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A D D R E S S

By

BROTHER RENATO BITOSSI,
President
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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let me, first of all, on behalf of the World Federation of Trade Unions which unites 133 million workers on all continents, extend to you and your Congress our warmest fraternal greetings.

The World Federation of Trade Unions is aware of the fact that your country was for nearly 200 years ruled by the British imperialists, until it gained its independence in 1947. The colonial rulers oppressed your people, denied them their democratic rights, suppressed the trade union movement-in fact, barred all cultural, social and economic development of your people and country. The working class throughout the world is well aware of the bitter struggle waged by the workers and the people of India against British imperialist rule to win their national independence. It also knows that the trade union movement of your country made a big contribution to the success of the liberation struggle.

The World Federation of Trade Unions has always supported the struggles of the peoples everywhere - in Asia, Africa and Latin America, against colonialism and imperialism, for freedom, peace, democracy and social progress.

The World Federation of Trade Unions is convinced that only strong united action by the working class, by the workers of the whole world, by the national liberation movement and by all peace-loving people can defeat the imperialist policy of aggression and avert the danger of a terrible catastrophe.

It is with these aims in view that the World Federation of Trade Unions took the initiative in organising a broadbased International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Workers and people of Algeria when they were carrying on their heroic battle for national liberation. Towards the same end, the World Federation of Trade Unions has taken the initiative in forming an International Trade Union Committee for Solidarity with the Workers and People of South Vietnam, and similar committees for solidarity with the workers and peoples of South Africa and Aden.

The 6th World Trade Union Congress which was held recently in Warsaw from October 3 to 22 further reiterated its full support for this struggle of the peoples everywhere. The Sixth World Trade Union Congress was a trade union event of great International and historical importance. Over 159 million workers were represented from all corners of the world, including more than 20 million workers from trade union organisations not affiliated to the WFTU.

The 6th World Trade Union Congress underlined the fact that the workers, their trade union organisations and the peoples of the world has won far-reaching victories in their fight to free themselves from the colonial yoke and that the colonial world is shrinking systematically.

Their victories are the outcome of the heroic and united struggles, actively supported by the successes and the policy of peace of the socialist camp and by international solidarity of the workers and trade unions in all countries.

The 6th World Trade Union Congress warned, however, that despite the heavy defeats and disintegration of the colonial system, the colonialists refuse to abandon their domination. The aggressive actions by the imperialists in various parts of the world confirm this. The U.S. imperialist war of intervention in South Vietnam against the national liberation struggle of the South Vietnamese people, its acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, its continuance of the economic blockade of Cuba, its armed intervention in the Dominican Republic, are evidence of this.

The imperialists are seeking to maintain their positions by also adopting a more complex instrument of domination, known as neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism, at the present stage, corresponds to the international development of the monopolies which are aiming at collectively exploiting, for their own profit, the developing countries. In this, the American monopolies and the U.S. government, as the worst enemies of the peoples, are playing an increasingly harmful role and resort to more and more disgusting methods with the aim of establishing their agents in power in the Developing countries.

In addition, the American, French, British and West German monopolies are exploiting the wealth of developing countries; they are hatching plots and are obstructing the progress of these countries towards a better life and complete independence. That is the essential aim of the so-called plans for the economic, technical and military aid by the imperialist countries to the developing countries.

Nationalisation of key sectors of economy, especially of foreign capital and investments in developing countries, while strengthening the independent development of these countries' economics, hits both at the neo-colonialist plots of foreign monopolies and at the local vested interests and monopoly capital exploiting the workers in their selfish interests.

Against this alliance of the foreign monopolies and certain privileged sectors and vested interests in developing countries, the joint actions of the workers, both in capitalist and developing countries become essential. It is with a view to developing these joint actions that the WFTU took the initiative in setting up the World Trade Union Committee for Consultation and United Action against the Monopolies. Its two plenary conferences, already held, in December 1963 and December 1964 were broadbased and drew representatives from affiliated organisations of the WFTU as well as from non-affiliated and independent trade union organisations. These conferences unanimously came to the conclusion, and now reaffirmed by the 6th World Trade Union Congress, that in the developing countries' struggle for economic and social progress the liquidation of neo-colonialist economic relations is essential. This means eliminating the direct grip of monopoly investments, ending discriminatory trade, ending the monopoly domination in shipping, finance, insurance, in the handling of trade and other forms of monopoly influence and exploitation in these countries. The antimonopolies' committee has also decided to convene a conference in December this year on the expansion of world trade in order to bring about an equitable solution and expansion. Discrimination of world trade, which

assistance to the economies of the developing countries.

Neo-colonialism also relies on military blocs and establishment of military bases in other countries for alleged defence purposes. This goes for NATO, CENTO and SEATO. The recent Japan-South Korea Treaty is also the type of anti-democratic and militaristic alliance being concluded in the Far East under the direction of the American imperialists. The WFTU considers the establishment of imperialist military bases on other people's lands as transgression of the independence of the peoples of these countries and demands their abolition.

These concealed and open economic and military policies of neo-colonialists and their allies, the reactionary circles and feudalism at home, have adverse consequences: industrial backwardness, resistance to democratic land reform, a drop in the living standards of the entire population, unemployment, anti-trade union and anti-democratic measures.

The WFTU is fully aware of the problem of food production and hunger in the developing countries, not least in India itself. We believe that in order to ease this distressing situation, it is necessary, first and foremost, to strengthen unity of all the workers so that their trade union becomes the instrument for action and struggle that will allow them first to weaken, and then to put an end to the rule of monopolies and of profiteers, who are taking advantage of the misery of the people.

This is true both at national and international level. The active solidarity of the workers who are struggling hard against the exploitation of monopoly capitalism, on the one hand the fraternal help of the workers in the socialist world, who are engaged in the construction of a new society, on the other hand, give a concrete evidence of the feelings of the working class of the world towards the peoples of developing countries.

The warm support that the workers in the capitalist world bring to the struggle for national liberation and the policy of friendship of the socialist countries in the form of invaluable economic and technical aid, given free of any political or other conditions, based on respect for national sovereignty, equality and mutual benefits, have played a basic role in the struggle of the developing countries for their total independence.

You know from your own experience the truth of this genuine friendship and sincere fraternal help being given to your country and people by the socialist countries, particularly the Soviet Union, on a massive scale, to build and strengthen your public sector of industry, especially in respect to the basic industries, in this sector.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the balance of forces today is decidedly in favour of those who are fighting for peace, freedom and progress and is daily growing. The policy of the imperialists, above all, of American imperialists who have assigned to themselves the role of the international gendarme against the national liberation movements and forces of progress, is doomed to failure. The victories already won by the forces of peace and freedom against the warmongering and reactionary policies of the imperialists go to prove this.

The fight for peace, peaceful co-existence and for universal and total disarmament, the WFTU believes, strengthens the struggles for national liberation as well and creates favourable conditions for the consolidation of national independence and reconstruction of national economies of the countries which have already won independence. This fight, however, in no case means collaboration.

or compromise in the workers fight against the capitalists and monopolists, in their fight against exploitation and for their complete economic and social emancipation.

However, an essential condition to defeat forces of war and reaction, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, to defend peace, consolidate independence and develop national economy on an independent path, to better the life and working conditions of the workers and people, is the unity of the workingclass and its alliance with other sections of the toiling people.

The realisation of this fact has led to the tremendous growth of workers' unity these past few years. United trade union centres have been formed in many countries. On a continental scale, decisive steps have been taken. The Trade Union Unity Congress of Latin American workers met in January 1964. The Second Congress of the All-African Trade Union Federation, which also met in 1964, was an important step towards stronger unity of the African trade union movement. The Tri-Continental Conference held in Havana played a vital role in cementing the unity of the anti-imperialist forces.

On the continent of Europe, there is a growing trend towards united action between trade union centres with different affiliations. The WFTU welcomes this as, we believe, it is of the utmost importance in the fight against the monopolies and the governments which assist them. We sincerely hope and believe that the Indian workers will also be able to unite around their common demands. The AITUC has played a vital part in stimulating unity in the past and we know that it will continue to do so.

The WFTU welcomes and supports all efforts and actions for workers' unity. Division in the trade union movement helps only the exploiters, the monopolists, the neo-colonialists and the reactionary forces. It is necessary for the workers to build their unity on their common demands and interests, irrespective of nationality, race, colour, religion, origin, language or political affiliation. It is only the exploiters and the reactionaries who utilise these factors in splitting the workers in order to weaken and disrupt their fight against exploitation, for economic and social emancipation.

The WFTU is aware of the many gains that the Indian workers have made during the past years through their innumerable struggles and more recently, especially in the organised sector of industry for securing the right to get dearness (cost of living) allowance added to their wages in proportion to the rise in the cost of living, and the right to get a profit-sharing bonus every year as also an addition to their wages.

The WFTU is also aware of the series of struggles that the workers, led by your great organisation, the All-India Trade Union Congress, are today carrying on to defend and consolidate these gains and to make further advances. The recent widespread general strikes in various parts of your country and involving millions of workers, clearly demonstrated the growing unity of the workers and trade unions, irrespective of affiliation, during these struggles, in alliance with other sections of the people. In all this, the AITUC and its unions have played a key role, and the wide upsurge of the workers in India in defence of their rights and for their demands is an indication of their increasing militancy. We are happy to observe that more sections of workers and people - middle-class employees, doctors, professors, university and school teachers, even small traders and businessmen are being drawn into the orbit of this upsurge. We have particularly noted the recent successful General Strike of 200,000 textile workers in your great industrial city of Bombay.