

IN THE R. I. L. U.

The Forthcoming Organisation Conference of the Subordinate Trade Union Functionaries of the European Countries.

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The establishment of close and permanent connection between the leading organs of the trade union movement and the working masses is acquiring great importance in view of the intensification of the class struggle and of the big economic conflicts, becoming ever more frequent, in a number of countries. We must confess, however, that the organisational connection with the working masses is by far the weakest side of the revolutionary trade union movement. Hence the altogether unsatisfactory leadership of trade union work in the lower organisations, the lack of a permanent, active centre conducting the practical daily work of the trade unions, and the frequently incorrect estimation of the forces and possibilities of our movement.

Already at the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. these shortcomings were recorded and the different organisations called upon to do their utmost in order to remove the causes of this unsatisfactory state of affairs. There is not the least doubt that since the congress there has been a real improvement in the connections between the organisations and the R. I. L. U., as well as between the leading organs of the red trade unions and of the oppositional minorities and the lower trade union functionaries.

In order, on the one hand, organisationally to extend and consolidate the already existing connections and, on the other hand, to draw the lower trade union organs into the work of leadership and render it possible for them to exchange experiences, the Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U. has decided to convene a European conference of representatives of trade union functionaries to be held in April, 1929. For the Agenda of this conference the following items are proposed:

1. The work of the lower trade union organs and of the factory councils in the workshops and factories.
2. Questions of mass work.
3. Organisation of the unorganised.
4. Activity of the lower trade union organisations in economic struggles.

This conference is to be attended by sixty representatives from the following European countries: from France, Germany

and Czechoslovakia about six comrades each, from England, Poland and Italy five comrades each, from Belgium and Switzerland three comrades each, from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Roumania, Hungary, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Ireland, Spain and Portugal two comrades each. The delegates are, in the majority of cases, to consist of comrades who are doing practical work in the lower trade union bodies.

As is to be seen from the agenda, it is intended that this conference shall deal with **questions of practical, everyday work**. The conference is to demonstrate that revolutionary trade union work as a whole is based on perceiving and caring for the interests of the workers and getting the broad working masses, and in the first place of course the members of trade unions, to discuss and to decide the most important questions of the movement. Much greater attention, therefore, must be devoted to the daily work in the factories and workshops.

The strengthening of our influence in the big undertakings is one of our main tasks, which must be carried out by means of organisation and propaganda. The successful accomplishment of work among the masses again demands the creation and education of a cadre of lower trade union functionaries. The projected conference will have to discuss the methods and ways of training our cadres of trade union functionaries.

An important item of the agenda is the **organising of the unorganised**. The revolutionary trade unions must become real mass organisations, winning ever fresh sections of workers for the trade union class movement. Unfortunately the decline in the membership of the revolutionary trade unions in certain countries is evidence that these organisations do not know how to tackle in a practical manner the solution of this task, which is an elementary one for the revolutionary trade union movement.

The active participation in and conduct of **economic struggles** by the lower trade union functionaries is of great importance. The election of strike-committees in the factories, the discussion of appropriate measures before the broad masses of workers, alone renders possible a firm and united carrying out of the struggle. Here it is before all a question of putting to practical use the experiences gained in the last struggles.

In order that a certain preliminary work shall be achieved already **before** the European conference, **national conferences** are to be convened in **France and Germany** so as to be able to provide the big conference with definite material. At the same time it will be necessary, **after** the European conference, to **organise national and district conferences** in order to insure that the **decisions** of this conference shall be fully utilised.