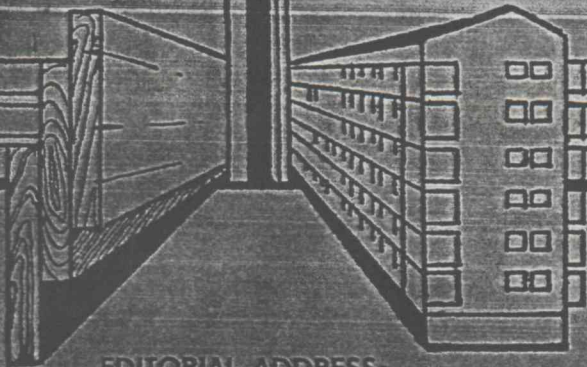


INFORMATIONS

*Plenty full
down*



EDITORIAL ADDRESS:
FINLAND - HELSINKI - BOX 281

Trade Unions International of
Workers of the Building, Wood
and Building Materials Industries

FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
5-DAY 40-HOUR WORKING WEEK

On May 5 to 7, 1961, at the initiative of the Austrian trade unionists, 135 representatives of European workers and trade unions held a Conference in Vienna to discuss reduction of work hours and means for winning a 40-hour working week without reduction in pay. The Conference had attracted attention among workers even outside Europe, and a few Japanese trade unionists had asked for permission to take part in the Conference as observers and to present the views of the trade union organisations and workers of their country on the question under discussion at the Conference.

The Conference made it clear that it is necessary to combine the activity of the workers and trade union organisations in all European capitalist countries for the solution of the particularly urgent question of shortening hours of work as soon as possible.

Of the representatives participating in the Conference 83 belonged to member organisations of the ICFTU, 51 to the WFTU-affiliated organisations and four were either members of the Christian international or independent trade unions. This shows that the workers see the necessity of and are ready for international co-operation on questions of importance to them regardless of ideological or organisational differences.

When the workers in the more developed capitalist countries have advanced the demand for a reduction of work hours and for the application of the 40-hour week without pay loss, they have been aware of the fact that technical development has reached proportions owing to which output has increased considerably in all fields of production. Drawing advantage from this development, the monopolies dominating the economic and political life of the European capitalist countries have continually increased their already big profits, while for the workers the same development has increased exploitation of their labour power and deterioration of their living and work conditions. The constant rise in the costs of living while wages remain low reduces the purchasing power of the working people and forces them to prolong their work-day and seek for additional income by working overtime.

Within the sphere of the building and woodindustries, too, technical development and mechanization have led to a

substantial rise in production. In France, within the ten years from 1950 to 1960 housing production grew more than four-fold, while the number of workers in the respective trades simultaneously increased only by 25 %. Similarly the output of the woodindustries of the leading capitalist countries has increased many times during last years, with the number of workers remaining the same or even falling. Even though mechanization and new organisation of work on the one hand have facilitated certain heavier operations of work, the increase of the work tempo in this connection and the increased danger of accidents caused by the machines have, however, on the other hand considerably increased the strain. The statistics show an increase in the number of work accidents towards the end of the working day, and most of the accidents and the most serious occur as a rule during overtime work.

When resisting the shortening of the work hours the capitalists allege that it would neither be in the interests of the workers themselves, nor in the national interests of the countries in question. They pretend that the reduction of work-hours would weaken their countries' ability to compete on the world market, lower production, increase unemployment and raise the cost of production and thus prices, which all would cause harm to the workers.

It is clear, however, that even on the basis of the level of technical development that prevails in the capitalist countries today a possible drop in the output due to the introduction of the 40-hour working week could be compensated within a few months. But this need not cause the negative consequences for the workers which the capitalists describe when opposing the shortening of hours, for a possible temporary rise in costs could well be compensated from their profits without risking at all the profitableness of the enterprises.

In the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, where the hours of work have already been reduced on the average to what is now the demand of the European workers, it has not resulted in a decrease of production or rise in prices. On the contrary, in these countries production has constantly kept increasing, prices have decreased and the workers' earnings increased.

Our Trade Unions International and all the member organisations of our TUI pledge their unreserved support to the decisions of the Conference of Vienna for the achievement of the 5-day 40-hour working week.

As experiences obtained hitherto show the capitalists will not satisfy this just demand without a firm and united struggle by the workers. Therefore we, the building and woodworkers, together with the workers of other industries must intensify our action and help the workers to unite their forces in favour of a quick realization of this timely and urgent demand.

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS AND WORKERS FOR THE REDUCTION OF OURS OF WORK AND FOR THE 40-HOUR WEEK WITHOUT LOSS OF PAY

(Vienna, May 5-7, 1961)

D e c l a r a t i o n

1. We, trade unionists and shop stewards belonging to trade union organisations in Europe, of every affiliation, met in Vienna from May 5 to 7, 1961.

We have exchanged the experiences which we have accumulated in the struggle for the reduction of hours of work and for the 40-hour week without loss of pay.

2.. This demand, which is becoming one of the major concerns of workers and their trade unions is being advanced with increasing determination in all West European countries.

In some countries the workers and their trade unions have won certain partial successes in their campaigns for a shorter working week without loss of pay, particularly during the past two years.

3. We note that today science and technique are making tremendous progress which have made possible considerable increases in productivity in all branches of production.

4. While in the European capitalist countries, where economic and political life is dominated by the monopolies and trusts, this progress means for the latter a staggering rise in profits, for the workers it means greater exploitation of their labour force and deterioration in their living and working conditions.

5. Inadequate wages and the drop in their purchasing power caused by the continuous rise in the cost of living, contribute to excessively long hours of work. They compel the workers to work overtime so as to maintain the purchasing power of their inadequate wages.

6. Despite new techniques introduced in industry and despite the increase in work tempo, the actual working week in Europe stands at 45 to 50 hours as a rule. In countries where the trade unions are being persecuted and oppressed, the number of hours

on the job is even higher.

7. The substantial rise in productivity under these conditions has inevitably had effects on the health of the workers and on their family life. It gives rise to an increase in occupational diseases and work accidents, producing permanent disability of some and, at times, the death of other workers.

8. The number of nervous diseases due to fatigue, the effect of growing strain caused by the speed-up imposed on the workers, are increasing at an alarming rate in the most diverse trades. This is particularly striking in industries and services employing a large number of women.

9. In several industries such as coal mining, textile, automobile and others, the increasing productivity and the use of new techniques far from creating higher wages and full employment, mean in fact for the workers in a growing number of cases a cut in hours of work, with substantial losses in wages, the closing of factories, unemployment and short-time. Older workers find it increasingly difficult to obtain work, they are often among the first to be dismissed or forced to retire before reaching the established age since they are considered unfit to keep up with the high pace of work imposed on the workers.

10. Moreover, the bad housing conditions from which too many workers and their families suffer, the long distances between their homes and places of work, requiring longer journeys, add to fatigue, disturb family life and restrict the workers' opportunities to engage in social activity and to raise their trade and cultural standards.

11. Under these circumstances, a reduction in hours of work without loss of pay is essential, since it would make possible a substantial improvement in the workers' living and working conditions.

12. But in their increasingly sharp struggle for markets, the capitalists and particularly the monopolies are conducting a policy hostile to the workers, attacking their purchasing power, their social gains and trade union liberties under the pretext that they need "competitive" prices. They are using the same pretext in their attempts to resist the demand for shorter hours of work without loss of pay. When the employers are compelled to grant a reduction in working hours thanks to the growth of the workers' struggle they lay down all sorts of conditions to reduce their significance, to take back the gains won in places of work, such as the rest breaks during working hours or the time allowed for cleaning up, and to raise productivity even further so as to try to retrieve the advantages which they were forced to grant.

13. But the workers know from their own experience that the rise in overall production, the substantial increase in productivity, the fabulous profits made by the capitalists and the huge sums

invested make it possible to reduce hours of work and introduce a genuine 40-hour week without loss of pay. They know that this would lead to neither a drop in production nor to a rise in prices but it could be achieved by deducting only a tiny part of the capitalists' profits.

14. In the socialist countries and above all the Soviet Union the results obtained in production and the introduction of new techniques are making it possible to reduce the working week without loss of pay and even with increases in nominal wages and to earmark increasingly high sums of money for the welfare of the workers. The workers and trade unions are closely associated with this policy.

15. The steps already taken in those countries are a great encouragement to the struggle of the workers in the capitalist countries for a genuine reduction in hours of work, we can see that this demand could easily be satisfied, it is an economic, social and human necessity.

16. On the basis of all that has been said, we declare that:
 THE REDUCTION IN HOURS OF WORK AND THE 5-DAY 40-HOUR WEEK WITHOUT LOSS OF PAY is a demand which the workers insist should be satisfied, for it corresponds to their interests and equally to their desire for social progress.

17. Under the present conditions it can be fulfilled entirely without any counter-concessions which might challenge previously won advantages, or which might affect demands for wage increases, for longer paid holidays, for the payment of public holidays, for the lowering of retirement age, etc.

18. We know that the monopolies and the governments supporting them will not surrender without a battle, and so workers' actions and struggles will have to become more powerful in order to break this resistance.

19. The programs of demands of all trade union centres in Europe contain this demand.

The workers' interests demand the rapid establishment of unity among all trade union organisations. Such united action on all levels would gather the workers' forces to achieve the speedy satisfaction of this demand for shorter hours of work.

20. We are convinced that unity among the workers and trade unions is forged in day-to-day struggles, that each success won in a factory, a workshop, an office or a department, in an industry or a country, helps the development of unity of action among the workers for even greater results. Each partial success won on the road towards a shorter working week helps the general achievement of this aim.

21. Division and disunity among the workers play into the hands of the capitalists. Mainly because of this disunity, the employers and governments have been able to prevent a satisfactory

solution of this demand.

United the workers represent a tremendous force which breaks down all barriers placed in the way of their legitimate demands.

22. That is why the delegates at this conference ask all European and international trade union organisations to undertake every possible step to increase united action for a reduction in hours of work and the 40-hour week without loss of pay.

23. Workers, shop stewards, trade unionists, we call upon you to devote all your efforts without pause to this united struggle, for that is the way to make sure that all workers in Europe rapidly obtain the 5-day 40-hour week without loss of pay.

The delegates at the Conference of European Trade Unions and Workers for the Reduction in Hours of Work and for the 40-Hour Week Without Loss of Pay.

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MEMORANDUM

TO THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

1. The reduction of hours of work is one of the main economic and social demands of workers throughout the world.
2. The place that the problem of reduced hours of work occupies today in the activity of the trade unions and in the struggle of the workers for the improvement of their living and working conditions shows the urgency and the vital importance of this problem. The fact that last year the International Labour Organisation had to discuss this question again is further proof of this.
3. It is precisely the urgency of the problem which has encouraged the trade union leaders and trade unionists of the European countries to respond to the appeal by the Organising Committee for the Conference of European Trade Unions and Workers for the Reduction of Hours of Work and for the 40-Hour Week Without Loss of Pay and to meet in Vienna on May 5, 6 and 7, 1961, in order to discuss the situation, to exchange ideas and

ences on this problem and to look for ways and means of
 g their forces and for co-ordinating their actions in
 struggle for the achievement of this historic demand of the
 g class.

During its proceedings the Conference has held a broad discussion
 e problem of the struggle of the workers in the European
 ries for the 40-hour week. An exchange of opinions has shown
 unity of the views held by those taking part in the Conference
 e main aspects of this problem.

A series of serious economic and social factors linked with
 evelopment of capitalist production in recent years makes the
 tion of hours of work a vital necessity.

A broad development of the system of production on conveyor
 , of mechanisation, the introduction of automation, the
 al tendency to more specialisation, the breaking up of the
 process, greater monotony of the work and especially the
 speed-ups have meant for the workers a whole series of serious
 equences affecting all aspects of their professional, social
 family life. They lead especially to increased work accidents,
 astional diseases, nervous, mental and heart illness,
 ature loss of capacity to work and universal premature body
 ue. The long and intense working day and moral and physical
 ue markedly reduce the workers' opportunities to take an
 ve part in social, political and trade union life or to raise
 r cultural and trade standards. They bring a series of results
 h upset family life. Moreover the process of mechanisation and
 nation which has been increased recently poses with greater
 e the question of reduced hours of work as a means of
 ggle against growing unemployment and dismissals.

The continual increase in work productivity and the volume
 production and the technical and scientific progress which is
 stantly increasing, must allow a considerable improvement
 the workers' living and working conditions.

By obstinately opposing the reduction of hours of work the
 opolies are trying to hide their real motives - their thirst
 constantly higher profits - by pretending that this would bring
 eed production, a higher cost of living, the weakening of
 ompetitive strength of the national goods on the international
 kets and so on.

However, the facts show the inconsistency of such statements.

• The example of France where the 40-hour week was introduced
 1936 by the Government of the Popular Front and the more
 cent example of the effective reduction in hours of work in
 e Soviet Union and in other socialist countries are ample
 lustrations that these arguments have no foundations.

• Therefore, the reduction of hours of work without loss of pay

is as necessary today socially, as it is economically possible.

12. By struggling for shorter working hours the workers and their trade union organisations have put forward, during the struggle a series of concrete demands and conditions. The Conference considers that it is necessary to point out some of these claims that can be considered essential:

- shorter working hours must be achieved without reduction of net wages, without increased work speed-ups and without any increase in the physical tension of the workers;

- national legislation on length of working hours must provide among other things, for:

a) Length of working hours per week to be fixed legally at 40.

b) Overtime must be strictly limited to exceptional cases fixed by agreement with the trade union organisations. In the case of young workers under 18 and pregnant women especially, overtime must be purely and simply forbidden.

c) Special facilities for working women and young people (no night work; rests provided for working mothers who are nursing their children; shorter hours of work for young workers and women workers).

d) Shorter hours of work for workers employed in difficult and unhealthy work.

e) Severe punishments for employers who violate the legislation on hours of work.

13. It must be emphasized that certain considerable successes have been achieved in the solution of the problem of shorter working hours in a series of European countries where new and concrete measures have been taken in this direction.

14. In the socialist countries of Europe at the present time a gradual reduction of working hours is taking place in accordance with the development of the national economy.

15. In the Soviet Union at the end of 1960 the change-over of workers and office staffs to the 41 or the 36-hour week was achieved. Throughout the country the average length of the normal working week was 39.4 hours at the end of 1960. In 1962 no branch of the national economy in the U.S.S.R. will have a working week of more than 40 hours. From 1964 it is planned to even further reduce the 35 and 30-hour week. The plans for the national economy in a number of other socialist countries provide for the reduction of the working week in the near future to 40 hours.

16. An important feature in the reduction of working hours in the socialist countries is that the workers' wages, far from being

on the contrary constantly increase. So, for example, after the reduction of hours of work by 12.5% the average the first quarter of 1960 was 17% higher than in the quarter of the preceding year. The wide-scale introduction of new mechanisms, the automation of production and especially of processes demanding greater efforts and the improvement of the organization of labour have assured an increase in the volume of production and in the conditions of the reduced working day without bringing physical tension for the workers.

Regarding the European capitalist countries the workers and trade unions are compelled to wage an obstinate struggle against the introduction of their right to a shorter working day and to a shorter working week. This struggle which has strengthened particularly during the last two years has recently brought considerable success to the workers in a series of countries in England, Austria, Switzerland and other countries.

However, these results have only been partial and limited. In many cases the contracts which have been drawn up only affect a limited number of workers and their effectiveness has been reduced by various conditions and clauses. Many of the advantages which the workers have been able to achieve have been reduced to a minimum in practice as a result of the introduction of overtime work imposed upon the workers by different forms of pressure and aggravated by the notorious insufficiency in the buying power of regular wages. Because of this the actual length of the working day in many countries has in practice, been scarcely changed in recent years. In certain cases it has even been lengthened. So taken altogether the measures applied remain insufficient and the question of reduction of working hours becomes constantly more urgent.

The International Labour Organisation states in its Constitution drawn up by all the member States how urgent it is to improve working conditions and especially to fix hours of work and to settle upon a maximum length for the working day and for the working week.

In this way the Constitution even obliges the I.L.O. to act in favour of the shorter working week and to adopt international conventions in this direction.

The workers are therefore expecting that the I.L.O. will take decisions supporting their struggles for this vital demand.

During its existence the I.L.O. has occupied itself with the question on many occasions and a series of international conventions have been drawn up and adopted. However, they are no longer of use to the situation as a whole and to the present demands of the workers.

The limited number of countries which have ratified these conventions, the lack of provisions that they contain, the

difficulties encountered during their introduction, the changes in production methods, the appearance of new social and economic factors linked to these changes -- all this has led to the need to put the questions of shorter working hours before the I.L.O. once again.

23. On the initiative of the workers' delegates to the International Labour Conference followed by discussions which led to a broad unity among all the workers' representatives the International Labour Office discussed this question once more, in a discussion which will lead, in June of this year, to the adoption by the International Labour Conference of an international instrument.

24. On this occasion the delegates to the Conference of European Trade Unions and Workers for the 40-Hour Week Without Loss of Pay address the International Labour Conference by submitting this Memorandum as well as the other documents which have been adopted. They ask the Conference to take into account the conclusions at which they have arrived and which strongly confirm the necessity for and the opportunities existing for the reduction of hours of work and for the introduction of the 40-hour week without loss of pay.

25. The delegates are convinced that the I.L.O. must take rapid and effective measures and especially adopt a new international convention which should take full account of the present situation and the workers' demands in the light of the factors which are widely recalled in the documents submitted to it.

26. The Conference considers that the adoption of such a convention and its ratification by the governments as well as its practical application would be an important positive contribution to the improvement of the workers' living and working conditions.

The Conference of European Trade Unions
and Workers for the Reduction of Hours
of Work and for the 40-Hour Week Without
Loss of Pay.

APPEAL TO THE WORKERS OF ALL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

EUROPEAN WORKERS,

ACTIVE TRADE UNIONISTS OF VARIOUS TRADE UNION TRENDS
APPEAL TO YOU:

Characteristic of our work in these times is its high production and technical level. Cosmic vehicles, interplanetary voyages, century-old dreams, begin to enter the sphere of reality.

Steel flows from the mills in torrents.

Cloth is manufactured at an extraordinary speed.

Buildings are constructed in record time.

The administration of the big enterprises is carried out by a very small number of office workers as a result of electronics.

Cars, television sets, refrigerators and household appliances are in general produced at a breathtaking pace.

Each of you produces more in one minute than your fathers could produce in one hour.

The high technical level proves that there are all possibilities to improve the living standard and the working conditions of all workers considerably.

In those countries where the exploitation of man by man has been abolished for ever, this is being carried out.

Where the monopolies rule, the workers are deprived of the fruits of progress. In the capitalist countries of Europe, the highest developed continent, workers are still forced to work too long hours at a break neck speed.

They are prematurely consuming their working power without adequate wage which could enable them to profit of the progress they are creating.

The number of victims of the terrible working speed is great.

Many suffer from nervous disorders and occupational diseases, many are permanently disabled by working accidents or

crippled and many accidents are fatal. Others are out of work or live under the permanent threat of unemployment, which exists even in times of boom.

The wages are too low.

The working hours are too long.

The working speed is quickened to an unbearable degree.

The monopolies are having all the advantages of technical progress. Profits are enormous. They invest enormous sums to modernise the equipment of the factories.

Their aim is not to make the work easier. Their aim is to conquer the markets of their competitors, their aim is to increase the exploitation of the workers. They want to enrich themselves still farther.

It is the workers, who are creating these profits and who are paying for these investments.

The reduction of working hours without loss of wages, the introduction of the 5-day and 40-hour week is therefore necessary and immediately possible.

The huge profits of the monopolies, the constant increase of productivity and the introduction of electronics and automation makes the reduction of working hours without loss of wages possible.

The experiences of recent years demonstrate that the shortening of working hours, even by several hours a week are in the course of a few months compensated by an increase of productivity.

Thus, production would not decrease. Even a small part of the fabulous profits, a reduction of the enormous military expenditure would suffice to pay for the reducing of the working week to 40 hours.

Prices therefore need not rise.

The danger of accidents would be reduced as well as the number of occupational diseases. The living conditions of the workers would improve.

The workers would have more leisure to spend with their families, they would have more opportunities for cultural activities.

The workers could have a larger share of the fruits of their labour.

EUROPEAN WORKERS!

In millions you have won the first successes. United in action it is possible to achieve the 40-hour five day week.

In the countries free of capitalist exploitation the reduction of working hours is progressively being carried out and the buying power of the people is ceaselessly increasing as a result of higher wages, lower prices and the reduction of taxes.

In the Soviet Union the present average working week is 39.40 hours. And the 7-year plan provides for the introduction of the 35 and 30 hour week in 1964.

In various capitalist countries of Europe millions of workers have won reductions of working hours these last few years. But the monopolies are striving to weaken these partial successes and are using the low level of wages in order to instigate the practice of overtime.

United in action it is possible to force the monopolies effectively to reduce working hours while improving the buying power of wages.

The W.F.T.U., the I.C.F.T.U., the I.C.C.T.U. and national trade union organisations of different international affiliations have included this demand in their immediate programme.

The time has come to strengthen the united struggle in the factories and to coordinate it in order to speed up the achievement of this goal.

For this common aim the unity of action between workers and trade unions in the national as well as international sphere must become a reality for the well being of all workers.

Let us unite all our forces!

Let us increase all our struggles, so that the workers of Europe shall be able to achieve as quick as possible the 40 hours and five days week without loss of pay.

The delegates
of the conference.

FINNISH WORKERS DEMAND

THE SHORTENING OF WORK HOURS

Mass movements by Finnish workers for reducing the hours of work to 40 a week and for the introduction of a workers' pensions scheme and sickness insurance have taken wide proportions in the past months. Resolutions by hundreds of organisations and job meetings were sent to the Parliament and several tens of deputations from the Capital and different other parts of the country visited the members of Parliament putting before them their demands on the passing of these laws before the ending of the sessions of Parliament for the Summer period. The most powerful manifestations for the united stand of the workers took place on the 18th of May, when about 10,000 workers gathered in the front of the House of Parliament to press forward their demands.

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THE STRUGGLE OF THE FINNISH BUILDING WORKERS

FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A LAW ON PENSIONS

On Saturday, the 20th May, 1961, the Executive Committees of the Finnish Building Workers' and Bricklayers' Unions called on building workers in all towns and boroughs of the country to stop works on the 25th May at 11.00 o'clock, in order to demonstrate through a 4 hour strike to the rightists in Parliament that workers unanimously denounce such plans which are aimed at postponing the paying of pensions by many tens of years and at excluding the building workers entirely from the security offered by the pensions.

The building workers followed the call by the unions and participated in the demonstration strike in hundred percent. The strike involved about 40,000 workers, who gathered into mass meetings in many towns during their strike to force their demand for a decent law on pensions.

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OUR T.U.I.'s DELEGATION TO JUGOSLAVIA

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A delegation of our Trade Unions International visited Yugoslavia at the invitation of the Yugoslav Building Workers' Union from 25 April to 3 May, 1961.

The delegation consisted of Aarne S a a r i n e n, Chairman of the Finnish Building Workers' Union and Vice-Chairman of our T.U.I., and Rudi S c h a r m a c h e r, Editor-in-Chief of the paper of the Building and Woodworkers' Union of the GDR. In addition Jean B r i q u e t, Secretary of the French Building and General Workers' Union and Vice-Chairman of our T.U.I. was also to have participated in the journey but could not travel because of the situation in France at that time.

The purpose of the journey was to acquaint the members of the delegation with the country, building activity, conditions of work and trade union activity of the building workers and also with the Yugoslav opinions on international trade union co-operation.

On the program were talks with the leaders of the building and woodworkers' trade unions, visits to building sites, a building workers' clinic and residence in Belgrade and to a professional school for building workers in Ljubljana, meetings with leaders of a few construction enterprises and representatives of trade union branches and workers' councils, participation in the First of May celebrations in Belgrade and getting acquainted with the country.

The Chairman of the Building Workers' Union Josip K r i p a n and the Vice-Chairman of the Woodworkers' Union Josip K l a i ć took part in the talks. Both expressed hope for the establishment and development of good relations with the member organisations of the T.U.I. as well as with other trade union organisations of the building and woodworkers for furthering and strengthening peace and friendship between the peoples.

JAPANESE BUILDING WORKERS
STRUGGLE FOR THEIR RIGHTS

Beginning from February last the members of the All Construction Ministry Workers' Union of Japan have waged persistent struggle for the increase of their wages and other demands. These workers are deprived of their right to strike and therefore their struggle consists of short-time work stoppages, half-day strikes, etc.

In order to suppress the struggle and to prevent the union's activity the Japanese Construction Ministry undertook repressive measures against the leaders and the members of the union. The Chairman of the union Kakuo Honjo and General Secretary Takeo Kimijima and ten other leading officials were dismissed from their employment by the State, several members of the union were suspended from employment and many received reprimands and had their wages lowered.

The All Construction Ministry Workers' Union, however, refused to accept the dismissals and decided to launch a campaign for their repeal and against all other repressive steps, and simultaneously to continue their struggle for the improvement of work conditions. In its struggle the union has received support from our T.U.I. and its member organisations, who have expressed their solidarity with the Japanese building workers struggling for their rights and sent protests to the Construction Ministry and the Government of Japan.

It is a generally known fact that the working conditions of the Japanese workers and of the building workers in particular are very deplorable and their rights to act for improvements very limited. The Japanese Government has not ratified the ILO Convention 87 on trade union rights. The Government's economic and social policies follow the interests of the big monopolies and are aimed against the interests of the working people. Instead of peaceful construction, houses, schools, hospitals, prevention of floods etc., the Construction Ministry directs its investments to the strengthening of the economic basis of the big monopolies and to the construction of roads and other similar projects presumed in the Japan-U.S. military agreement.

By fixing the wages of the workers employed directly by the State at a very low level the Government at the same time influences the wage situation of the whole country, since these wages are often referred to and they are also taken as a basis when calculating average wages for the purposes of the Labour Code.

The present Annuity Law is such that it is "not returning but robbing" as the Japanese brothers say about it. Huge sums of money are collected from the people yearly under this

but these sums are not used for the social welfare of the insured for financing the monopolies and also for armaments.

Therefore the Japanese building workers are waging struggle on a broad front and their demands for better conditions of work are accompanied by demands for an economic policy benefiting the working people and for social gains, in the same way as they have campaigned also for peace against the Japanese military treaty.

Our Trade Unions International wishes success to our Japanese brothers in their courageous and persistent struggle and trusts that its member organisations and all workers of our industries will follow the fight of the Japanese brothers and give them their support.

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J O I N T S T A T E M E N T

b y

the French Building, Building Materials and General Workers' Union
(C.G.T.)

a n d

the Italian Building, Wood and Allied Industry Workers' Union,
FILLEA (C.G.I.L.)

Concerning the Cement Workers' Problems

In connection with the national congress of the Italian cement workers' trade unions affiliated to the FILLEA, held in Firenze on February 4th and 5th, 1961, and participated in also by a cement workers' delegation sent by the French Building, Building Materials and General Workers' Union, discussions were carried on concerning the mutual exchange of information and questions connected with the workers of this industry.

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The following was stated:-

a) that economic and production characteristics of this industry are much the same in both countries.

In Italy as well as in France almost all production is carried out by a small group of companies of monopoly type, and in last years these monopoly companies have invested considerable sums of money in expanding and modernising their factories and thereby

had a big increase in production and productivity and an intensification of the exploitation of labour and have achieved an increased useful effect of labour and increased profits.

b) the working conditions, aspirations and demands of the workers are consequently similar.

Technical progress does not as yet appear as social progress. The workers' health is in ever greater danger, while a great increase is to be seen in the number of labour accidents and occupational diseases (gastric ulcer and also silicosis). The number of working hours is the same as in other industries although the strain of work is much heavier.

The wages also continue to remain low - in spite of increases obtained through struggle by the trade union organisations in the last years - and are quite in disproportion with the rise of the costs of living on the one hand and with the increase in profits on the other.

The freedom of the trade union organisations especially in regard to their possibilities to conclude agreements covering all aspects of the working conditions, is largely limited and in some cases quite nonexistent.

c) In view of this situation the main demands of the workers are as follows:-

1. A general wage increase in a form considered most appropriate in both countries.
2. Reduction of the hours of work without pay loss.
3. Opportunity for the trade union organisations to negotiate on all conditions of work and wages.
4. Drawing up and adjustment of agreements on classification of work.
5. Lowering of the age of retirement.
6. Holiday compensation.
7. Elimination of wage differences between different areas.
8. A more efficient prevention of occupational diseases and accidents at work.

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Both trade union organisations (CGT and CGIL) pledge to carry on activities in their respective countries for uniting

the cement workers in order to find out means for establishing trade union unity of action among all workers and their trade union organisations beginning with local branches up to the leading bodies.

In addition, both organisations in their own countries will make efforts to organise, according to their possibilities and in the most appropriate forms, such action and struggle of the workers as will be necessary for the winning of the aforementioned demands.

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In conclusion, both organisations state that the problems are very much alike within this field of industry particularly in the countries of the European Economic Community. It is a well-known fact that the employers of the cement industry of this region are not only closely connected with each other but also often use the existence of the Community and the obligations arising from it as a pretext for resisting the just demands of the workers.

Taking into account the basic obligation of the workers international solidarity both organisations decide to bring the contents of this document to the knowledge of the central trade union organisations in Western Germany, Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg.

They hope that relations be established between the trade union organisations of all workers of these industries irrespective of what body takes the initiative to this effect, in order to be able to examine in common the demands that exist at present in the countries of the European Economic Community and means for strengthening the workers' militancy and mutual solidarity for carrying through these demands.

In Firenze, 5th February, 1961

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GREETING FROM THE VIETNAMESE BUILDING WORKERS' UNION

TO THE BUILDING AND WOODWORKERS IN ALL COUNTRIES

The first congress of the Building Workers' Union of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which met on 18 to 24 April, 1961, along with other questions also discussed the question of international working class solidarity and replying to the greeting sent by our T.U.I. to their congress decided to send their fraternal greeting to our T.U.I. and thereby to all building, wood and building materials workers. The I. congress of the Building Workers' Union of Vietnam says in its greeting:-

Dear Brothers,

We, the 254 delegates to the I. congress of the Vietnamese Building Workers' Union, held in Hanoi from April 18 to 21, 1961, in the name of the 50,000 members whom we represent send you and thereby to all building, wood and building materials workers of the world our most cordial greetings.

Summarizing the activity of our building workers and our union since its founding until today we realise with joy that under the leadership of the Workers' Party of Vietnam and its honoured Chairman Ho Chi Minh, construction in the Northern part of our country has advanced at an unprecedented pace during the past six years. Our construction workers, their untireless working enthusiasm and their unshakable will to surmount obstacles have within this short period brought about the construction of hundreds of industrial enterprises and the pavement of millions of square metres of earth into a soil capable of being inhabited. When in the period of economic reconstruction (1955-1957) one building project (factory, hospital, school, etc.) was handed over to use every eleventh day, the time needed for this was reduced to 4 days during the period of economic development in the years 1958 to 1960.

Thus, we have taken an active part in the building of socialism within the Northern part of our country and in the struggle waged by our people for the unification of our homeland.

Side by side with the development of national economy the material and cultural level of our workers has been raised considerably. Considerable rise can be noted also in the development of the political, educational and technical level.

Our national union covering almost all construction workers of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has done everything in its power to enhance the well-being of the workers

of our industry, to build socialism and to struggle for the unification of our fatherland.

Our congress also vigorously condemned the attacks of the American imperialism in the Southern part of our country. The American imperialists and their lackey Ngo Dinh Diem have during the past six years done their utmost in order to change the country into a military base of the United States and into a colony of a new type. They are working for the division of our country and preparing for a new aggressive war in the South-East Asia. But all these attempts are meeting with a firm resistance of the population and workers of the South as well as with the strong protests by the progressive forces of the world.

On the basis of the decisions taken by the IIIrd Congress of the Workers' Party of Vietnam and of the recent decisions by the IIInd Congress of the Vietnamese trade unions our congress has laid out the line of action and the main tasks of our union: to struggle for the successful realisation of the plan of construction laid down in the first Five Year Plan (1961-1965) and aimed at industrialising the country and changing Vietnam, which as yet is a backward agricultural country, into a modern industrial country, where agriculture is also mechanised and where there is high cultural level and on this basis to raise our people to struggle for the unification of our homeland.

Dear Brothers,

Inspired with the decisions made on the 19th September, 1960, by the Trade Unions International to accept our union as member of the TUI our congress has decided to improve its work in the field of the international relations, to take part in all forms of the activity of the TUI in order to make its contribution to the strengthening of our TUI, to the strengthening of the international solidarity of the building, wood and building materials workers and to the common struggle of all workers for the unity of the trade union movement, peace, national independence and socialism.

We send you, dear brothers, our most fraternal greetings.

FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY!

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Since our T.U.I. has no organisational tie with the trade union organisations in New Zealand, our Information Bulletin has also not often had the opportunity to discuss the conditions and activity of the building workers of that country. We have therefore turned to Brother J. Gillies, President of the Auckland Branch of the N.Z. Building Workers' Union asking him to tell the readers of our Bulletin about the conditions of the building workers in New Zealand and their action for concluding and improving their collective agreements.

- As President of the Auckland Branch of the Building Workers' Union I am very glad to have this opportunity of contributing to the U.I.T.B.E. Information Bulletin, and wish them well in their task of establishing international solidarity in our section of industry.

The Auckland Branch hitherto has been known as the Carpenters, Joiners and Joiners Machinists. However, pursuing our policy of industrial unionism we have achieved amalgamation with the Bricklayers, Plasterers and Roof-Tilers. The painters are expressing a keen interest on the question of amalgamation, and we have every hope of drawing them into our growing industrial union. The virtues of an industrial union in the building industry has been explained to the smaller unions by the Carpenters and Joiners Union and under the Constitution of the Building Workers' Union all sections have equality of representation on the combined executive, thus eliminating the possibility of the identity and interests of the smaller unions being swamped and lost sight of.

Over the years, in the course of struggle for wages and conditions the Building Workers' Union has established a good system of liason and activity between the Union office and the workers on the job. It is Union policy that every job elects a job delegate who is the spokesman for the job on any issues which arise; and is the Union representative for that particular job. He negotiates on minor issues and should a dispute of a serious nature arise he immediately contacts the Union office and asks for an official to visit the job immediately. This method of work has achieved good results, and several important gains won on the job have been incorporated in the Building Workers' award.

Compulsory unionism has been the law in New Zealand for the last twenty-five years. Under this system every worker must be a member of the union which operates in his particular field of industry. The Union representatives and employers meet

in Conciliation Council, and having agreed on the Award present it to the Arbitration Court for ratification. The present Award is in force from the 12th October 1959 until 3rd May 1961. The rates of pay contained in the Award are only a minimum - 6/8d per hour, and the workers are entitled to get as much above the award rate as they possibly can. In the major cities the ruling rate, as distinct from the Award rate - is 8/- per hour. The next step of course, is to get the ruling rate incorporated into the Award as the legal minimum rate, in line with the policy as laid down by our parent body, the New Zealand Federation of Labour.

The Labour Government introduced compulsory unionism into New Zealand in 1935. However, with the defeat of the Labour Government at the 1960 General Election the National Government assumed office and have stated their intention of reintroducing voluntary unionism. The unions feel that if voluntary unionism is introduced the prime essential is to get a 'preference for unionists' clause in every agreement between unions and employers.

Our country is almost completely dependant on overseas markets for selling its primary products. It has been aptly named the "Dairy Farm of British Empire" and is deep in the clutches of overseas monopoly. The rate of exploitation is very high and the amount of money taken out of the country by overseas monopoly is astronomical. Our own section of industry is, to all intents and purposes, completely at the mercy of a monopoly insofar as building materials are concerned. Unfortunately, the Labour Government while to a certain extent advancing the interests of the working people, did not attempt to curtail the activities of the great monopolies. This situation is reflected in the Trade Union movement, where the ultra-rightists have, because of the progressive policy of the Building Workers' Union, attacked it through the courts of law, and to a certain extent depleted its funds through successful legal actions. The Building Workers' Union is not dismayed by these attacks, and will continue to further the interests of its members and the working people of New Zealand.

The Federation of Labour policy on peace can be summarised thus, complete support for the banning of nuclear tests, for disarmament and for a lasting peace. These are principles which will receive the enthusiastic support of trade unionists of the world over. There is, of course, a divergence of views as to how these great ends can be achieved. Progressive trade unionists make the point "do not let us argue about our disagreements, but rather find out the things we are agreed upon and from there move forward in unity in the interests of our members". Members of the New Zealand Workers' Union employed at the big Mangere Airport job are reported to have passed a remit for the Federation of Labour Conference urging a joint conference of the two world trade union bodies. They say that the best interests of world trade union unity would be served if the W.F.T.U. and the

I.C.F.T.U. got together in this way. This is indicative of the desire of the working people, not only of New Zealand but of the whole world - to move forward in unity into an era of peace and prosperity.

J. Gillies

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C O N T E N T S :-

- For the Introduction of a 5-day 40-hour Working Week
- Conference of the European Trade Unions and Workers for the Reduction of Hours of Work and for the 40-hour Week without Loss of Pay.....
- Declaration
- Memorandum to the International Labour Organisation
- Appeal
- Finnish Workers Struggle for the Shortening of Work Hours
- Our T.U.I.'s Delegation to Yugoslavia
- Japanese Building Workers Struggle for their Rights
- Joint Statement by the Trade Unions of the French and Italian Building, Wood and Building Materials Workers Concerning the Problems of the Cement Workers
- Greeting from the Vietnamese Building Workers' Union to the Building and Woodworkers in All Countries
- J. Gillies: For International Trade Union Unity

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES SYNDICATS DES TRAVAILLEURS
DE L'ALIMENTATION ET DU TABAC, DE LA BOISSON
ET DES TRAVAILLEURS DES HOTELS, CAFES ET RESTAURANTS
(Département Professionnel de la F. S. M.)

Sofia, December 24 19 60

МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ ОБЪЕДИНЕНИЕ ПРОФСОЮЗОВ ТРУДЯЩИХСЯ
ПИЩЕВОЙ И ТАБАЧНОЙ ПРОМЫШЛЕННОСТИ, ПРОИЗВОДСТВА
НАПИТКОВ, РАБОТНИКОВ ГОСТИНИЦ, КАФЕ И РЕСТОРАНОВ
(Производственный отдел В. Ф. П.)

TRADE UNIONS INTERNATIONAL OF WORKERS OF THE FOOD,
TOBACCO AND BEVERAGES INDUSTRIES AND HOTEL, CAFE
AND RESTAURANT WORKERS
(Trade Department of the W. F. T. U.)

UNION INTERNACIONAL DE SINDICATOS DE LOS
TRABAJADORES DE LAS INDUSTRIAS ALIMENTICIA
Y TABACALERA, DE LA PRODUCCION DE BEBIDAS Y DE LOS
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Dear Brothers,

We refer to our letter dated October 3, 1960 regarding the choice of an Indian representative to our Administrative Committee.

As the next session of this Committee will be held in February 1961 and will be very important, we are awaiting anxiously your reply.

Thanking you in advance,

We remain, sincerely and fraternally,

Domenico Bianco
Domenico Bianco,
Secretary of the TUI.