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ESTONIA
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KENYA
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NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PALESTINE
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RUMANIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SWEDEN
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TUNISIA
UNITED STATES
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EGYPT
MEXICO

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GREECE
JAPAN
LATVIA
POLAND
PORTUGAL
SPAIN
and other countries

The Construction of a New Trade Union Movement in Germany

By J. H. OLDENBROEK

Acting General Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation.

THE problems connected with the rehabilitation of trade unionism in occupied Europe and the construction of a new trade union movement in Germany loom large in the minds of those who are concerned with the future of the international labour movement. I use the words "rehabilitation" and "construction" advisedly, to make it clear that in my opinion an entirely fresh start has to be made in Germany, right from scratch.

That is to say, from the outset I reject the idea of converting the German Labour Front. It has got to be short-circuited and electrocuted. I doubt even whether it would be desirable to transfer the assets of the Labour Front—should there be any after the war—to newly created trade unions. Perhaps at a later stage, after the Labour Front has been liquidated, part of any assets could be used for compensating trade unionists who, because of active resistance to the Nazi regime, suffered particularly severe hardships or whose dependants are in need of support.

I have a few remarks to make to which some may take exception, but which in my opinion reflect the views of many belonging to the international labour movement and particularly of those who have now for four or five years endured the curse of German occupation. They find it very hard to distinguish between Nazis and Germans. They hold that the Germans are no ignorant people and cannot, therefore, be regarded as mere dupes. They are not prepared to absolve large sections of the German workers from responsibility. They refuse to entertain the idea of co-operating to-morrow with those who yesterday may have been active or passive supporters of the Nazis. It should be borne in mind that this time, in contradistinction with 1918, there are very few neutral countries left in Europe, and it is doubtful whether they would be disposed to act as the devil's advocate.

In such an atmosphere, then, will the problem of the International's policy with regard to the construction of a new trade union movement in Germany be approached. To start with, the pre-war period will be reviewed. In 1933 the German trade union movement and the German Labour movement as a whole collapsed like a house of cards. Consequently the German trade unions suddenly ceased to exist and—what was far more tragic—the trade union spirit was well-nigh killed. It was my privilege to maintain close relations with German comrades who *genuinely* strove to bring about an underground movement in Germany (much of the clandestine activity was spurious) and I wish to say that I am second to none in appreciating and admiring the courage and devotion

to the movement of those who after its inglorious end tried so hard to arouse resistance to the Nazis. They did it in the face of the most brutal persecution the world has ever known.

The real underground fighters will bear me out, however, when I say that the overwhelming majority of the German workers wanted to be left alone—after all, Hitler had found them jobs, and wasn't he doing well in international politics? It cannot be denied, either, that many former trade unionists surrendered to the Nazi Party and that the number of spies and informers among them was very considerable. In 1939, therefore, the picture was roughly as follows: a substantial majority of the German people backed Hitler for better or worse; a large part stood for Germany—which was identified with Hitler—because they either wanted to win the war or did not want to lose it; while a small part was definitely anti-Nazi and wanted Germany to be defeated, although many of the latter were and still are afraid of what will come after the catastrophe.

The argument has been used that hundreds of thousands of Germans have been flung in gaol and concentration camp, and that thousands have been tortured to death, shot or murdered in some other way, which is said to show that Hitler encountered strong opposition. I venture to differ. Whilst sympathizing with all those Germans who suffered humiliation at the hands of their own countrymen, I maintain that the number of victims would not have been significantly smaller if not a single effort had been made to start underground groups in Germany. The Nazi underworld had been promised their "Night of the Long Knives." Let us not forget that intimidation and victimization are character traits of the aggressive German, that "*Einschuechterung*" and "*Massregelung*" have always been hard-worked words in German.

Fortunately the situation is entirely different where Austria is concerned. There the workers did offer dogged resistance in 1934, and by 1938 it was evident that the underground movement was borne by the whole Austrian working class. This, in my opinion, cannot be said of Germany, although there is, of course, a possibility that, led by underground fighters who have never given up, the German workers will yet make an appreciable contribution towards the downfall of the Nazi regime. No one would be happier than I if that happened, as such an event would greatly facilitate the task of those called upon to assist at the birth of a new trade union movement in Germany.

For the present, however, the picture is a sombre one, nor is its distressing nature mitigated by the knowledge that the German working class had all the advantage of a long tradition of trade union experience and socialist education. I am fully aware of the demoralizing effects of economic depression and of the failure of the foreign policies of the democratic countries, but all that is hardly relevant inasmuch as it does not explain away the fact that the German people, including the German workers, have proved remarkably accessible to Nazi doctrine and ideas. Will a German defeat change that attitude of mind? Are we to accept that they have all been betrayed

Owing to difficulties with the editorial work which have arisen at the last moment, this issue has suffered considerable delay for which we apologize to our readers.

or hypnotised by that sorcerer Adolf Hitler? No one who occupies a responsible position can fall for such talk. Those German comrades whose integrity is above suspicion and whose internationalist outlook is beyond doubt would do well not to try to seek the path of least resistance nor to try to play off one resolution against another, but to understand that the creation of a new trade union and labour movement in Germany is a laborious and missionary task. It is easier to talk with the crowd than admonish them, easier to explain and apologize than to admit failure.

* * *

Among trade unionists there can be no difference of opinion that in Germany a new free trade union movement must rise again. That is necessary because the interests of the German workers must be represented and protected; it is necessary because the interests of the workers in other countries demand that working conditions in Germany be improved and maintained at an international minimum level; it is necessary because the workers must erect mass organizations which will ensure the maintenance of peace. (This, incidentally, will not only be a task for the German labour movement; it will also fall to the labour movements of other countries to prevent the rise of militarism and jingoism.)

The setting up of a new German trade union movement, just as the creation of other agencies, is not only an internal German affair. As a matter of fact, on the morrow of the war, and for some time afterwards, there will be few "internal German problems" in the ordinary sense of the term. For that reason alone the German workers will need the support in word and deed of the international trade union movement. But they will need more. They will need the prestige and guidance of the international trade union movement in order to build up a movement which, after having furnished proof of its reliability, shown its vitality and defined its policy, will be acceptable as a partner in the International on a footing of equality. I have no doubt that the underground groups which have worked under the auspices of the I.T.F. will gladly accept such intervention, call it interference if you will.

I will not speculate as to the situation which will exist in Germany at the close of the war. I assume Germany's complete defeat and unconditional surrender. I assume that the country will be occupied in some way or other and that the Allied High Military Command will be in control.

At that juncture it will be the duty of the International Trade Union Movement, regardless of the existing political and economic situation, to promote the creation and recognition of trade unions in Germany. To do so at the right, that is the earliest possible, moment, will have an invaluable psychological effect upon those German

comrades who have always in their heart of hearts and in their conduct remained true to the ideals of international brotherhood. We may not leave them in the lurch when they need our inspiration and encouragement to begin their heavy task of remoulding the minds of the German workers and saving them from utter demoralization.

* * *

I now come to the question as to how the construction of the new unions has to be undertaken. It has to be assumed that immediately after the Nazi terror weakens discipline will decline and nuclei will come into being in the factories with the aim of setting up workers' councils. In my opinion the new unions must also start work in the factories and should, therefore, base themselves on these nuclei. Generally speaking, the nuclei will consist of anti-Nazis and some of the members will have belonged to underground groups. These underground groups may have done no more than to keep alive contacts between former trade unionists pending the coming of better times—in any case they are the elements which will form the new rank and file. Our first aim should be to unite absolutely reliable anti-Nazis only and to bar all Nazi and unknown elements. Germany will be passing through difficult times. The Nazis know this too and if our information is correct they have their plans ready in case of defeat. At all costs, therefore, Nazi elements must be kept outside the trade unions and gradually isolated. To ensure this no one should, in the first phase, be admitted to trade union membership unless vouched for by a trustworthy trade unionist.

The trade unions should not, however, be based on the works councils. Such councils as are established later must be under the auspices of and answerable to the trade unions for their activities. The Nazi system, with its prevention of inter-factory contacts, and that of company unionism must not be accepted in any shape or form.

Once the reliable anti-Nazi elements have grouped themselves the time has come to admit the "indifferent" elements, i.e. those who were not pro-Nazi in the past. And in the third phase, say, after the elapse of twelve months, membership could be made open to all eligibles, with the restriction that those who have at any time held office or occupied a position in the Labour Front, or who have been members of the S.S. or similar organizations or otherwise active Nazis, will for a long time to come have to continue to be barred and never will they be eligible to hold any office whatsoever in the new trade unions.

From the foregoing it is clear that I am no supporter of a hurried creation of huge organizations. The growth must be a natural process, the enlightenment and education of the members must be taken in hand very seriously. The linking up of unions on a regional or district basis must also not be rushed. Whilst local patriotism should not be fostered, the delegation of power to larger units must be done with circumspection. One of the causes of the failure of the German trade union movement has undoubtedly been the over-concentration of power in the head office, resulting in the destruction of all initiative in the lower regions. Over-centralization leads to bureaucracy.

After some time there will be a need for central bodies, although it is difficult to foresee what the political set-up is going to be in Germany. Will there be a central administration or a decentralization of functions? Even in the latter case there will be activities on the federal plane, particularly in the sphere of social legislation. But however that may be, there is not likely to be any possibility of creating a National Trade Union Centre before national trade unions have emerged, nor of setting up a General Council of the T.U.C. before there is a T.U.C. Apart from that, would the Military High Command grant recognition to a General Council of a non-existing T.U.C. or will they be prepared to pay any heed to persons, let alone co-operate with persons whom they do not know?

I can see only one satisfactory solution, and that would be for the International Trade Union Movement to send representatives to take over provisionally some of the tasks which otherwise would fall to the Secretariat of a German T.U.C. These representatives should have at their side German advisers also appointed by the International Movement. In the meantime nothing should be done to impose any leaders, old or new, on the new German trade union movement. The election of their leaders must be the exclusive right of the German trade unionists. The German trade unions must learn to stand on their own feet as soon as possible, but that, I am afraid, is a process which will take several years.

To keep the whole process under control, German organizers, acting on behalf of the International Movement, will have to be appointed to assist in the formation of local (and later regional and national) unions and trades councils, and to report the progress made to the international bodies. It is obvious that the International Trade Secretariats will have to play an important part and that the organizers they appoint must be men who have won their spurs in the underground movement.

It has been said that among former German trade union leaders now living abroad the idea exists that the German trade unions will not accept foreign trade union control and object to being placed under military supervision, because they would then be looked upon as Quislings by the German workers, and that workers who have suffered under occupation will understand the force of the objection. For me, however, a Quisling is one who assists the Nazis to oppress his own countrymen and to make them work for the German war machine. Now the object of the International Trade Union Movement is to assist the German workers in throwing off the Nazi yoke and clearing the way for a new trade union movement. In view of the presence of so many desperadoes in Germany it is clear that the military authorities will be extremely suspicious of any attempt to set up any kind of organization whatsoever, so that representatives of the German workers will not be able to do a thing unless representatives of the International Trade Union Movement vouch for them. The latter, for their part, will also be subject to the control of the Military Command and will, therefore, have their own responsibilities. I am sorry to say so, but I have an impression that those who advance the objection I have mentioned are afraid of

returning with empty hands. Let us be careful not to stir up trouble which would bring grist to the mill of the nationalists who hope that their turn will come again.

In conclusion I would say that I am conscious of the dangers which will arise after the war. The International Trade Union Movement must safeguard the German workers from being used to reduce standards of living in other countries. It must save Germany from becoming the hunting ground of big business and international

finance. It must prevent the German workers from being reduced to slaves.

The International Movement can only achieve its objects in an atmosphere of frankness, unity of purpose and a sincere desire for co-operation. In active participation by the International Movement in laying the foundations and designing the pattern lies the best guarantee for the emergence of a sound German trade union movement, capable of taking its proper place in the ranks of the International.

THE EGYPTIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

For over 20 years the workers of Egypt have been striving without interruption to build up a trade union movement, as a means of securing collective agreements and social legislation to improve their working and living conditions. Among them the transport workers—private chauffeurs, taxi drivers and seamen more particularly—have been the most active.

The right of association still had to be won, however, and many an initiative was smothered in its infancy by the intervention of the authorities. The pioneers of the movement were accused of subversive activities, harshly persecuted and thrown into prison. The history of the Egyptian trade union movement has resembled that of many other countries. When it is written it will be a record of pioneers fighting with great fortitude and a true spirit of sacrifice. Undaunted by setbacks, they rebuilt again and again on ruins. As soon as one group had been broken up, another formed itself anew, to carry on the work amidst all the difficulties inseparable from underground activity. Always a small band of men held on, waiting for the time when they would be able to conquer their freedom and trade unions could fight in the open, and drawing hope and courage from international relationships maintained cautiously but steadfastly—with the I.T.F. among others.

Finally, the first fruits of long years of patient effort were reaped when a newly formed Government, in September, 1942, enacted a law recognizing the right of association and assembly. This is, indeed, a very carefully worded statute, which still has a number of loopholes and lays down various obligations and conditions difficult to comply with. Among other things the right to set up trade unions is denied to State servants, including railway workers, to agricultural workers and to hospital staffs (Article 2). Then it stipulates that trade union members will only be entitled to hold meetings after having given notice to the competent authorities (Article 20). Another provision states that trade unions may only combine to form a federation where they belong to the same occupation or trade or to trades manufacturing the same products (Article 26).

But in spite of these shortcomings, the first principles of free trade unionism have been won; it now remains for the Egyptian workers to use the position gained as a stepping-stone for fresh conquests.

With the enactment of the Trade Union Law the feeble pulse of Egyptian trade unionism has become firmer and resolute efforts are being made to make up for lost time,

In industrial regions organizing work is in full swing and trade union membership is already said to exceed 100,000.

In Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, Ismailia, Damamur and El Minya the transport workers are particularly active. In Cairo the numbers organized already exceed 7,000, in Alexandria about 3,000.

Much remains to be done, however, before wages and working conditions of the Egyptian workers can be raised to a satisfactory level. Will the Egyptian workers seize the opportunity and give an example to those of the other countries of the Near East? In their endeavours they can rely on the international workers' movement to support them to the utmost.

MAKING A WORLD ORDER

The United Nations, joined together for war purposes, are finding they cannot win the war without at the same time taking steps to win the peace. There is now unity upon military co-operation with desire to see the thing through as rapidly as possible. Simultaneously a number of committees and councils have been set up—a European committee, functioning in London; a committee in Italy on which Greece and Yugoslavia are represented; a committee in London on punishment of war criminals. U.N.R.R.A., the United Nations agency for relief and rehabilitation, has been organized and is accumulating funds for operation following a world conference. Other world conferences are in the making.

As a result of agreements at Moscow, Cairo and Teheran the U.S.S.R. already is planning its frontiers, making agreements with bordering small nations whose independence will rest upon American protection. It seems obvious that there will be four great world powers which will have a special responsibility for their part of the globe, so that upon them will depend progress toward personal freedom and the development of democratic institutions in their areas. The political power of the four dominant United Nations rests upon their economic resources, man-power, territorial expanse, national resourcefulness and virility.

This situation need not lead to the old balance of power tactics if democratic institutions and procedures are developed at the top. This is why labour is not content to see the new world order developed solely by government representatives. We feel that most of the international problems to be discussed in international conferences are matters with economic implications where industrial, agricultural and trade groups should be represented. We have as a precedent the constructive work of the I.L.O., with its tripartite basis. We also know the

THE RESURRECTION OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN ITALY

By O. BEĆU

Representative of the I.T.F. in U.S.A.

The writer has recently had the interesting and elevating experience of spending a fortnight in Southern Italy, re-establishing contacts with the workers there on behalf of the I.T.F. Ever since the invasion of Italy and the liberation of a part of the country, the workers in all democratic countries have had their eyes on the Italian workers. There was necessarily some doubt how they would react after having lived for nearly a quarter of a century under the Fascist yoke, and as to what use they would make of the liberties restored to them. The constitution of a new independent labour movement would provide the first test of the application of the principles laid down in the Atlantic Charter.

The I.T.F. long ago realized that the workers in the fascist countries, after being cut off so long from all organized activity other than what was possible underground, would need prompt and effective help in canalizing their energies as soon as they were released; so an appeal was made some time ago, to affiliated and other organizations, for funds for the purpose. It met with a generous response, particularly from the United States, Great Britain and Sweden; once more proving that international solidarity was no empty phrase. My mission to Italy, in company with other comrades, was the first practical utterance for the Italian workers.

Our work was done in an atmosphere strongly charged with emotion. More than twenty years of savage oppression have necessarily left their stamp on the population, and the dread of violence is difficult to overcome, particularly in the case of the younger generation, that has never known freedom, while the older men are almost overwhelmed by their release. But the workers as a whole are putting their heads together, and both old and young are uniting in local and district trade groups. Their call resounds throughout the country, and any one who would suppress it might have to pay dearly for the attempt.

The story of the revival of trade union activity in Italy falls naturally into two chapters; one relating to Sicily, which has been liberated for some time already, and the other to the Italian mainland, where the process of liberation is still in its initial stage.

The task of restoring the liberty of the Sicilian workers fell to the Department of Labour and Social Affairs of

League of Nations accomplished its most constructive and lasting achievements through its Economic Division. We know there is much that the I.L.O. could do in the relief and rehabilitation of war-devastated countries, with the International Federation of Trade Unions as a companion agency. The I.F.T.U. has invaluable labour information which will be indispensable to liberated European countries.

The new world order should be democratic from its beginning.

William Green, in "American Federationist."

the Allied Military Government, with the American Captain Dave Morse at its head. It was soon found that most of the Fascist so-called workers' leaders had fled to Rome, after destroying all documents, taking with them everything of value they could lay hands on. The first job to be tackled was the opening of employment exchanges, to recruit the workers needed to restart industry. It was a great success, as the workers offered their services spontaneously, leaving the question of wages and working conditions to be settled later, when conditions would become more normal.

Workers long known as anti-Fascists had in the meanwhile begun to organize the men in the factories, thus making ready for later developments. The Governor appointed for the Palermo district proclaimed shortly after the first trade union rights, the right of association, assembly and free speech, which were soon embodied in regulations effective throughout Sicily. Such leaders of the Fascist corporations as had failed to get away were dismissed. The prisons were opened, releasing men who had in many cases been imprisoned for twenty years or more in dark and loathsome dungeons, but for the most part they were such human wrecks that they had to be replaced and the leadership of the workers entrusted to younger men.

The enthusiasm of the workers was tremendous, and everywhere democratic machinery was set up for collective bargaining and for settling labour conflicts. Most amazing of all, the right to strike was recognized, even for the period of the war. They had an early opportunity of using this right, too. In impoverished Sicily there was a particularly acute shortage of food and clothing, and the Allied Powers had not only to supply their troops, but also to succour the population. The black market had to be eradicated, and a fair system of distribution assured. The workers submitted their proposals through their newly won trade unions, and when owing to the numerous difficulties the distribution services failed to work smoothly a strike was declared by the electricity workers of Palermo. Hitler, however, had no cause for satisfaction, to say nothing of his puppet Mussolini; nor was there any need for the military authorities to step in. The arbitration machinery was set in motion. It produced a settlement satisfactory to the workers, and after a blackout of a few hours' duration the lights went on again. Under democratic leadership the free trade union movement had done its job. To-day the Sicilian workers, both in factory and field, are strongly organized.

And now I come to the mainland, the liberated southern regions of Italy. Here, unlike Sicily, trade union rights have not yet been officially proclaimed, but following the example of their Sicilian comrades, and counting on the democratic powers at least recognizing these rights, the workers have started to build up a trade union movement. Encouraged by the help given by the

International Transportworkers' Federation, which has its representatives on the spot, the Italian transport workers, particularly the railwaymen, are playing a major role in these activities. In every town the call of the trade unions met with a warm response. Old socialist leaders, long oppressed by the Fascist régime but firm in their faith in the day of liberation, came to the fore; group meetings took place; new leaders were elected and old ones reinstated; and after the spade work had been done and the seed sown, the first free National Railwaymen's Congress, attended by 120 delegates, was held on 9th January, 1944, at Bari. It was opened by Bozzi, the leader of the local branch, and presided over by the I.T.F. representative, Paul Fano, and after discussions lasting two days, in an atmosphere of remarkable unanimity, the foundations were laid for future activities.

One resolution adopted declared that the name of the old pre-Fascist organization, *Sindacato Ferrovieri Italiani*, would be retained, and that its rules would form the basis of the new ones. The new organization is to be provisional until the complete liberation of Italy makes it possible to give it definite form. Its basis is declared to be independence of the State and of all political and religious organizations; voluntary membership; the fostering of a spirit of solidarity among the workers; close co-operation with other trade unions in both the national and international fields; and as an expression of the latter, affiliation with the International Transportworkers' Federation.

Another resolution welcomed the decisions of the Moscow and Teheran Conferences, and promised that to enable them to be carried fully into effect the railwaymen will spare no effort to free their fellow-workers in the northern regions still under enemy occupation, and to support the struggle for the reconquest of human rights and the ending of Fascist slavery. It also tendered warmest thanks and greetings to the comrades of the I.T.F., with whom the Italian railwaymen consider themselves to be in inseparable alliance until victory has been won.

A third resolution formulated a series of demands aiming to solve the most urgent economic and political problems, including punishment of Fascist criminals,

rehabilitation of all workers victimized for political reasons during the Fascist régime, a voice for the trade union movement in all public affairs, adjustment of wages and widows' and old age pensions to the cost of living, etc.

A fourth resolution affirmed the right of the Italian people to choose their own rulers under conditions of absolute freedom, and urged the immediate formation of a representative people's government on a broad political basis.

It was further decided to publish a free and independent Union journal, under the old pre-Fascist name of *La Tribuna dei Ferrovieri*. It may be added that thanks to steps taken by the I.T.F. thousands of copies of the first number of this journal were distributed among Italian railwaymen in the northern part of the country, still held by the enemy.

Both the older and younger generations were represented at the Congress. The older men, conscious of the deep importance of their task, saw that the proceedings were conducted in a businesslike fashion, and took full advantage of the freedom they enjoyed. When the old banner of the Union, carefully hidden since pre-Fascist days, was brought out, enthusiasm knew no bounds, and all stood and sang the old battle-hymn of the Italian workers. Grey-haired men could no longer control their emotions, and tears filled their eyes. The younger workers present, who had been reared under the yoke of Fascism, and who, therefore, had no memories of freedom to arouse them, were deeply stirred at the profound effect which the very mention of the word had upon the older ones. They have had an experience and a lesson that will remain with them all their lives. They were also able, be it haltingly, to voice their claims and grievances, and as a result of the Congress the concepts of class consciousness and of the workers' right to a voice in the economic and industrial life of their country have acquired a meaning for them. The awakening has come, and we are witnessing the rebirth of a free people.

An incident which occurred on the same day at a general meeting of the newly founded Tramwaymen's Union, also in Bari, shows the profound influence of years of Fascist oppression. The employers sent a representative to the meeting to inform the workers that they had no right of association and assembly, and that the proceedings must, therefore, be stopped at once. The bewildered workers, still under the impression of the conditions which have ruled their lives

for twenty-two years, would have been intimidated had the representatives of the International Transportworkers' Federation not been there to urge them to carry on, and only to heed orders coming from the public authorities. It transpired that the workers had nothing to fear from the authorities, and to their joy they were able

14 Gennaio 1944

(RISERVATO)

LA TRIBUNA DEI FERROVIERI

ORGANO DEL SINDACATO FERROVIERI ITALIANO

PRESENTAZIONE

Dopo oltre 20 anni di ingiuste e pesanti catene, il sorgere di un giornale che rappresenti la libera voce dei ferrovieri d'Italia è un avvenimento che non può non trovare consenso ed entusiasmo nel cuore di quanti, in detta lingua e oscura parentesi della vita nazionale, scerbarono intatta una sana

olluscata, nella tragica marcia del l'oscurantismo e del dissolimento, ogni spiraglio di sole.

Ma se gli ultimi venti anni per gli italiani sono stati una vita odiosamente non vissuta, se questa vita ha dovuto essere sacrificata tra le pieghe parulente d'una mostruosa terita aperta da un pagno di mat-

tozza tutto il terreno perduto ed elaborare, con serena coscienza del loro divenire, il conquiste, affinc e santa fatica sia e di tranquillità Il domani batte la parte, in una tragicamente di il nuovo assetto non tenere, pri, quelle che sono i billi del lavoro, l di completa indipendenza dai partiti, e ciò è stato chiaramente affermato

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR COOPERATION

A TRIBUTE TO EDO FIMMEN.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom writes in a circular letter: Alexander S. Lipsett, connected with the International Trade Union Movement since 1921 and an old friend of Edo Fimmen's, has written in a purely personal capacity a very interesting letter which discusses the need of continental and regional labour groupings in the post-war era. Mr. Lipsett refers to Mr. Churchill's address on post-war plans early in 1943 as having helped to crystallize and focus ideas which for many years have occupied the minds of outstanding labour leaders. "They were, of course, mainly interested in the problems of making internationalism among labour truly effective and were groping for ways and means toward that end. . . ."

"I also mention the valuable contribution of the late Edo Fimmen, general secretary of the International Transportworkers' Federation, toward this end and his views on international collaboration on a regional basis. I believe that you and many other friends will be interested in Fimmen's ideas and plans which considerably ante-date Mr. Churchill's programme and other post-war plans now industriously peddled in the United States and abroad.

"As far back as 1928 Edo Fimmen, having returned from a world tour on behalf of the I.T.F., began to press the advisability of regional labour groupings, with particular emphasis on the transport workers' movement throughout the world. In a remarkable address before the I.T.F. Congress of that year he stressed the fact that international relations have a natural tendency to establish themselves where common interests are greatest and most pressing, that is to say, between countries close to each other.

"The closeness of international relations is determined in the first instance not by idealistic but by purely practical considerations," Fimmen stated. It was Fimmen's view that the I.T.F. must envisage decentralization and advocate a new grouping of its forces on a regional or continental basis. "The future development of the

International Transportworkers' Federation should not be in the direction of an international federation to which every union is directly affiliated, but in the direction of a world-wide combination of a number of federations consisting of the unions of different continents, or perhaps parts of continents." These continental or regional federations, he added, should work in close co-operation and harmony and try to reconcile their varying interests within the framework of the I.T.F.

"There was whole-hearted agreement with Fimmen's views, and the Congress immediately authorized and inaugurated a programme 'which will enable the I.T.F. to meet in ever increasing measure the needs and wishes, both organizational and economic, of the extra-European organizations.'

"Efforts of varying intensity and success have been made in the past fifteen years to turn Edo Fimmen's blueprint into a practical reality. Developments in Asia, the Pacific area, and the western continent, both North and South America, are promising though the difficulties and handicaps should by no means be under-estimated. Hitler's war has created unforeseen difficulties and postponed steps which it is safe to assume would have proven helpful in carrying this programme further toward its final accomplishment."

to conclude their first free meeting without interference.

There has also been a great revival of trade-unionism in other industries. Of the hundreds of unions which were suppressed by the Fascists something like fifty have already been reconstituted, including, apart from the railwaymen and tramwaymen, the seamen, dockers, building workers, workers in the public utilities, telephone and telegraph workers, etc. After the reconstruction of their unions, the Italian workers now await the shaping of the new machinery of collective bargaining which will determine their wages and working conditions. This machinery must be created without delay, for the existence of a powerful and effective trade union movement can do much to place industrial and economic life on sound foundations. The awakening of the Italian workers will quickly express itself in concrete deeds, and it promises well for the future of a democratic Europe.

The I.T.F. is proud of being in the forefront of this reconstruction work, and can assure the workers of Italy, as well as those still awaiting liberation, that it will not flag for a moment in this work for the growth and progress of the international trade union movement.

ECONOMICS AND THE WAR EFFORT

China's trade with foreign countries, of course, is almost non-existent now. We gave China a credit of \$500,000,000 (U.S.) about a year ago. It could not be used, because there was no trade to speak of. So the latest stunt used to prop up China's tottering financial structure is the importation to China of \$200,000,000 of the \$500,000,000 in the form of gold bullion. The gold itself will actually be sent to China. And that means by air—a total of 80 to 100 airplane loads—at a time when there is not cargo space enough for weapons!

Just what the Chinese government will do with the gold was not decided when I left Chungking. They can issue notes upon it or sell gold in the open market, for \$10,000 (Chinese) an ounce. It cost them, at the official rate of exchange, \$700 (Chinese) an ounce, so they will do a good stroke of business if this policy is followed. If the bullion is sold, much of it will be purchased by those Chinese who have made money on the war, thus making permanent their war-time fortunes. It is certain that in such case much of the gold will find its way into Japanese-occupied territory, which means into the hands, eventually, of the Japs themselves. From an article in "The New Republic," entitled "Inflation in China," by Eric Sevareid.

WELCOME IN THE I.T.F.

The Management Committee was pleased to receive, during January, 1944, three new applications for affiliation to the I.T.F.

The Chilean Seamen's and Dockers' Federation (*Federación Industrial del Transporte Marítimo y Portuario de Chile*) has applied through the Chilean Confederation of Workers, and the application has been accepted, subject to the formality of ratification by the Executive Committee. This is the first organization in Chile to join the I.T.F., and we are hopeful that its action will open the way to further affiliations of transport workers' unions in that country.

The French National Seamen's Union (*Syndicat National des Marins de France*) is the second applicant for membership. Under the Vichy régime the *Fédération Nationale des Syndicats Maritimes*, which was affiliated to the I.T.F. up to the fall of metropolitan France, ceased to function as a genuine trade-union organization, and the crews of the mercantile marine of Fighting France reconstituted it as a section of the B.D.D.F.P., the organization of Belgian, Danish, Dutch, French and Polish transport workers established in the United Kingdom under the auspices and with the help of the I.T.F. The liberation of French North Africa brought in its wake the reconstitution of the whole of the French trade union movement, and with it the resurrection of the French Seamen's Union as an autonomous organization operating on French territory. It therefore became more than a section of the B.D.D.F.P., and applied for reinscription on the I.T.F. roll of effective member organizations, with all the rights and obligations attached to that position. The application was, of course, accepted.

The third application has come from Italy where, with the help of emissaries from the I.T.F., the Italian Railwaymen's Union (*Sindacato Ferrovieri Italiani*) has been reconstituted—the first trade union to re-emerge, in Southern Italy, from the ruins caused by over twenty years of the Fascist régime. By the day of its first General Delegate Meeting, held in Bari on 9th and 10th January, 1944, 18,000 members were reported, a figure which had risen a few weeks later to 23,000. The delegates decided unanimously on affiliation to the I.T.F., and the application was sent in immediately. In this case, as in the others, ratification of the Management Committee's acceptance is a foregone conclusion.

The extension of the I.T.F.'s membership in South America is particularly significant in view of the fact that it coincides with the reactionary doings of the fascist-minded military dictatorship in the neighbouring Argentine Republic, where the two railwaymen's unions—both affiliated with the I.T.F.—have been placed under Government control, and their leaders forcibly deposed. Democratic opinion in Argentina has been gagged, and the country is a centre from which anti-democratic and pro-Nazi intrigues are spun throughout the whole of Latin America. And this is the time chosen by the Chilean Seamen's and Dockers' Federation to show its solidarity with the foes of dictatorship by joining the I.T.F.

The resurrection of the French seamen's and Italian railwaymen's unions foreshadows the rebirth of the trade union movement over the whole of the oppressed European continent; and their reaffiliation to the I.T.F. is a testimony of the loyalty of the European transport workers to international socialism.

"REDEMPTION BY WORK" IN FRANCO'S SPAIN

Spanish workers condemned to several years of imprisonment for having fought in the civil war on the Republican side are now granted the privilege of redeeming, by work, a part of their sentences. Under one of the Generalísimo's laws, which bears the title of "Redemption of Sentences by Work," thousands of these men are "released" from the prisons and concentration camps.

The "release" is only a fictitious one, as will be seen from the conditions to which the men are subject. In the towns which suffered most from bombardment by aeroplane or artillery during the civil war, building contractors may apply to the authorities for the services of a certain number of Republican workers. For their work the men are paid two pesetas* a day, part of which goes to the prisoner's family, while the remainder is retained to pay for his food. The following is the daily routine which these forced labourers follow. They leave the prison or concentration camp, duly handcuffed or chained together, to start work at 8 a.m. on the job, where they are closely watched by the police. At midday they are allowed an hour to eat what is charitably called their dinner. They start work again at one o'clock, and

leave the job at five, after which they are conducted, with the same precautions as before, back to their prison or concentration camp.

In Asturias, where the repression has been most violent on account of the strong leftist tendency that has always characterized the population of that region, and the consequent resistance to tyranny and injustice, this method of reconstruction is used on a large scale, but where it is most favoured is in the mining districts. After imprisoning all leftists, Franco was faced with an acute shortage of workers to extract coal from the mines. To get over the difficulty he erected concentration camps in the neighbourhood of the mines, and from these camps the miners are taken to the pits, under the same conditions as the building workers, and returned after an exhausting day's work, inhuman treatment and a very poor dinner. In return, apart from the payment which has already been mentioned, the miners are allowed visits from members of their families twice a week. The meeting takes place across a double fence of barbed wire, and naturally under the closest possible supervision by a Franquist guard.

THE OUTLOOK FOR THE SEAMEN

By CHARLES JARMAN.

Acting General Secretary, British National Union of Seamen.

We reproduce the following article, by Charles Jarman, who is also chairman of the Seamen's Section of the I.T.F., with acknowledgments to "The Shipping World" in which it originally appeared.

*Oh, there'll surely come a day
When they'll give you all your pay
And treat you as a Christian ought to do!
So until that day comes round
Heaven keep you safe and sound,
And sailor, here's my best respects to you.*

Lines and rhymes, like these adapted from Rudyard Kipling, run in one's mind in thinking about the seamen's future. British merchant seamen have never yet failed their country. Will their country fail them when the war is over? The contribution to victory which the British Merchant Navy has made is beyond calculation or assessment in terms of money. It has been truly said that, no matter what the risks or sacrifices, if ships are available there will always be men to take them to sea. In what practical form will Britain recognize at the end of the war the claim of the merchant seamen for better conditions of service and higher rewards for the hazards they run, and the sacrifices their work entails?

Merchant seamen do not expect the post-war world to be a new Utopia. But they do expect that the pledges made and the promises given to the seamen will be redeemed. No indication has yet been given, beyond the views expressed by the representative body of shipowners on the National Maritime Board during the International Maritime Conference, of the way in which some part at least of the debt which the nation owes to the Merchant Navy can be liquidated. No programme of reconstruction applying to the shipping industry has yet been formulated in concrete terms. No statement of claim on behalf of the seamen has yet been put forward by the unions which are entitled to speak in their name. That will be forthcoming, in due course, as far as the National Union of Seamen is concerned. I really believe that the one thing which would send me berserk would be the erection of another stone memorial, or a multiplicity of stone memorials in every port, to those who gave their lives that our nation might live. The seamen want no such tribute as that; what they want is a clear recognition of the importance of the shipping industry, of

Similar conditions are enjoyed by the workers in factories manufacturing the armaments and munitions of war, of which Franco sends large quantities to his allies the Germans, and other members of the Axis.

This is the way in which the Spanish workers condemned for having fought for democracy and against totalitarianism are "redeemed." This is the way, also, in which Franco reconstructs "his" Spain, and enables his friends the Phalangists to grow rich out of the misery, hunger and slavery of the Spanish workers.

(From a Correspondent).

*The pre-war value of the peseta was about threepence. The present official quotation makes it about sixpence, but it is merely nominal.

the status that the Merchant Navy must be accorded, and of the service that seamen give and will continue to give in the post-war years.

An Instrument of Empire Policy. The first thing that has to be ensured, from the seamen's standpoint, it seems to me, is that the Merchant Navy is thought of as the instrument of an Empire policy. Its future must be safeguarded in a very different way from what was allowed to happen after the last war. If the shipping industry is allowed to drift and decline as it did between the two wars, then there is not much hope, or indeed any purpose, in talking about a better state of things for the officers and men who man our ships. Neither complete State control nor unbridled competition can solve the problem of the future of the Merchant Service. But I am satisfied that a measure of control combined with a sense of responsibility for the well-being of our mercantile marine will contribute to a solution of the problem.

Certain factors in the post-war situation can already be identified. An assessment of their value for the future has still to be made. One of these factors is that there will be at the end of the war a large surplus of merchant shipping, provided that the U-boat menace, which now appears to be pretty much under control, does not worsen. A large part of the merchant tonnage afloat at the end of the war will not be British owned; a very large proportion of it will be owned by the United States. Another factor, a corollary to this one, is that shipbuilding capacity, hugely expanded in many countries during the war, but particularly in the United States, will be available for the production of merchant shipping. If the old forms of competition are to be revived after the war these factors must be reckoned with; but if co-operation and co-ordination of merchant shipping services and the shipbuilding industry can be achieved, they place the problem in a different setting.

The position of the shipping industry at the end of the war, through the operations of these two factors, should be fairly favourable. A third factor enters into the calculation when account is taken of the imperious need for sea transport to supply all the countries that have been ravaged and devastated with the supplies they require to set their industries going again, to feed their populations, and to renew their social life. Both the importing and exporting countries will be able for a long time to come to make use of all the shipping facilities that are available. When I speak of surplus tonnage, I do not mean tonnage redundant to the requirements of world economy, or surplus to the needs of world trade. It is not unreasonable to anticipate that for years after the war our own Merchant Navy and that of other countries will be fully employed.

Changed Attitude of Shipowners. And here is the foundation and framework for those measures to improve

the conditions of service in the Merchant Navy, and to ensure a better future for the men of the sea. We have had evidence during the war of a change in the attitude of shipowners towards this question of improving the conditions for seamen. I take it as a good omen that trade union negotiations with the shipowners, through the National Maritime Board, have resulted in raising the basic wage of seamen both on foreign articles and weekly articles. Overtime rates, too, have been raised. Better compensation is now payable for loss of seamen's effects. Hours of labour have been reduced to a standard of 56 hours per week. The length of seamen's leave on pay has been extended. Seamen who are discharged sick in foreign ports are guaranteed their basic wage for a period of twelve weeks. There has been considerable improvement in accommodation aboard ship, in the food scales, and in compensation and pensions under the Mercantile Marine Services Pension Act. All this has been helpful in keeping up the morale of the seamen, and it affords a sound foundation upon which we can build for the future, particularly when we take into consideration, too, the development of plans for the post-war training of boys, and educational opportunities offered for the lower ratings to rise in the service. Developments of considerable promise have been taking place also in the catering department. These improvements and advances made under pressure of war conditions represent a long step towards the position organized seamen are determined to reach, where the Merchant Service will not be made the dumping ground for the riff-raff along the shore, nor delinquent boys be drafted into it by magis-

trates who do not understand the pride that men take in the service of the sea.

A Programme of Reform. This is but the beginning in the carrying out of a programme that will presently bring pensions for the men who have served long years at sea, and which will vastly improve the provision made for welfare centres, hostels, hotels and clubs, to replace the "flop houses," sailors' homes, and other institutions ashore. Seamen, who are also trade unionists, look forward to the post-war years as giving them the opportunity to build, upon the foundation of the existing basic wage and standard working hours aboard ship, a living wage which takes into consideration the standards of living of the seamen's families; a better scheme of holidays with pay; higher rates of compensation for injury, and a scale of pensions which is commensurate with the service that the old sailors have rendered to the community and to the Merchant Navy; still more improved conditions for sick seamen left abroad; more balanced, varied and plentiful food scales, and a continuance of the effort to improve accommodation aboard ship, in consultation, I hope, with representatives of the seamen themselves.

These measures, combined with the development of schemes for the training of boys, and with wider opportunities and encouragement—including financial aid—to all ratings to rise to the highest and most coveted posts on board ship, will make the Merchant Service worthy of the men who have kept alive its traditions during the war years, and have added a new lustre to the name of Britain in all the seas.

TOWARDS A NEW EUROPE—WHAT TRANSPORT SYSTEM?

By C. N. GALLIE.

General Secretary of the Railway Clerks' Association.

In "The Railway Service Journal," the monthly paper of the Railway Clerks' Association of Great Britain and Ireland, Mr. Gallie (who is a member of the I.T.F. European Transport Committee) centres some of his observations about the future of Europe on the problem of the organization of its transport.

We reproduce this passage as a contribution to the discussions that are now going on in the I.T.F. as well as in other interested quarters.

... It is rather surprising to me that nothing so far has been said with regard to the organization of transport on the continent after the war; its direction and control could have a tremendous influence on the industrial and economic life of Europe, and above all, the relationship between the peoples of the continent. Every student of social progress knows that in the old stage-coach days, before the development of railways with all their civilizing effect, people in one valley were almost strangers to people in the next, and were nearly as hostile to each other as if they were the inhabitants of different worlds. Is there not, therefore, a substantial reason for something being done which will help to break down the nationalistic barriers on the Continent? Is the idea of a Continental or International Transport Commission only an ambitious dream far removed from the realities of the situation, or is a unified system of controlling and directing all inland transport, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, established under the allied

Governments and the rehabilitated democracies, a sane and progressive possibility? I can see great potentialities in a scheme of that kind. It is audacious and tremendous, but considering the rail or inland transport of Russia, or the through inland services of the United States of America, or even Canada, I suggest it is at least something worth considering. In my view such an organization would establish closer contacts, and would develop a greater fundamental understanding between the peoples. It would certainly destroy the worst features of economic nationalism, which in Central Europe have been for years the breeding-ground of fears, antagonism and internecine warfare. Never again will a greater opportunity be available for such a transformation. When it is remembered that many of the railway systems of Europe were established for military and strategical purposes rather than for the social development of the people or the requirements of industry, and that in this war many of the railway lines have been lifted and transferred else-

UNION CONTROLLED DISCIPLINE IN PORTS

By Mr. E. ROACH.

Assistant General Secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia.

Much has been said and written in Australia and New Zealand about the desirability and necessity for the trade unions to enforce discipline on the waterfront. The factor that has been primarily responsible for this development is, no doubt, the fact that with the advent of the Stevedoring Industry Commission in Australia a change took place in the methods followed by the industry in peace time.

The following article on the subject, that has also aroused attention in New Zealand, has been taken from "The Maritime Worker," the organ of the Australian Federation.

In setting up this machinery, the Australian Government's desire was to obtain the quickest possible turn-round of ships—so vital in our present struggle against Fascism—and the Stevedoring Industry Regulations gave the Commission and its port committees an extremely wide range of powers to ensure this. Under these Regulations the Commission was given power to control the conduct of those engaged in the industry, and subsequently a code of discipline was drawn up to cover both the employers and the employees registered with the Commission; this code of discipline to be administered through the various port committees established in the main ports.

Objections. It became obvious that there were many objectionable features in this method of imposing discipline, particularly that imposed upon our own members, because on some port committees it appeared that some biased shipowners' representatives were out to vent their spleen against members of the Federation for previous actions which still lingered in their minds, and it has been claimed in some ports that there was a better opportunity for such biased shipowners' representatives to exercise their prejudice against a waterside worker than there was for the employee representatives to impose necessary discipline on any employer.

Discipline Essential. We must agree that discipline on the waterfront is a necessity, because discipline is a necessary adjunct to control, and the Commission having taken over control of the waterfront, was more or less compelled by the Regulations to introduce the methods of control to which we refer, but this did not by any stretch of imagination require that the Federation should give up its own rights in the matter, or that the Federation, through its branches, should just tail on behind the Commission's machinery, allowing the imposition of a code of discipline which would take away the power that the branch itself hitherto had.

Shelving responsibility. It has been suggested, and I believe that there is some ground for such a suggestion, that in allowing such a state of affairs to continue in some ports, the activities of the port committee in this particular direction interfered with our own domestic responsibilities and policy, because it was very easy to allow somebody else to shoulder the responsibility of imposing

where; and when regard is also paid to the fact that industries have been uprooted and removed from their original position, the whole situation is sufficiently fluid to be tackled in a bold and comprehensive way. Big as the project may be, it is no bigger than the world events which preceded this war, and those which will follow it.

discipline, thereby escaping some slight unpopularity that might develop because of the imposition of proper control. This attitude neglects the interests of the Federation which, since its formation, has recognized the need for discipline by the Union, and it must be noted that in those branches where this need has been appreciated and discipline imposed, we find our strongest branches. Therefore, in the interests of the Federation, and in strengthening its organization in the various branches, it is essential that we must develop a positive planned and independent role in regard to the control of our members.

One of our principal functions as a trade union is to make our own decisions on the conduct required, and the discipline necessary for our members, and in allowing any responsibility in this matter to go to any outside body, such as those set up under the Stevedoring Industry Regulations, we tend to weaken our own standing in the industry.

Our Strength Backed by Control. While recognizing this, and continuing our work through the port committees and the Stevedoring Industry Commission, on which we are represented and through which we are working to improve the dispatch of vessels, and at the same time provide that the work be done under the best possible conditions, we must remember that the strength of any case admitted by us is best backed by the control we ourselves exercise over our own organization, so that any decisions arrived at in regard to the policy arising from or through the Commission, can be immediately implemented by the branch or the Federation acting as a body. Therefore, in carrying out our independent role in relation to discipline, it is necessary that branches should recognize that discipline has been imposed by the Stevedoring Industry Commission through its port committees, only because our branches have not done sufficient about this important matter. It is not enough to protest against the Commission or the port committees' disciplinary methods, and express the desire for union discipline, we must do something more about it.

Improve the Rules. Branches must take this question of discipline upon themselves and, by improving and consolidating their present branch rules, take steps to see that an adequate code is drawn up, approved of by the Federal Committee of Management, and put into operation. To then ensure that the code drawn up will be successfully carried out, it must be kept in front of the mind of each member that if it is agreed that the discipline is to be imposed by the union, through the branch executive, and that body having acted, appeals are continually upheld at general meetings, we do not advance

from the position that many branches find themselves in to-day, because the Commission's machinery will still be in existence, and will assuredly function if we ourselves fail to do this job which is rightly ours.

Example of Port Kembla. Port Kembla can be quoted as a good example for the rest of our members. The Port Kembla Branch did not ask any outside permission or direction as to what discipline should be imposed, but seeing the necessity for the imposition of a proper code, drew one up, obtained the approval of the Federal Committee of Management, and saw that the code was strictly operated, being equally binding upon all mem-

bers, without exception. This happened many years before the Stevedoring Industry Commission came into existence, the result was that our organization at Port Kembla has always been a strong one, and the example is one that should be followed by each branch of the Federation that has not yet taken steps to impose its own code of discipline.

It is worthy to note, in conclusion, that not one member of the Port Kembla branch has yet been dealt with by the local port committee, the code drawn up by the branch being sufficient to deal with any offence that required the body's attention.

Read, Reflect and Write to Us

The purpose of this column is to provoke thought on world problems and those of our own movement, and it will contain matter from all parts of the world. This matter will be presented as it was served up, whether you or we like it or not. We are not responsible for the views expressed and for the present pass no comment thereon. Matter will be selected because it shows evidence of perceiving a problem, because it is calculated to provoke thought, and because it may contribute towards a clarification of thought.

Our first quotation is from "The Seaman," the journal of the British National Union of Seamen. Its general secretary, Mr. Charles Jarman (who is also one of the three members of the British Management Committee of the I.T.F.), makes the following observations under the title of "What are we fighting for?"

A radio announcement was recently made that the Islands of Sicily and Sardinia, together with all liberated Italian territory, are to be transferred to Italian administration. This caused me—and must have had a similar effect upon others—to think furiously. It was only recently that the list of killed, wounded and prisoners became known in the Italian campaign, and if these losses were sustained in order that Italian territory should be handed back to an Italian authority which has only to declare its good faith towards the Allied cause to secure Allied goodwill, then it is time we asked ourselves what is the real position? Certain penalties are inflicted upon our own serving soldiers for breaches of discipline, and these are said to be very necessary in order to obtain concerted action. But how can one square this decision with the decision to hand back to those who have helped to inflict large casualties upon our own people, the very territory upon which their blood has been spilt.

Then, again, it has recently been stated that certain British seamen have been ruthlessly dealt with by the Nazi authorities for attempting to set fire to their prison ship—and all we can do in this case apparently is to make a protest. Is it impossible for the responsible authorities to see that the enemy we fight is always ready to employ any cunningly devised scheme to place us at a disadvantage? We must exercise all the firmness possible in dealing with the Italian situation, or else we shall find ourselves being double-crossed. Surely, no territory won by hard fighting and at such cost to the young manhood of Britain, should be handed over to an Italian administration before the war has ended.

We take our next quotation from "Trade Union World," the joint monthly paper of the I.F.T.U. and the International Trade Secretariats. The general secretary of the I.F.T.U., Mr. Walter Schevenels, writes about the forthcoming International Labour Conference under the title "Social Revolution—by Peaceful Agreement?" We reproduce part of his article, presented under the sub-title "Peaceful or Violent Social Transformation."

... The coming Conference is going to be of decisive importance for the future of the I.L.O. There and then, the present ruling powers will have to show whether they will allow the I.L.O. to play its part in the profound social changes imperatively needed for the new world and much will depend on the way in which the vital questions on the Agenda are answered whether the I.L.O. will live or not.

At the New York Conference in 1941 and at the Emergency Council meeting in London, April, 1942, it looked as if all social forces believed that this fundamental social transformation was going to be realised in a spirit of general agreement and understanding. All participants in these two meetings, governments and

employers included, seemed to have realised that without these far-reaching social changes the coming new world had no chance of lasting for any length of time. The leading employers' representative correctly translated these views in April, 1942, when he said that a great measure of agreement had been reached on the main points and that it was only details on which some disagreement remained. A warning was, however, given by the I.F.T.U. General Secretary, when he replied to the employers' leader: "We may agree on certain general principles as we did in a very demonstrative and spectacular manner in New York in 1941, but it will be found that as soon as we leave the general formulas about which we are in agreement we disagree very deeply on the ways and means to be used to attain our goals."

What has happened in the capitalist world since then is not very encouraging. Between April, 1942, and December, 1943, those circles which actually retain tremendous economic and financial powers and even control governments, have not shown any willingness to harmonise their attitude and their action with those of their spokesmen in the I.L.O. Yet the latter felt quite at ease in generously repeating their previous demonstrations of goodwill at the latest Governing Body meeting in December, 1943. It would therefore be a serious mistake if organised Labour took these declarations for granted. The workers, taught by their daily experience in political and economic life, are used to taking only the hard facts into account. They will, therefore, await the positive action of the employers' class at the next International Labour Conference. There the general formulas and principles, on which there has been so much general agreement so far, will have to be translated into more precise and concrete decisions leading to immediate or early tangible results. We are, therefore, entitled to say that the 1944 Conference will be the real test for the employers and the governments in their approach to the new world order based on social justice. . . .

But let there be no mistake, this fundamental social transformation must come. If it doesn't come peacefully through the I.L.O. it will come otherwise just the same.

A REQUEST

The library of the I.T.F. has no single copy left of the monograph entitled *Reparations and War Debts from the Labour Point of View*, by M. Zwalf, which was submitted to its Congress in Prague in 1932. If any reader has a copy that he can do without, and will send it to the I.T.F., Crossland Fosse, Kempston, Bedford, we should be very grateful.