers, the statistical material will undoubtedly be still more marked in character. How many Soviet employees who are members of our Union receive less than 80 roubles and how many more than 80 roubles? In the towns of the Union of S. S. R., the number of Soviet employees receiving a smaller salary than 80 roubles amounts to 73,3% of the total number of the members of the Union of Soviet and Trade Employees; 26,7% receive more than 80 roubles; in the villages the members of the union (employed in the Soviet apparatus) who receive less than 80 roubles amounts to 99,5%. This then is the group on the existence of which a whole social and political theory is built up without proving the matter, without closer investigation, without reflection. The employees, the officials are bureaucrats — whose numbers in the opinion of the Opposition are no less than those of the workers — who, in their standard of living, are approaching towards the tenant farmers, Kulaks and capitalists. And what do we find in reality? In reality we find that of the whole first group (in the towns) 26,7% earn more than 80 roubles and 73,3% less than 80 roubles. Between ourselves, if we speak openly, with this money one can only just scrape a living and I can see no standard of living which would admit of a comparison between this category and the Kulaks etc.

I will now look at the question from the other side: how many members of the Union of Soviet Employees are in a privileged position, i. e. work 6 hours, and how many work 8 hours? We find that among the members of this Union (which is the bogey with which they want to frighten us) 43,7% work not 6 but 8 hours. We find that the Opposition takes a wrong attitude towards the non-industrial unions, an attitude which does not differentiate; the relative figures quoted are wrong — consequently all the conclusions drawn from them are also wrong.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOST SUBORDINATE BODY OF TRADE UNION FUNCTIONARIES.

Let us now see what is the position with regard to the development of the network of the trade union organisations; for the extent to which the network of the lowest trade union organisations is spread, shows the degree to which the broad

masses of workers are embraced by the trade unions and the degree of their activity. The primary trade union organisations represent a school for the work of organisation. In the year from January 1st 1925 to January 1st 1926 the number of factory councils (factory committees) increased from 30,000 to 56,000, i. e. the number of factory councils increased by 26,000; the total number of members of factory councils increased from 153,000 to 226,000, the number of paid committee members (exempted from other professional work) increased from 24,000 to 28,000, the number of section delegates from 200,000 to 800,000. The collectors of subscriptions are not included in this figure, although this institution may be regarded as the first stage of the trade union organisation work.

In 1925 226,000 members took part in commissions, now 642,000; there were then 200,000 section delegates, now 870,000. Altogether 1,738,000 persons take part in the subordinate work of the trade unions. This shows that, in spite of a number of defects and deficiencies in the trade union work, just this elementary work of preparation and training for active work, of enlisting millions of working people — about two millions — in public activities is a proof that both the party and the trade unions are doing an enormous piece of work in this field.

What part then do the communists take in this elementary work of the functionaries? We see that the task we set ourselves of enlisting the non-party workers in active trade union work and thus training them for administrative activities, the task of elevating the cultural level of the masses of workers and of developing their independent activity — that this task is being fulfilled. In 1925, 36,2% of the members of the factory councils were communists, now only 29,7%; the quota of the non-party workers who have been enlisted in the work, has thus increased. The same applies to the commissions — last year 24,3% of them were communists, now only 17,4%; among the section delegates there were 22,1% communists, now there are only 14,4%. The increasing number of the non-party workers taking part in trade union work need not, of course, be any cause for anxiety in our party. We are on the right path.

At the last party Conference I spoke of the comparatively feeble work of the Union of Agricultural and Forest Workers with regard to training rural functionaries, although it is their business and theirs chiefly, to exert both through the party and the trade unions a strong proletarian influence in the villages.

I can bring figures to prove how this body of functionaries is now developing. In the factory committees, i. e. in the primary organisations of the union there are 15,029 agricultural workers and 6934 shepherds; the total number of agricultural workers and shepherds in this most subordinate trade union organisation amounts to 21,963 persons. In the district committees — the district organisations of the Union — there are 7417 agricultural workers and 1384 shepherds, altogether 8971 persons. In the village Soviets there are 3245 agricultural workers and shepherds, in the district executive committees 143, in the committees for mutual help 540. Altogether the Union has, in 13 provinces alone more than 34,683 functionaries. Of course this is little for so large a Union, little in comparison with the extent of the problem by which the party is faced in the country, but the number of ten thousands from the newly awakened strata shows that on this front also tens of thousands of fresh troops are advancing without noise or clamour in order to take part in the work of construction.

Is not our apparatus built up from the bottom on firm foundations stones? I quote only such figures as I believe cannot be disputed by anyone here present. After the election of the lowest trade union organs, after the 14th Party Congress of the C. P. S. U., there was a far-reaching renewal of the subordinate body of functionaries on the basis of a broad workers' democracy. The factory Councils have been replenished by more than 50% with new workers, in individual cases even up to 70—80%.

The general activity of the workers has indisputably increased in recent times. I will not trouble you with figures for the separate districts. The characteristic figures which, it is true, are still far from complete, show that the percentage of members who speak on various questions at meetings of members, at conferences and at meetings of delegates, and of members who attend meetings, committees and conferences has increased by 25%.

The finances of the Union show recovery and consolidation. I will give you a few figures. The amount of subscriptions sent by the local trade union organisations to their central committee amounted in the first half of 1925 to 4,492,329 roubles and in 1926 to 6,327,754 roubles — an increase of 80%. The total

takings show an increase 58,6%; 23 central committees have increased their deposit in the bank by 105,5% this year. The sums are as follows: On June 1st 1925 the deposit amounted to 2,5 millions, on the same date in 1926 to 5,25 millions.

The financial book-keeping is improving, the financial administration is improving from top to bottom and the number of defalcations is correspondingly diminishing. The party must, however, take cognisance of an extremely depressing fact; i. e. that amongst those persons who are guilty of embezzlement there is a considerable percentage of members of the party and members of the Young Communist League.

The share taken by the women workers has somewhat increased in all trade unions but, in my opinion, the increase has been insufficient, and what is still worse it has decreased in some large industrial centres where it would have been particularly desirable to enlist the help of the women workers. For this reason I consider it necessary to point out to the trade unions that it is their duty to enlist the help of the women workers in a higher measure and also that of the young people's organisations, whose participation has diminished though only to a small degree.

THE RESULTS OF CULTURAL WORK.

In respect of cultural work, I will not trouble you with too many figures. We find a tremendous increase of the so-called "Red Corners" and a slight increase in the work of the clubs. The increase of the work in the clubs, its success, consists in that the adult workers who used to keep aloof from the clubs have, during the time reported on, begun to visit them and to take part in this work. The further development of club work in interfered with by an obstacle in the form of lack of club premises and of overburdening of the club premises with all kinds of meetings which have nothing to do with club work. Nothing, however, can be done to mend this. If in a provincial town there is a hall which holds 150—200 persons and in which party conferences and all kinds of meetings are held, it results that the hall is being used six days in the week for all possible meetings, committees etc. and can only be used one day a week for real club work. This interferes with club work and the natural result is a demand that club premises should be included in housing schemes. It is indeed a difficult question how clubs can be thought of in this connection, but the workers demand not only houses but clubs. I have here an appeal in which it says that the workers have no place in which to spend their free time and that the lack of the possibility of spending their time reasonably drives them into the public houses or into the streets.

The figures for the increase of the Red Corners are about as follows: From December 1st 1925 to June 1926 the number of Red Corners increased from 16,000 to 19,000. The whole work of enlightenment is developing. We can, however, record quite especially good results in the domain of abolishing illiteracy during the past year. Thus, in 1923, at the third session of the Red International of Labour Unions, in a report on the position of the Russian trade unions, the following figures were given:

"I have already said that we inherited a country lacking in culture, and illiterate. The majority of the Russian people were illiterate and even in the beginning of 1921 we had trade unions, such for instance as the Union of Workers in the Food Trade in which 65% were illiterate, the Union of Municipal Workers with 50% of its members illiterate, the Woodworkers with 50%, the Agricultural Workers with 80%, even among our special pride, the miners, up to 50% of the members were illiterate."

This was the situation in 1923. What have we done since then? On April 1st 1926 there were still 2% illiterates amongst the metal workers, 6% amongst the workers in the chemical industry and on January 1st 1926 there were still 18,4% illiterate members of the Agricultural Union (in which there is the greatest number of illiterate persons). Amongst the workers in the building trade there are still 5%, amongst the woodworkers 6,5%, leather workers 6,3%, amongst the transport workers 10%, in the Union of Traffic Workers 3,9%, amongst the municipal workers 4%, amongst the seamen 4%. (Interruption: "And amongst the miners?"). The miners give no figures. They say:

"The abolition of illiteracy can be regarded as complete. It is only among the seasonal workers that it is not possible to abolish illiteracy because of their conditions of work. For them new classes are necessary, for the seasonal

worker, when he leaves his work, ceases to read and to learn and thus reverts to illiteracy."

In my opinion, the party and the trade unions can boast of these results everywhere and to everyone.

MORE CONSIDERATION OF AND CLOSER INVESTIGATION INTO THE NECESSARIES OF LIFE FOR THE WORKERS.

I should prefer not to spend too much time on revealing our defects. I will only point out the most important ones. I have been told by some functionaries of the trade union movement, by some party comrades that I have gone too far in the theses when I point out that the economic interests of the workers have been insufficiently protected by the trade unions. I maintain that this is no exaggeration. Before the 14th Party Congress, we often saw the following picture: The director, the chairman of the factory council and the secretary of the communist nucleus opposed the workers unanimously and like one man. Now we find that this "economic deviation", that of supporting the economist in every case and on every occasion, regardless of whether he is right or wrong — has been largely overcome by the trade unions. They have, however, removed to other positions and show evidence of a different but no less detrimental deviation. This can be proved by documentary evidence in a number of cases, a number of factories, a number of trade unions, and it is useless to dispute it. On the basis of the most recent investigations, on the basis of the evidence of workers, it is obvious that the trade unions are taking a different but also noxious standpoint. They no longer protect the economists in all cases, it is true, but when great mistakes are made, when the demands of the workers are completely justified, they hold back. They have passed from actively supporting the economist everywhere and in all circumstances to passivity in important questions.

A further defect is the slight interest they take in the small details of the life of the workers. Here, of course, the economists and the trade unions are equally to be blamed, but the trade unions even more severely. Trifles, which in general seem unimportant to people who are occupied in high politics, who frequently take part in various committees and who are used to discussing plans, are frequently of great importance to the workers and lead to their being discontented. For what reason? Let us give an example: Until now, in one factory, a towel was given out for each worker, but now, in view of the regime of economy, only one is given out for every three workers. Apparently a trifle.

Would the workers have paid any attention to such a trifle in the past? A towel for two or three or for each single one? But now it is a big question. The worker is more sensitive where his State is concerned. It is no longer the same worker as we old workers remember in the factories in Czarist times. Neither is it any longer the worker of 1918/19, who knew: We all have nothing, neither the Soviet Government nor the party has anything; well and good, such are the times; nothing here, nothing there! During the last few years since peaceful development set in, the worker has changed completely. He has become touchy. He feels he is assisting at the construction of socialism and demands a maximum of consideration in every respect, even in trifles.

What other complaints we hear? Complaints which would not even occur to you. There is for instance the statement of a worker at a public meeting which sounds rather like an anecdote: he complains of bureaucratism, that the trade unions do not react with sufficient understanding to the demands of the workers and do not get small questions settled. He said: "The Commission for the Protection of Work is uncivil; the chairman has forgotten where he is working and is rude to the workers. In answer to the workers' petition, eight months ago, that measures be taken for exterminating black-beetles, he answered: "Do you take me for a tit?" (Laughter).

Such answers are naturally regarded by the workers as insults. They say: "Why is he rude to us, is he not the chairman of the Commission for the Protection of Work whom we elected? Then he should not be haughty and rude, he should not answer in this way!" I have received many complaints from workers, serious complaints which show what the workers think of this kind of "joke". Another example: When a foreman objected to a woman worker having made too many faults in her work, she asked: "But, little father, you object to everything and nothing will be left to me. Just look, I shall not only get nothing but I shall have to pay in addition." To which the foreman replied:

"Well, then you will have to pay in addition." This "joke" excited great indignation amongst the whole group of women workers.

Small events of this kind show that the workers themselves are beginning to make greater demands both on the economists and trade unionists. They demand that a comrade elected by them should not be rude. In my opinion this is a good sign of the development of the workers who feel they are the masters. The workers are easily offended, they do not react as they used to do to lack of attention or lack of consideration.

I shall not go into details with regard to the theses which speak of the regime of economy being exaggerated. I refrain from doing so because they are well known to all of us. Some comrades have said in private conversation: "Yes, it is true, there has been exaggeration of the regime of economy but it is no longer the case, it is a phase of the past." We, comrades, cannot reckon merely with present-day facts, we must take the facts over a definite period and draw up an account from them. I should be very glad if someone would prove that such distortions of the economy campaign no longer take place. I should be very glad if someone would prove this, but comrades, when the 15th Party Conference began, I was informed that in a textile factory the management made the economy regime an excuse for refusing to heat the workers' houses. The workers said: "Are we to freeze then?" The answer was: "What do we care! We get nothing and we shall give you nothing!"

It seems to me, comrades, that the party, the Soviet workers, the trade union workers, ought all to join in putting an end to this distortion. It is unbearable.

THE SUMMING UP OF THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCES ON PRODUCTION.

MORE CONSIDERATION FOR INVENTORS AMONG THE WORKERS.

I now come to the point which seems to me the most important, that is the question of conferences on production. I consider this point very important because differences of opinion become evident amongst us with regard to this question. What particularly oppresses me is the differences of opinion with a number of old industrial functionaries. There have been differences of opinion between us as to the question of the Control Commissions. Much as this depresses me, I shall nevertheless maintain my point of view as to these matters, (Hear! Hear!). I will not speak to you of the importance of the conferences on production nor repeat what, in my opinion, was thoroughly enough discussed at the 14th Party Congress. I presume that the usefulness and importance of the discussions on production have been clearly proved to everyone. I have heard no contrary opinions. But the work of the conferences on production must be summed up.

We hear both in the speeches and in the various documents of the Opposition that our conferences on production are failing, are collapsing, that it is necessary to instill new life into them etc. Comrades, we have concerned ourselves with this question and have enquired as to what is the real state of affairs. In spite of all these sayings and statements, we find that the conferences on production are working well. The conferences on production have already raised thousands of persons to posts of lesser responsibility, to head-workers, foremen of groups etc. Especially in Leningrad this work is well established, much to the honour of the trade union workers of Leningrad. In that town a specially interesting newspaper is published "Conferences on Production", which, it is true, has certain defects, but the very publication of such a paper is a good experiment.

When the dispute about the conferences of production was in its infancy, the reproach was made against me, that Tomsky underestimated the importance of the conferences on production and wished to limit them to the discussion of questions of secondary importance. That was two years ago, at the Leningrad Trade Union Congress, when I defended my standpoint and maintained that it would be to no purpose to bring up the question of world economics in general, and of the economic life of the U. S. S. R. in particular, including the questions of the chemical industry and of our trust in detail before the workers at the conferences on production whilst the rain was coming in through our dilapidated roof. These are all very fine and instructive questions, but we ought to begin with something else; what is to be done to prevent the worker stumbling over a heap of rubbish every time he goes into the yard; what is to be done so that thousands of workers need not walk round a heap of old iron and rubbish and take a zig-zag course each

time he goes across the yard from one workshop to another; what could be done to clear out of the way the simplest obstacles which are the most annoying. And instead of that, they go to the conferences on production and talk of world problems, of Fordism, of the rationalisation of work etc.; then, when they come out of the meeting they stumble over old iron, rubbish etc. in the yard, water drops on their noses — but they talk about Fordism. In my opinion, the practical experiences derived from the conferences on production have completely confirmed the correctness of the lines suggested by me — if we begin with small things, much can be achieved.

The formulation of these theses has been contradicted to the effect that the time for these details is passed. I am prepared to modify these theses, but I do not think that these "details" have been satisfactorily dealt with everywhere. A short time ago it was mentioned at a conference on production that a great deal of china is broken because the old baskets in which the china is carried, collapse, so that the china falls out and is broken. When the question of the destruction of material is brought up, such details also come under discussion, as they are important for the question of the waste of materials and of how to prevent such occurrences. Details exist in plenty, they cannot be avoided, they must be dealt with. It must, however, be said that the state of affairs is now somewhat different, the conferences on production must now be raised to a higher level and we must deal with questions of a more general character. This does not yet mean that the conferences must concern themselves with problems of world economics. They must deal with questions of a general nature such as the prevention of the destruction of materials, the position of production, the condition of raw materials, the means for improving work, production etc. A number of conferences on production have already transferred their interest to such problems.

The programme of work for the conferences on production is arranged so that it should not happen, as it has done in some places, that they turn into evenings for gossip, where one talks about one thing and another about something else, everyone about just what pleases him. A programme of work must be arranged, but it must be kept on practical lines. With us, it is usually arranged in such a way, that if a programme has been drawn up, nothing may be done outside the programme. I am decidedly opposed to this method. I call upon the Conference to express its disapproval of this wrong conception of a programme, that, when any question is on the programme, it must absolutely be discussed, and that even if the roof is almost crumbling over our heads, no one shall dare to speak about the collapsing roof, everyone may only speak about what has been provided for in the programme. The programme must not prevent the workers from raising questions which force themselves upon them at the conferences on production. No single discussion on production, no single leader should have the right to prevent them doing so.

There are a number of questions on which I cannot enter; I must however speak of the inventors. We distributed a circular which we passed and signed at the last Plenary Meeting three days before the death of Comrade Djerzhinsky. This circular gives a number of perfectly correct instructions for the conferences on production. The opinion has been expressed here by some economic functionaries that I have offended the economists in the theses in spite of the friendly attitude they had taken towards the conferences on economics. In what way have I offended them? I said that there are some economists who show contempt for the conferences on production. It cannot be denied that there are some such economists; and if only 3% of the economists take an unfriendly attitude towards the conferences on production, it must nevertheless be said. In this respect it is better to exaggerate than to hush up the truth. That such an attitude with regard to the conferences on production exists, that it still exists in some places, is a fact which is not without danger. Psychologically it can be explained and in certain sense even excused, but it must be overcome. What accounts for this hostile attitude? From this way of thinking: "I am the director and understand my business very well, I know everything, I understand every detail of the production entrusted to me; now I am to come to you and you are going to teach me how to manage the production and how to handle the administration; thank you, I understand my own affairs quite well." And the technical staff and engineers who have attended all sorts of technical schools show the same attitude of mind. "I", they say, "possess the necessary training, I have been working at my profession for 15—20 years, and who is assembled here? Workers and inferior employees, and they want to teach me my own business. What do they un-

derstand? They know nothing and understand nothing. I myself understand everything."

Anyone who has ever talked confidentially with our technicians and engineers and has touched on the question that engineering is on a high level in Western Europe will probably have noticed how sensitively they react: "Why do you speak of Western Europe? We understand our business just as well, and if we only had the means we could arrange things just as well here." They are envious of the technicians and engineers of Western Europe. This envy becomes perhaps more evident when ignorant persons are assembled who can hardly write their own names and who begin to reflect how production can be arranged or who come forward with inventions. Just imagine, they say, what kind of inventors we have here! That this attitude exists, is a fact. And this attitude can only be described as one of contempt. Perhaps they really feel it as an injury, but what can be done? I consider it necessary to depict things as they really are.

The workers are at present justified here and there in saying that we do everything to destroy their gifts for invention. I will give a little example. In a factory there was a machine which produced finished articles and which, in doing so, threw them and bits of metal which had been cut off into the same box. The article then came for further manipulation to another machine worked by women who took over the goods by weight and passed them on according to the weight they had taken over. In this weight and in the calculations the odd pieces of copper were always included. An inventive worker, realising the inconvenience of this old method of work, invented an arrangement by which the finished articles were separated from the metal rings; this was simpler and better. And what happened? When the women workers who did the subsequent manipulation handed in their work, the old weight was demanded from them. Imagine the position of the inventor when a dozen women rushed at him, saying: "You are an inventor at our expense!" (Laughter.) Of course the worker vowed never to invent anything again. (Laughter.) So as not to waste time, I will not quote another example, although I know of many similar ones.

THE FUTURE TASKS OF THE CONFERENCES ON PRODUCTION.

THE CONTROL COMMISSIONS AS A FORM OF EXPLOITATION OF THE INITIATIVE OF THE WORKERS.

I pass to the question of the further activities of the discussions on production. If no objection is raised to the slogan: "Conferences on production, begin your work with details and arrive at the more serious and more important questions in the course of your work", if you do not dispute that this slogan is right (and no one seems to dispute it), then the objection cannot be made that a certain amount of system in the work of the conferences on production is unnecessary. A scheme of this sort should be arranged for a number of months, say at first for three months; later we could proceed to make a programme for a longer period. If this does not meet with contradiction, it will not be disputed that, in the interest of the systematic work of the conferences on production, it is necessary to enlist the workers in this activity and to lead them on step by step, from interest in their own bench to interest in the whole department, the whole factory, the whole trust. This is the way that should be taken, in training the worker for production.

The idea contained in the theses about the control commissions can as little be refuted. What can prevent this system from increasing the interest of the workers in production? With what difficulties does it already meet in this respect? The worker says: "It is all very well, but how am I to discuss the interests of my factory when the director gets up, which of course he does — he produces diagrams and statistical material and then he begins to talk, whilst I have come either from a weaving loom or from a turning bench. I sit and listen. How can I the worker who comes from the working-bench to the conference on production test the correctness of the figures, of these diagrams? No, he cannot! And for that reason he thinks: Perhaps you are speaking the truth, perhaps not; it is not clear to me.

In order to avoid such obstacles, the conference on production must be able on its side to prepare for such questions through its confidential men. And these preparations must be made by the Control Commission which we are trying to re-introduce as a revival of the principle of control by the workers. This is not the position of affairs. The conferences on production put a report of the director of the factory on their programme every two or three months; they chose a temporary commission

consisting of a limited number of persons, about five, a commission which has the right of entry everywhere, which goes round the factory. — It examines the apparatus, inspects the books, listens to the communications of the factory council, examines everything, goes through the whole works, it roams freely all over the factory and then, when the director gives his report, it either affirms it with him or corrects it in some points. They may, of course, agree beforehand as to the report and then bring up for discussion, at the conference on production, those points on which no agreement has been come to.

The question then arises — suppose they do not agree? Suppose the conference on production differs from the director? Well, comrades, there are so many authorities who may bring about an agreement. An agreement will be brought about, you may rest assured as to that. What is extremely important, comrades, is to state the attitude of mind, to give voice to the wishes of the masses of workers. If it is then said: "Now they are going to set a new trap for us. We have already too much control and now a new form of control is going to be introduced!" Well, it is not intended to be a control. The commission has no administrative rights, its only duty is to look round a little before the director presents his report. The director says: "This is the position as far as I am concerned." And the commission reports: "We have seen this or that." If the economists offer too much resistance and fear a restriction of their rights, I should like to give a few examples. A conference on production recently took place in Moscow. Those who took part in the conference made a number of suggestions. Directors of factories and managers of trusts of every rank took part in the conference. They did not contradict the proposals, no voice was raised against passing them. According to this, the conference might believe that if the economists said nothing against them, the proposals were passed. Now, let us suppose that the proposal which was passed was one for the construction of a new factory. But not a single voice was raised by the economists; they sat and listened. Afterwards, when the proposal had been passed by 100%, they carried out 40%, discussed 20% and dropped the rest. We must then ask the economists: "Where were you at that time? What is happening now? What does this mean?" This is how the confidence of the workers in the economists, in their objectivity, in their seriousness, their readiness to acknowledge mistakes and to find out the truth, is undermined. In this case the behaviour of the economists can be explained as follows; they say to themselves: "Let them say what they like on the conference on production we shall carry out what pleases us; and if it does not depend on us, let our superiors take the consequences." Comrades, this is not the right attitude! Here we see the fear of the economists lest anyone should poach on their privileges. In recent times I have not heard of a single case in which, in the factories of the U. S. S. R., the rights of the economists have been encroached upon by the wicked trade unionists or the workers. ("Hear! Hear!") Other cases however are known.

When the control commission has fulfilled its function, it is dissolved, and there is no longer a control commission until the next time the conference on production, in common with the factory council finds it necessary to appoint a new control commission in order to carry out definite tasks; these tasks being partially or entirely handed over to it. We say, develop the independent activity of the workers through conferences on production and thus make them familiar with all economic tasks. The conferences on production are an organ for developing the economic initiative of the masses of workers in production. If this is right — and it is right — we must not be afraid of putting into shape the right kind of organisation through the intervention of which the best possible use can be made of the economic initiative of the masses of workers. But, the objection is made, possibly all this will prove unsatisfactory in practice. Let us wait and see. If it does not prove satisfactory, then it was merely an "experiment". Then we shall say quite openly, before all the workers: "Well, we wanted to make something good and it has turned out a failure; let us change it. No one can reproach us for that, we never maintained that everything we did was infallible. If it proves a failure, we can alter it. Why should we be afraid of the experiment? Well, then, let us make the experiment in 10 to 15 factories. But why do you object to this experiment? If it proves an interference, if it turns out badly, we will discuss the matter. What we are looking for is a form for bringing out the initiative of the workers; for a form which

will bring to light the independent activity of the workers. If you do not object to this, why are you afraid? There is no reason for anxiety.

For this reason it seems to me that it is wrong to object to this point on principle; it does not decide on the construction of the control commissions, it does not lay down the field of their rights and duties, it does not determine the methods of their appointment or the domain of their activities. The comrades who contradict this, do not understand the tasks of the conferences on production, as they were laid down at the 14th Party Congress of our party.

THE MISTAKES WHICH RESULT WHEN WORKERS ARE APPOINTED TO HIGHER FUNCTIONS.

I should like just to touch with a few words the question of entrusting workers with higher functions. During this year and especially during the conferences on production, we have employed thousands of workers, hundreds of women workers in all kinds of industrial posts. The system of making it a principle of employing them for higher functions, has, on the whole, proved entirely satisfactory, though, in a number of individual cases, mistakes have become evident. It is, however, necessary to give some consideration to the mistakes which have occurred. Amongst those who have been made use of there are some skilled workers. Is this true or not? It is true. Why? Because the posts in which they are placed are less profitable than the work they have done up to then.

Secondly, the organisations entrusted with it and especially the trade unions, have shown a certain indifference to those who have been appointed. In private conversation I have heard of examples of cases in which those appointed refused to take a lower post than that of a director. A person of this kind is unsuitable, he should be sent back to his work. Usually, however, just the opposite occurs. The person appointed is promoted, he is at first made a deputy for the director of the industrial department. He works. Then it is said that he has not enough experience, that he is not yet well enough trained for that work, that he must be given a less important post, so that for the time being he may work in a subordinate position and later be returned to his post. The man works, takes trouble. The manager says: "That is all very well, but he is not quite reliable. In a few years he will be an efficient worker, but at present we cannot place full reliance on him. We will give him the management of the report on the personnel." This is done. He works. It is then said that he is an efficient man but that his education is inadequate. For this post he requires more skill in writing. "Let us give him the job of supervising the charwomen and messengers!" It goes on in this way and finally he becomes chief watchman.

Who is to blame for this? The organisation or trade union which enlisted him is to blame. It is not enough to appoint a man, to place him in new surroundings and in work which is strange to him. He must be helped. But who helps him? Who goes into the question of his capabilities? Who supports him? This problem ought to give the party and the trade unions material for thought. The problem must be grappled with from this end, guarantees must be given that those who are promoted are not, so to speak, dragged in an opposite direction and therefore they must be given moral support and interest must be shown in them by all concerned.

ON WAGES AND THE DEMAGOGIC PROPOSALS OF THE OPPOSITION.

At a discussion of the theses in the Politbureau, the comrades of the Opposition told me that they might have accepted them with a good conscience, if they had not contained some insults aimed at them. These insults are just in that part which deals with the question of wages. I consider the question of wages extremely important. The question of wages is one in connection with which it is particularly easy to take a demagogic attitude and to make irresponsible speeches. It is therefore a very dangerous and important question. Why? Just because there is not a single worker in the whole world who is content with his wages and does not want more. Such a worker does not exist.

As long as wages exist as a system of reward for work done, the question of wages will be an important one and will always demand, especially in a time of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that the party pay the greatest attention to examining very clearly all mistakes which may occur and all irresponsible speeches. I am thinking of the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the C. P. S. U. in April. What did we experience at the be-

ginning of April, when the Plenum met? A tremendous rise of the index for goods, a tremendous increase of the prices of goods. Then followed the difficult month of May. We knew already in April what would follow. We foresaw that the crisis would grow. Every worker knew and understood this and at that time Comrade Kamensov proposed the amendment:

"The policy of wages in the next half year must be based on the principle of the absolute maintenance not of nominal but of actual wages and of the creation of the material prerequisites for raising wages in the future (above all the increase of the productivity of labour). The maintenance of nominal wages only guarantees the stability of actual wages in sufficient measure in so far as a stable currency is on the whole maintained and supported."

What prevented the C. C. in April from passing the amendment with regard to the maintenance of actual wages and from saying that the maintenance of nominal wages only guarantees the stability of actual wages if the currency is stable? First of all this would have meant recognising the fall of our czervonetz. Is this true or not? It is true. Secondly this would have meant a transition from the system of calculating wages in czervonetz to the system of calculating wages according to the index of goods. It means a return to the time in which we quarrelled as to what potatoes cost in this or that district, as to by what index we should reckon etc. What would the re-introduction of the index of goods in April 1926 have meant? It would have meant recognising not only that it was inevitable that the czervonetz should fall at the present moment but also that it would inevitably continue to fall. This is what it would have meant and nothing else.

If I say I guarantee the maintenance of actual wages for the next six months in spite of increasing prices what were then your actual wages in April, what on January 1st and what must they be in May? Here comrades, is the index, here is the czervonetz rouble. Now let us calculate. And what does this mean? It means affirming the bankruptcy of the czervonetz, recognising not only that it has been tottering (that could still be disputed in April), but also recognising that it has fallen and will fall further. It only needed a little push — the introduction of the index of goods — and the czervonetz would have fallen; for the index would have caused a considerable increase of the amount of czervonetz in circulation, an increased issue, an increase of the bulk of money while the quantity of goods remained the same etc. That would have meant destroying what we had bought so dearly.

We trade unionists hesitated for a long time before we changed from the index of goods to reckoning with the czervonetz. We debated the question a long time, there was a violent contest, but finally the trade unions and the workers, with a great deal of trouble and much loss, shook off the index of goods and adopted the calculation in czervonetz. The workers profited in doing so and gained a breathing space. They have profited from the firm currency, from the relative stability. To adopt such measures as the Opposition has proposed would mean recognising that the czervonetz is falling and will fall, for if we give it a push it will collapse. How can statesmen lay such a proposal before the Central Committee at so difficult a moment when a particularly severe increase of prices is being felt?

Do you call that a wise, reasonable wages policy? Would the workers thank us if we were to let the czervonetz blow up, if we were to deal with it as in 1919 by adding a few more noughts to the paper money, as was done at the time when a further nought was painted on the Budget with the result that the workers got a thousand instead of a hundred?

In a number of factories it has occurred that, when wages were raised, the workers asked: "But will it not cause the czervonetz to fall? If it causes it to fluctuate, we would rather wait." I am convinced that were we to go into any factory meeting and ask the workers whether we should take measures which threaten to undermine the czervonetz, which would, with mathematical certainty, cause a fall of the czervonetz, i. e. the transition to the system of the index of goods, I maintain that the workers would say: "We would rather be patient and wait, but we will not admit of the czervonetz being undermined". For the worker would be the first to lose. The quantity of goods will not be increased by raising the index of goods. Let anyone show us how the index of goods would maintain the actual wages in the coming year. Many workers say: "Improve the work of the co-operatives day by day, for an improvement of the work of the co-operatives means an increase of the actual wages of the workers." But how can we guarantee actual wages by acknowledging the fall

of the czervonetz? That is a quite absurd, politically irresponsible suggestion.

For this reason I cannot consent to any modification of this point, even if so desirable a prospect were before us as that we should all vote unanimously for these theses. We have acted rightly. When we saw that the prospects of harvest were better than we had anticipated, that the productivity of labour was increasing, that prices were returning to the normal, we ourselves, after consulting the comrades in the trade unions, and the Politbureau of the C. C., brought on the tapis the question of an objective examination as to how much the wages fund should be increased.

We discussed this question for more than two months. How indeed can such big questions be dealt with otherwise? This is a question in which a miscalculation of 1% would be enough to cause a deficit of 15 to 20 million roubles, with the result that there would be a gap in the State Budget and in the budget of industry. A question of this kind is not decided by empty, irresponsible resolutions but by working it out objectively and by examining it with the greatest exactness. This proposal of the Opposition was wrong; the party must in the future firmly oppose such propositions. A suggestion of this kind can only be described as demagogic. It should be rejected with all energy lest in the future there should be an inclination to play with fire. In this respect the party members must not be guilty of irresponsible action.

THE PECULIARITY OF OUR UNEMPLOYMENT.

A great political fuss is often made in our country because of the problem of unemployment. I only wish to throw light on the peculiar features of our unemployment which distinguishes it from unemployment in any other country. In our country unemployment prevails in spite of the fact that industry is developing and not, as in Western Europe, declining. Although the number of workers employed is growing rapidly, unemployment is also increasing. Its particular features are firstly over-population and secondly seasonal unemployment.

As far as numbers go, more unemployed are registered in the trade unions in our country than in the Labour Exchanges. They, however, are seasonal workers, almost exclusively seasonal workers who, after they have worked for a season, register themselves as unemployed in the trade union. The cause of this phenomenon is the surplus of the rural population which is passed on to us. Among the unemployed registered there is another element; women are no longer content to be mere housewives, they put their labour power on the market and say: "I prefer to work in a factory than to shut myself up in the kitchen."

This is the character of our unemployment. If we detach from the whole picture of unemployment such features as seasonal unemployment, if we exclude those elements of which I have spoken, we shall find that unemployment amongst skilled workers is almost negligible. There is a lack of skilled workers in our country. There is practically no unemployment in our country amongst the industrial workers, this kind of unemployment does not exceed the measure of a "subjective" unemployment in the form of a shifting of hands within industry etc., workers changing over from one factory to another. This is normal unemployment. For skilled workers, for trained workers, unemployment does not exceed the measure of an unemployment which can be estimated normally in Western Europe at about 8%.

Which trade unions have the largest number of unemployed members? The Union of Workers in the Building Trade has 17.8%, the Union of Agricultural and Forest Workers 15% unemployed. They are seasonal workers. Amongst the employees there are 12.3%; this is connected with the reduction of staff. The workers in the food trade, with whom it is also partly a case of seasonal work, have 7.3% unemployed and the educational workers 5%. In the other trade unions the number of unemployed is less than 5%.

The chief causes given above indicate that in spite of the great demand for workers in the towns we must reckon with chronic unemployment for a number of years to come. Our unemployment, however, cannot be regarded as similar to or comparable with or even as resembling unemployment in Western Europe.

I should like to touch on one more question. It is erroneously supposed that, in consequence of the differentiation among the peasantry, only poor peasants migrate into the town. In my opinion, this is a wrong conclusion, based on lack of observation. If we observe the rural population of to-day, we

see that the young peasant has increased in culture during these last years. The village with its narrow horizon of the old days — just as far as can be seen from the church steeple — no longer satisfies the young peasants and they crowd into the towns, ready for any kind of work. They are by no means always poor peasants, in most cases they are middle peasants; even children of wealthy peasants are found amongst them.

Another, quite different question is that of the unemployment of young people. Unemployment amongst the young is assuming a dangerous character, particularly unemployment amongst the children of workers. I think, the Ivanovo-Wosnessenskiers know very well how serious is the question amongst the juveniles amongst all branches of industry, young people whom one cannot place anywhere, who cannot be made use of in industry.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DEMORALISATION OF THE YOUNG. — CLUB WORK

I think that this question comes particularly to the fore at present when neglect has not yet been abolished, when the young boy who, on leaving school does not pass into a factory, drifts about the street, when he remains uninfluenced by the workers. For how is our work arranged? Party work is arranged according to the principle of production, work in the factories among the workers; the Young Communist League also works according to the principle of production, the trade unions do the same and the young people who are not in factories or in the villages are not got hold of by us. The clubs are closed to them with the result that a number of dangerous elements which are injurious to society develop. This leads to a certain demoralisation, about which, however, it must be said that it is generally grossly exaggerated. There is talk of young workers in the outer suburbs, of young boys who have not yet found any place in life. These young people attract some of the young factory workers, members of the Youth Leagues. That this occurs and is a source of danger cannot be denied.

But how this question has been inflated, what a noise has been made about it and what social significance has been attributed to it! When I read and heard what was written and spoken on the question of the demoralisation of the young, how much fuss was made about it, I thought the same feeling must have been roused in many old workers as in me. This is how the picture arose: "Gaze and wonder, this is what the working class looks like, these are the pioneers of the liberation of mankind!" As to the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, however, who display their demoralisation in public houses and elsewhere, the minstrel in his politeness passes over them in silence.

I am convinced that the ordinary citizen, even the most typical of them, will read these words with great pleasure. But, by the way, what kind of demoralisation is this? I believe that what we read in the newspapers every week can be seen in any working class district (take for instance the Narva district in Leningrad on a Saturday or Sunday). We used to pay no attention to it. And now suddenly an America has been discovered to the effect that the Russian worker drinks, that a drunken person sings songs, that he sometimes curses abominably. (Laughter). All this is put under one heading as demoralisation together with deeds of violence, incendiarism etc.

We must fight vigorously against demoralisation which is dangerous, which results from lack of supervision and unemployment and is rooted in economic conditions. We must also carry on a vigorous fight against the neglect of children. That must be done away with. In my opinion we have carried on this campaign badly. (Hear! Hear!) Now, in the ninth year of the dictatorship of the proletariat, we must make it our aim to put an end to the neglect of children in the tenth year of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must and shall do everything to overcome the symptom that young people and, what is still worse, grown-up children of workers, who can find no use for their energies in production, wander about the streets, into the sphere of influence of the workers' organisations, into the workers' clubs.

We must put the workers' clubs themselves, the whole club work on a broader and freer foundation. In what respect? At times we exaggerate in the direction of cultural work.

Let us take for instance physical culture. When we began to practice physical culture, many were prejudiced against overdoing sport and overdoing records. I was not one of the last to fight for the development of physical culture among the proletariat. But I was the first to raise the question as to whether physical culture was not carried on too mechanically. The same physical culture was recommended to the transport worker

who carries heavy loads all day and to the Soviet employee who rests his muscles all day. All began to practice physical culture and all in the direction of corrective, equalizing movement. This went on in such a way that no objections were listened to. There simply was no other form of physical culture; everyone occupied himself with these corrective movements, free exercises. And I for instance refuse to do any free movements, any corrective exercises. What then? (Laughter.)

Is it possible to approach the question in this way? It is a stereotyped, bureaucratic attitude. What they once begin, they carry on until they collapse. The fight against the worship of records and sport belongs to the past. Undoubtedly, for thousands, this exaggeration of sport is unnecessary. But among thousands are perhaps five persons with a lively temperament and strong muscles for whom devotion to sport and records is useful. They must apply their forces somehow, let them strive for records.

Every single person is compelled to do things as we wish, as we have thought it out in theory. But they are living human beings, and experiments are made with them as with rabbits. We must take into consideration what is right, but we must also take into consideration what the person in question wishes. The cultural level must be raised gradually, not all at once. We must take people as they are and not as they should be. Elasticity is necessary in every field of cultural and educational work. I have often been accused of opportunism because (oh shame!) I have instigated dancing in the workers' clubs and extraordinarily well-meaning orthodox members of the Young Communist League once wrote me a note: "Are you not ashamed, Comrade Tomsky, to advocate anything like dancing?"

Which is better, to occupy oneself with the politics of culture and education, with the education of the classes, or to dance? Of course political education is a better occupation, but can a worker after an eight hours' working day stand being fed with lectures day after day? No, he cannot! Individual persons can of course, but it is not possible to force every human being into the same mould. We must abandon these empty, lifeless ideas and such methods of work.

When we approach the question in the right way, when we take up the campaign against the neglect of children and against the unemployment of juveniles, when we succeed in bringing these juveniles into the sphere of influence of the workers' clubs, when we arrange the club work in such a way that each one finds in the cultural work something that appeals to his temperament and his individual taste, then we shall have fulfilled our task.

Let us take for instance excursions and museums. They are fine, magnificent, but I do not care for museums. I have been everywhere, in Leningrad, in London, but I do not go to museums, they bore me. Now, I am dragged into a museum, and I say I want to go shooting (laughter). You cannot treat everybody alike. Excursions to museums — well and good. But other excursions? Do, for once in a way, try other methods, other forms of attracting young people, which appeal to different attitudes of mind, to different temperaments, to a certain development of muscles etc. Methods of this kind must be worked out.

THE PARTY AND THE TRADE UNIONS.

I will now speak quite briefly on the question of the party and the trade unions. I do not think it is necessary to say much about it here. We can record a certain progress, a certain improvement in the relations between the highest party functionaries and the trade unions. We find a corresponding improvement in the provinces, but not everywhere. I regret to say that in the places subordinate to the provincial governments, the resolutions of the 14th Party Conference have not been carried out to any large extent. It is our misfortune that we have not yet succeeded in changing the subordinate bodies of our party organisations in this respect. This duty is clearly emphasised in the theses. I think that the Conference can and will declare its approval of them.

The last question is the international question. After Comrade Bucharin's speech, I will not deal with it in detail. I agree entirely with Comrade Bucharin's report. I must only justify one of the theses with regard to which the comrades of the Opposition said that I had calumniated them, but they have short me-

morities. I should like to dwell on the theses referring to the Anglo-Russian Committee. What does the Opposition propose? In what do its proposals consist? To disrupt the Anglo-Russian Committee. Why? In order to make a revolutionary gesture which everyone would understand etc. They say we should not be on the same committee with traitors; and I say that, in the present situation, this method of acting would not lead the Communist party to the point to which we want to direct its attention. It does not lead to winning over the masses for the trade unions nor to fighting through the trade unions, but it leads past them, it justifies secession from the trade unions, justifies indifference to the trade unions.

In 1907 it was not particularly pleasant for us to sit side by side with traitors. When we were isolated the whole time, when Mensheviks and social revolutionaries sat next to me in the management of the Printers' Trade Union, I should have been very glad to make myself scarce. One's feelings say: I will not sit with traitors; however I vote, I remain in the minority; but there is nothing to be done, it is the only way to get into touch with the masses.

The attitude of our Communist party must be: The masses are to be won over through the trade unions. But by what methods? By the method so clearly described by Comrade Bucharin and which I discussed at the Enlarged Plenum of the Comintern where no one contradicted me and where I stated that the task of the Communist party is to approach nearer to the trade unions. I remember what happened to us Bolsheviks in 1907. We came — Riasanov probably remembers it too — and began by saying: The London Party Congress has resolved: the party and the trade unions ... We were answered with: Away with it! We changed our tactics then in 1907 and went to work in the trade unions, studied tariffs and so on and in 1909 we could already boast of very good results and filled up the trade unions.

In the West-European trade unions the comrades are still talking about the Dawes plan, etc. The result is the phenomenon of which Comrade Bucharin spoke. The masses entrust the protection of their political interests to the Communists, but when it comes to the everyday work of the trade unions, they prefer the social democrats. You communist comrades, they say, occupy yourselves with the Dawes plan etc. But as regards rates of tariffs and collective agreements, you do not want to concern yourselves with them, you do not trouble about them. We must keep our eye on the fact that the communists will conquer the trade unions if they do the detail work in them, if they study them from beginning to end, if they earn and win the confidence of the masses in the practical work. We must point this out to our communist brother parties. If at this time they issue the slogan: Since they are traitors we will not sit in committees with them, and if they state that this is a revolutionary gesture which the workers of the whole world would understand, we shall reply that this is calling upon them to secede from the trade unions, is calling upon them to show indifference. I think the Conference must confirm this.

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I think, comrades, that if we settle accounts with ourselves as to whether we have carried through all the instructions given us by the 14th Party Congress with regard to the trade unions, we must confess that not all the instructions have been carried out. Have we begun to carry them out? A beginning has been made. Can we record success in this respect? We can record success. Are there any shortcomings? Yes, there are shortcomings. And the conclusion is: We shall fight against these shortcomings, but we have accomplished no small amount during these years.

Whatever may be said, how much we ourselves and our opponents may criticise the work done, it cannot be denied that, during the nine years of Soviet rule we have created a trade union movement such as has never existed before in the world, centralised, firmly-welded, powerful, which boasts of almost two million active members; we have understood how to develop the cultural work of education on a broad basis; we have created a movement which, during the whole period of revolution, has marched hand in hand with the party; together we founded the Soviet rule, together we have fought, have built up socialism and, of this I am convinced, we shall together build it up to the end. (Prolonged applause.)