

REPLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

On the Question: United Front. No. 6

To the Red International of Labour Unions.
Solyanka 12, Moscow.

CITIZENS,
The Bureau of the International Federation of Trade Unions, which acquainted itself, at its meeting held on March 14th this year, with the proposals set forth in your letter from Moscow, dated March 7th, instructed me to answer you as follows:

The attitude of the International Federation of Trade Unions towards the Communists' proposals for unity of action, a united front or a common front was so often established and confirmed by the decisions of the Congresses and of the General Council, including the recent decisions made in Weymouth, on August 29th, 1934, that it may be considered that this attitude is sufficiently known to the workers' trade union organisations of the world. The Bureau has neither the right nor the desire to abandon this line of conduct, established by the Congresses and sessions of the General Council of the International Federation of Trade Unions. On the other hand, the International Federation of Trade Unions, which observes trade union discipline, cannot accept on an international scale a united front rejected on a national scale by all its affiliated national trade union centres.

Therefore the Bureau of the I.F.T.U. believes that a conference for the discussion of the three points of the united front, proposed in your letter, can give no practical results.

As for the problem of restoring organisational unity of the international trade union movement, the Weymouth resolution of August 29th, 1934, determines the attitude of the I.F.T.U. and says, basically, as follows: The International Federation of Trade Unions has been struggling for trade union unity since 1919: this Federation declares that this unity is now more necessary than ever and considers that the I.F.T.U. is the base on which the workers of the

world can unite. Therefore the I.F.T.U. calls again upon the workers of all countries to join the regular organisations and through them the International Federation of Trade Unions. The latter believes that through applying the slogans of unity put forward by Moscow the Communist trade unions and the Red International of Labour Unions are prepared to take up this path.

The Bureau was able to state with great satisfaction that the National Trade Union Centre of Norway which kept aloof from the International Movement for many years and consequently aroused certain doubts as to its viewpoint on International trade union unity, made a decision clarifying this question at its last Congress, held in December, 1934. In agreement on all points with the spirit of the decisions of the International Federation of Trade Unions, this attitude of the Norwegian Trade Union Centre is outlined in its letter dated February 14th, and addressed by the Norwegian Secretariat to the R.I.L.U. in the formal question worded as follows: "Is the Red International of Labour Unions prepared to encourage the restoration of trade union unity in all the countries where certain groups in the past disaffiliated from the National Trade Union Centres? A Trade Union International should be based on one national organisation in every country."

Therefore it is necessary that the Red International of Labour Unions inform the Bureau of the I.F.T.U. first of all whether it is prepared to accept the preliminary conditions which the International Federation of Trade Unions (and also the National Trade Union Centre of Norway) consider necessary with a view to the realisation of this international trade union unity.

Accept, Citizens, our Trade Union Greetings,
On behalf of the Bureau of the International
Federation of Trade Unions,
V. SCHEVENELS, *General Secretary.*