

# FOR THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

## A Step Towards International Trade Union Unity.

We publish below the letters exchanged between the two independent Scandinavian Trade Union Federations and the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions on the question of international trade union unity.

### Letter from Norwegian and Finnish Trade Unions to Red International of Labour Unions.

To the Executive Bureau, Red International of Labour Unions.  
Moscow.

The Secretariat of the Trade Union Federation of Norway and the Secretariat of the Finnish Trade Union Federation take the liberty of addressing the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions with the request to give joint help to the calling of a Conference, on a free and comradely basis, of representatives of the International Federation of Trade Unions, the Red International of Labour Unions, the Norwegian Trade Union Federation, the Finnish T.U. Federation and all other national centres not affiliated to either International, desiring to respond to the invitation.

We propose, as the theme for discussion at this Conference, the question of the establishment of complete international trade union unity, and also the question of the unification of the trade union movement on a national scale in those countries where the trade union movement is at present divided.

Taking into consideration the serious circumstances under which the working class of a whole series of countries is living, bearing in mind the attack of reaction upon the working class and the trade unions, and also in view of the war danger, threatening the nations from the imperialist overlords, we consider that there is no need to base our proposal in greater detail.

We are convinced that the Executive Committee of the I.F.T.U. and the Executive Bureau of the R.I.L.U. understand better than we the difficulties to be met with in achieving complete international trade union unity, but together with this, fully recognise the need for it and its advisability.

Entertaining the hope that our proposal will meet with a favourable response and will be discussed, as far as possible, immediately, we remain, with comradely greetings,

Trade Union Federation of Norway  
Finnish Trade Union Federation.

### Letter from Red International of Labour Unions to Norwegian-Finnish Trade Unions.

To the Secretariat of the Norwegian Trade Union Federation.  
To the Secretariat of the Finnish Trade Union Federation.  
Dear Comrades:

Your letter of March 20, 1928, which was received here only on June 20, was considered by the R.I.L.U. Executive Bureau in its meeting of July 4th. You ask the R.I.L.U. to "render assistance in convening, upon free and fraternal principles, a conference of representatives of the International Federation of Trade Unions, the R.I.L.U., the Norwegian Trade Union Federation, the Finnish Trade Union Federation, as well as other national centres unaffiliated to any International which might respond to the invitation."

The R. I. L. U. Executive Bureau welcomes your initiative, it believes that the least step towards unity of the trade unions should meet with the support of every worker irrespective of political views and convictions.

The R. I. L. U. supports your proposal because it coincides with the decisions of the Soviet-Norwegian-Finnish Conference, which are in accord with the decisions of the Third and Fourth Congresses of the R. I. L. U. in regard to unity of the trade union movement, and because the danger of the imminent imperialist war imperatively dictates to all the oppressed and exploited the need of united action against capitalism.

We attach particular importance to the invitation to the conference of those national centres which are unaffiliated to the International. Among such centres are, in the first place, Australasian Trade Union Council, the Indian Trades Union Congress, the Trade Union Federation of Mexico (C. R. O. M.), and as far as we can gather from the press, the Australasian Trade Union Council has quite independently expressed itself in the spirit of your letter. We cite here the verbatim text of a resolution carried by the Australasian Trade Union Congress May, 1927:

"This Congress urgently requests the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions to agree to the repeated proposals of the Red International of Labour Unions for the calling of a 'World Conference' in order to achieve unity of the workers throughout the world. Pending the convening of such a conference we postpone our decision as to affiliation to one or another International."

In the same spirit was the expression of opinion by the Indian Trade Union Congress which was held in November, 1927. Here is the verbatim text of the resolution:

"Congress expresses regret at the rupture of the Anglo-Russian Unity Committee and insists that further steps shall be taken for the establishment of unity between the International Federation of Trade Unions (Amsterdam) and the Red International of Labour Unions."

We have no information whether an expression of opinion was made by the Trade Union Confederation of Mexico (C. R. O. M.), and in what sense such an expression was made; in all events, it would be desirable that it should be invited to take part in this conference, which has for its purpose to discuss the ways and means for the restoration of unity of the trade unions, and the formation of an all-embracing International uniting the trade unions of all countries, all races, and all continents.

The composition of the Conference as suggested by you seems to us expedient and we are, therefore, prepared to send delegates as soon as you inform us as to the time and place of opening of this Unity Conference.

Trusting that our affirmative reply to your proposal will facilitate your work on the organisation of the Unity Conference, the R. I. L. U. Executive promises its further assistance in every effort to restore the unity of the trade union movement on a national and an international scale.

With fraternal greetings,

The Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U.