

V. b. b.

**SPECIAL NUMBER**

English Edition.

Unpublished Manuscripts - Please reprint

# - INTERNATIONAL - PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 6. No. 37

5<sup>th</sup> May 1926

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. — Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 66, Schliesfach 213, Vienna IX. Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Vienna.

## The II. Organisation Conference of the E.C.C.I.

3<sup>rd</sup> Part.

### FRACTIONS.

(Detailed Report.)

GERMANY.

#### Comrade Merker (Germany):

Since 1923 our influence in the German metal workers union has steadily dwindled. It is only quite recently that we were again able to make a little progress. The main cause of this is that our comrades in the German Party during the last few years showed very little interest for the everyday trade union work. The German Party was not yet reorganised on a factory nucleus basis, and we were unable to concentrate on the most important industries. I will give a short survey on conditions in the Metal Workers' Union.

The German metal workers union is the biggest organisation in Germany. Its membership in 1924 was 710,934. Since then the membership has gone up. Of the 700 administrative executive bodies, 131 have over 1,000 members. In 10 district locals there is a Communist majority. These 10 locals, which are under our influence, embrace 34,751 members. Thus, a comparatively small number of members are under our influence. In 57 locals of the aforesaid 131, there are active Communist fractions.

During the last few months we have tried to form trade union departments under the various section executives, in order to manage somehow to form fractions in the individual organisations. With respect to the formation of departments we at the same time carried out an investigation and ascertained that such trade union departments already exist in 67 towns. We have at the same time ascertained that the 39 administrative bodies of the metal workers unions embrace 163,904 members. Of these 6,132 belong to the Communist Party, but only 1,815 of them attended the regular metal workers fraction session. 40% of the Party membership are not yet organised in trade unions.

I will deal now with the structure of the fractions in the Berlin metal workers organisation.

The Communist trade union members are, in accordance with the structure of the local administration of the German metal

workers union in Berlin, amalgamated into branch and district fractions, which are directed by the district or branch fraction executive. Then there is also the fraction of the general meeting delegates and the narrower fraction executive (bureau) of the fractions as a whole.

The fraction executive consists of leading factory nucleus functionaries, who collaborate in the bureau, plus a trade union secretary and a comrade employed in the C. C.

There is a narrower and an enlarged fraction executive. The enlarged fraction executive is a body which at present consists of 60—70 members. In it are representatives of 23 district fraction executives, 7 main branch section representatives, etc.

The narrow fraction executive meets once a week. A session of branch delegates and a meeting of district delegates take place once a month. At these meetings definite current questions are dealt with and authoritative decisions are made.

In order to improve the connection between fraction work and Party work, trade union days were carried out lately. At the 10th Party Congress we decided to have a trade union day once a month. On that day all trade union fractions had to meet to discuss immediate tasks. Attendance is now much better and we propose to convene the comrades once a month also on a branch scale. A smaller fraction session in the 23 districts precedes these trade union days. The following fact alone will prove that attendance has improved everywhere. The district meetings of the fractions on December 28th, were attended by 293 comrades out of 3,000. The subsequently arranged meetings were already attended by 790 comrades. The explanation for this great step forward is that the Party apparatus is beginning to bring more pressure to bear on Party comrades in the nuclei and sub-sections, urging them to attend fraction meetings.

A few words on the connection between the fraction and the nucleus, the sub-section, the section and the trade union department of the district executives. There is no direct connection between the fraction and the nucleus, this is kept up through

the organisation of the fraction. Branch fraction meetings are attended by members working in the nucleus, so that every nucleus member is familiar with the work.

**Connection between the fraction and the trade union department** of the Berlin-Brandenburg district executive is kept up through the metal workers fraction secretary being at the same time member of the trade union department of the Berlin-Brandenburg D. E. C. In this way direct connection is established.

To raise the necessary funds for fraction work, we proceed in Berlin as follows: The cashier of the district executive issues **stamps**, which are sold by the fraction among the comrades. This is a contribution just like any other Party contribution, except that it can only be used for fraction purposes.

In Germany it will be necessary to concentrate on the following in the near future in order to bring about systematic work in the trade unions: The most important thing is a policy which the workers can understand, slogans, the correctness of which can be exemplified by the workers own experiences. Further there is necessary the complete reorganisation of the Party on a factory nucleus basis and the politisation of nuclei. This is a prerequisite of effective work as 90% of trade union work must be carried on in the factories, in order to create the necessary premises for systematic fraction work. There must also be **more adequate control over the trade union adherence of Party members**, — the latter must be taught to understand the important role of the trade unions in the class struggle. Finally, it is essential to train all our members in fraction and trade union everyday work.

### Comrade Oberdoerster (Germany):

I will limit myself to reporting on the fraction work in the German Consumers' co-operative league.

**Fraction work in the co-operatives** still lags behind fraction work in the trade unions. We have 26 societies with in round numbers, about 100,000 members, under our leadership.

The co-operative bureaucracy, which as everyone knows is the most reactionary section of the reformist bureaucracy, has managed to manipulate the statutes of the co-operatives in a manner to ensure its domination in every way possible. At the election of delegates in 1924 we polled 51% of the votes, and at the last election 45%. But owing to the manipulations of the bureaucracy the percentage of Communist representatives elected to the leading organs is much lower.

It is essential to have a good fraction or a good active fraction executive not only for the whole area of the co-operative or consumers society, but also a **local fraction** in every locality, and in every **distributing centre**, as the lower co-operative unit. Such a fraction structure is as yet to be found only in one consumers society. To be sure we have fractions for the whole area, but in most cases we lack them in the lower distributing centres. If we mean to achieve real successes we must work systematically from below.

Here I would like to state that since 1924 our influence in the co-operatives has **diminished**. If we are to work successfully in the co-operatives, it is not enough to form fractions there, but we must lay the foundation for this work in the Party. For this purpose it is essential for every Communist to join a co-operative, and to be active in the co-operative movement, not only by making his purchases in the co-operative, but also by fraction work. It is also essential to attach to all Party newspapers for collaboration special responsible co-operative functionaries.

We have a **Co-operative Department** in the Central Committee of the Party. But district executives should also have organs which concern themselves with co-operative work. Moreover every section, sub-section and nucleus should have a **responsible co-operative functionary** — not only in the street nucleus but also in the factory nucleus.

If we form fractions in the consumers' cooperatives, and special organs in the Party executives, to carry on Communist co-operative work, we will create the necessary premises for the successful activity of our Parties also on this field.

### Comrade Grübner (Org. Depart. of the E. C. C. I.):

I think that after Comrade Merker's speech many comrades will have the impression that we in Germany are already well on the road to the formation of trade union fractions, that we have already adopted a definite line and know in what direction we will be going. I think that this is not correct. About two or three months ago we had a heated discussion on the question of fractions in the trade union leading organs and we had to realise that even among the leading comrades of the trade union department there was no real understanding of the importance of fractions in the leading organs. They failed to understand the meaning of a fraction in the leading organs. Only a little while ago many comrades in Germany failed to understand that it is absolutely necessary for us to hold positions in the trade unions. They were satisfied with ideological influence. The reorganisation of the Berlin Metal Workers' Union is an entirely new affair. Reorganisation on a district and branch fraction basis is only about six weeks old. There is as yet no definite policy for the carrying on of fraction work and we have as yet no executives on a district scale.

The relation of the Party apparatus (trade union departments) to the fraction executives are also far from ideal. Comrades who should be in the fractions stick to the trade union department, or rather the trade union department takes the place of the fraction executive. Comrades think that the Party apparatus must do fraction work and not the comrades in the fraction. Therefore, I think that Comrade Merker was right in saying that fractions and their executives must be allowed to work.

### FRANCE.

### Comrade Roger (France):

I propose to deal with the metal workers in my district. There are about 33,000 metal workers there, including 20,000 in the district capital. Their distribution is as follows: 20 factories employing from 100 to 3,000 workers and 200 factories employing less than 100 workers. The Metal Workers' Union belongs to the Unitarian trade Union Federation (C. G. T. U.) and there is no reformist trade union. The **Unitarian metal workers' union** has at present **700 members** out of 20,000 metal workers. The reformists tried to form a trade union but they failed.

In May-June, 1925, we instructed our comrades to form a fraction. The fraction in this trade union has 80 Party members, but it must be admitted that only 20 are active in the trade union. Fifteen of the others work exclusively in the Party and do not concern themselves with the trade union movement.

During the Morocco war we instructed the fraction to mobilise the Metal Workers' Union against the war. Our directions were carried out only in part and this further augmented the workers' lack of interest in the metal workers union.

Between June and November, 1925, on the instruction of the Central Committee, we formed a **fraction in the trade union executive committee of the metal workers**, but this fraction functions poorly. To bring about an improvement, the **trade union department of the district executive** convened all the Communists to a meeting. We found it necessary to change the composition of the committee of this trade union, and all the Communists present voted for a list of comrades who were to be nominated for the trade union committees. This list of candidates was elected. It includes 13 Party comrades out of 20 members of the trade union committee.

The present situation of the trade union is not very satisfactory. We have endeavoured to form **trade union sections (branches) in the factories**, but met with serious obstacles. Even Party comrades fail to understand such simple matters as, for instance, the amalgamation of all those organised in trade unions according to the place of their employment. Nevertheless, we hope to be able to form these trade union sections in the factories in the course of a few months.

**Proletarian unity committees do not exist.** The trade union department of the district executive concerned itself directly with the fraction. The connection was established through a member of the trade union department who is also a member of the fraction in the trade union committee.

The comrades constituting the new committee are politically very weak. They have not yet realised the importance of work in the trade unions. The fraction turns its attention much more to the struggle between the various tendencies than to the workers' conditions. The result is: that the general meetings of the trade union are attended by 30 to 40 members.

In December we held an **information-conference** for all Communists active in the trade union. Of the 70 comrades who were invited, 60 attended the conference. We can say that our conference has had good results. Our fraction is beginning to work more seriously, it turns its attention to the position of the workers and examines all measures to be taken.

Three thousand workers are employed in the works of the adjoining town. There is a **Unitarian trade union** there, built up on a territorial basis, and having 300 members. There are no other enterprises in the place. The nucleus members constitute at the same time the trade union fraction. During the short period of its existence the fraction has done fairly good work, with the result that the membership of the Red trade union section has slightly increased. 50 new entries can be registered. Ten new members were also added to the Party nucleus.

The trade union department of the sub-district has been in working order for the last two months. It controls the work of the fractions, issues instructions and sees to it that the instructions of the trade union department of the district executive are carried out promptly.

All the fractions of the metal workers' union in the district are still inactive. It is only a few months ago that we formed the fraction in the trade union committee. But this did not eliminate the difficulties and two months ago we formed a fraction of all the Communists in the local trade union. There has always been a good connection between this fraction and the trade union department of the district executive. The latter issued instructions which, however, were not always carried out.

#### CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

### Comrade Hosicki (Czecho-Slovakia):

Our district has 178,365 wage earners employed in industry, commerce and agriculture. In our district at the last elections, we polled ten times as many votes as we have members. When we began our activity as the new district executive after the last district Party conference there were no fractions whatever in the district. We have 11 trade unions, of which 3 are Reformist.

In the „**International General Trade Union Federation**” (a revolutionary union) (I. A. V.) we have hitherto found very little understanding among the secretaries of this organisation for the necessity of fraction work within its unions. Hitherto the comrades have opposed the formation of fractions as unnecessary in revolutionary unions. It was only after the experiences in the Building Trades Union that we were able to persuade them to abandon their resistance. After the I. A. V. Congress a conference of I. A. V. secretaries took place in which our district secretaries also participated. They pledged themselves not to hinder us any further in our fraction work, but on the contrary to give us every possible support.

Work in the reformist organisations could not be carried on because of lack of Party members within these organisations. However, in the recent wage struggles in our district we were able with the help of our **fractions in the factory councils**, to arouse the textile workers organised in the Reformist unions. At least our factory nuclei took care that Communist fractions are being formed in all the factory councils. These fractions are to champion the struggle for trade union unity.

We are aware that our fraction work and the influence we have on trade unionists are as yet inadequate. Nevertheless certain results have been achieved, and as soon as we will have developed fractions in the trade union organisations our work will make still more progress. I must say that we have formed **no fraction apparatus** in the trade unions of our district, neither in the reformist nor in the revolutionary unions nor in the elected organs and groups.

Fraction work in the co-operatives is above all important in the big consumers co-operative which has 30,000 members in our district (most of whom are Communists and sympathisers). The leader of this co-operative takes up a passive attitude although he is a member of the Party. This weakens our posi-

tion in the co-operatives. This has also been a useful object lesson to the Communist members of the co-operatives, showing as it does that in the co-operatives one cannot depend on individual “influential comrades”, in lieu of forming fractions. We have made a beginning with fractions in the various retail centres of the co-operatives and have already formed fractions in 15 such centres in our district, among the membership as well as in the **administrative council**. However, the majority of the distributing centres are still **without fractions**.

Hitherto there were no fractions in the **federation of workers gymnastic clubs**. But during the recent Party crisis our members came to the conclusion that here too fractions are unavoidably necessary.

### Comrade Kohn (Czecho-Slovakia):

In his report Comrade Hosicki has to a certain extent dealt also with fractions in cooperatives and workers gymnastic clubs. I will therefore limit my remarks to the trade union fractions.

We have, firstly, the **revolutionary trade union federation** which, together with the independent unions, has 200,000 members. Then there is a reformist trade union federation of the Czech Social Democrats with 250,000 members, a Czech **National-Socialist trade union federation** with 200,000 members and finally, the **trade union federation of the German Social Democrats** with 200,000 members. All this together amounts to 850,000 out of one million trade unionists in Czecho-Slovakia. We also wield influence besides over the revolutionary trade union federation, over about 75,000 workers in the trade union federation of the German Social Democrats, as well as over 75,000 workers of the Czech Social Democratic trade union federation — which means that about 350,000 trade unionists are under our influence. Of the 100,000 members of our Party 85,000 are organised in trade unions including 55,000 to 60,000 in the revolutionary trade unions.

Railwaymen are organised in the National-Socialist trade union. While we also have a **revolutionary railwaymen's union**, the traffic workers are organised in the National-Socialist trade union, a big union with a membership of 60,000. It behoves us to form fractions everywhere. We are now in the midst of a big recruiting campaign. We intend to recruit 50,000 members. They will have to remain under any circumstances in the reformist trade unions and to be formed there into fractions.

In the central committee we have a **trade union department** which functions well. It consists of comrades who work in the trade unions and one comrade who is a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. We discuss there all our affairs and our decisions are binding. But what about the fractions in the various unions? Formerly we had only **fraction delegates** in every local union. But this proved unsatisfactory. Subsequently we formed **national fraction executives for the various unions**. We collected the most trust-worthy comrades and constituted them into a **national fraction executive**. We said to ourselves that there are comrades in the trade union central committees who managed to get there just because they are not reliable Communists. But they have shown us that this attitude of ours was entirely erroneous, that without these people who are in the central trade union committees, we cannot get along and that without drawing them into the work we cannot be successful. On the other hand we have of course also comrades in the trade union committees who actually had to be placed under the control of the party executives. We have not succeeded everywhere in keeping up **direct connection** with the trade union departments of the district executives. Frequently we had to correspond **direct** with the fractions in the local trade unions. But this has not proved satisfactory. It is essential everywhere to correspond **direct** with the trade union department of the district executives, as thereby we can make them responsible for the work.

We attained good results in our work among the **building workers** where only a few months since we had **no fractions**, the situation for us was very difficult. The **central committee** of the union consists **entirely of Communists**. The chairman of this union suddenly went over to the reformists and endeavoured to transfer the union to the Amsterdam International. We began post-haste to form fractions, especially in the Prague district, because the influence of the Party C. C. was strongest there. We managed gradually to get the majority in the Central committee to side with us. We are now making preparations for an emergency Trade Union Congress at which at least 90% of the membership will be represented. Our experience in the

building trade union has been an object lesson to our comrades with respect to the necessity of having fractions, and since then they are much more in favour of fraction work than before.

I am coming now to the situation in the I. A. V. We can say that ideologically we have defeated the former anti-fraction attitude there, and that the comrades have promised to help us in our fraction work.

With respect to work in the reformist trade unions, for a long time a confusion of ideas prevailed in the Party. For a considerable time the attitude was that everywhere one must simply transfer whole groups of workers from the reformist unions into the I. A. V. At present our standpoint is different: Fractions must be formed, the unions must be captured. We have made a beginning with this work.

In the **Czech Social Democratic, Czech National-Socialist and Christian trade unions** we have no Communists, and we are endeavouring now, with the help of the fractions, to form **Left wings in the factory councils**. Our fractions in the latter are demanding everywhere that factory councils should convene factory meetings with the slogan: trade union unity, and in many cases this is being done.

Generally speaking fraction work with us is still in its initial stage. Only a few months ago we had no fractions whatever. But we believe that now that the question has been fought out ideologically we will make progress.

#### NORWAY.

### Comrade Voss (Norway):

At the time of the split in the **Norwegian Labour Party** we had already trade union fractions in Oslo. When the split came the fractions became, so to speak, our Party organisations. The various fractions in the **industrial groups** were amalgamated into **industrial fractions** and constituted our lowest Party organisation. When reorganisation came they of course lost their character as Party organisations. The fractions were also reorganised and their members were amalgamated into groups industrially. We have in Oslo 114 craft unions. In 66 of them we have formed fractions, with 21 we have contact and with 17 we have no connection whatever. Connection with unions in which we have no fractions is kept up through individual Communists, or through sympathising members of the **Tranmael Party**, or through the group expelled from the **Tranmael Party**, the so-called workers' opposition. In the 7 biggest unions in Oslo the Communist Party has an **absolute majority**. In a considerable number of unions we have a substantial minority, in 4 big unions we control the executive.

For us 1925 was an important year, many trade union congresses as well as a national trade union congress being held. This gave a great impetus to the work of the fractions. The latter were developed and organised in connection with all important politico-trade union questions. In many trade unions Communists succeeded in getting delegates to the Congress. It was of extreme importance to capture the **metal workers union in Oslo**, a stronghold of the **Tranmaelites**, with 5,000 members including 130 Communists. The fraction worked so well that it gained a **majority** at the meeting.

The following campaigns were carried out by the fraction: firstly, a campaign for **national unity**. There is in Norway a **trade union Federation**, but many trade union central committees do not belong to it. The Communist fractions agitated for affiliation to the Federation, as for instance in the **telephone workers', firemen, engine drivers, masons** and other unions, with the result that some of them have already affiliated. The second important campaign was for **international trade union unity**. In connection with this the fractions did good work. Owing to Communist pressure a unanimous decision was made to affiliate to the **Anglo-Russian Committee**.

In Oslo the Party is very weak politically. It polled but few votes at the municipal elections. On the other hand it is fairly strong in the trade unions (600 Communists control 33 to 35% of the membership).

As to the **formation of fractions**, they have only been formed in 4 unions out of 29. In the remaining unions we have as yet no success in this direction. In most of the **local trades councils**, except that in Oslo, **Communists have a majority**.

Every fraction has an executive. The Communist members in the committees of the various unions are at the same time members of the fraction executive. The fractions themselves are subordinate to the corresponding Party executives. Some of these fraction executives are already doing independent work but some are still very weak and get the help of the Party, which convenes fraction meetings. About one half of the fractions in Oslo work independently, whilst the other half depend on help from the Party. The Communists in the fraction executives are under the direct control and leadership of the Party.

#### FRANCE.

### Comrade Vilatte (France):

I would like to report on the fraction work in the **Tenants' League of the Paris district**.

At the beginning of 1925 the Party wielded considerable influence in this League. There were no fractions in the lower tenants' sections, but whenever there were conflicts with the Reformists, Communist caucuses were arranged for this or that section. After the reorganisation of the Party these meetings were discontinued.

The **Social Democrats** required all their members of the League to sign a document which contains the following statement:

"I give my word of honour not to belong either, to a Communist nucleus or a fraction, or a tenants' commission."

It is self-evident that this was sure to lead to a split, which in fact is what happened. There are now two tenants' organisations in the Paris District.

Our **Paris District tenants' organisation** has 30,000 members and 53 sections, 14 of them in Paris itself. The social composition of our organisation is as follows: 80% workers, 20% middle class. In the **Paris district Party Executive** we have a **tenants commission** which, however, only began functioning two months ago. Although last year we did not have any fractions in our tenants' organisations, we endeavoured through the **Org Department of the district executive**, to maintain regular relations with the Communists active in the householders organisations. Some time ago fractions were formed in the old reformist tenants' organisation where no split had taken place. Before putting up questions of a political nature for discussion in the tenants' organisations, they are gone through by the **Communist fraction of the tenants' organisation committee** in conjunction with the **narrower executive (bureau) of the Paris district Party executive**.

The main reason for the inadequate organisation and work of the Communist fractions in the tenants' organisations is the unsatisfactory work of our lower Party executives (section and sub-section executives). Now that we are reforming our lower executives we will no doubt be able to carry on better fraction work also on this field of the tenants' organisations.

### Comrade Dubois (Org. Depart. of the E. C. C. I.):

I will deal with the activity of the **metal workers fraction of the Paris district**.

There are in the Paris district 250,000 metal workers. The **Unitarian metal workers union**, which is under our influence, has 5,000 members. Up to January 1925 there were no trade union organisations in the factories. It was only in January 1925 that **trade union sections** began to spring up in the factories. This in most cases is due to our nuclei. Since the organisation of the metal workers' unions was transferred to the factories, through the formation of trade union sections, 1,000 new members were recruited.

There are 6 local organisations in the **Paris metal workers district committee**. At the trade union congress in June 1925, an **executive commission** was elected as the leading organ of the trade union. It consists of 25 members, all of them Communists.

Fraction work is as yet weak. It has been ascertained that among the 5,000 members of the metal workers' district union, there are about 1,000 Communists, who therefore constitute a considerable core of the membership. During the report period 2 general meetings of Communist metal workers of the Paris district were convened, both of them prior to the trade union Congress in June 1925. But only 70 Communists put in an appearance as none of the comrades from the provinces attended

the meeting because of the long distance. Things were no better with respect to the second meeting to which all the Communists of the Paris district were invited. It was a mistake to invite the Communists of the whole district to one meeting.

As to the metal workers local organisations, of which there are 6, in the Paris district, no general meetings of Communist members were held there, which means that no fractions were formed.

It must be admitted that the work of the district fraction was not particularly fruitful, which, moreover applies to almost all the fractions of the French trade union organisations.

As to the question of connection between the fraction and the Party organisations — the district and sub-district Party executives, generally speaking, were not in close contact with the corresponding fractions. With respect to the district executives of the Party the situation, until quite recently, was the same, because these executives do not have adequate and well-functioning trade union departments at their disposal. The same applies also to the Paris district executive. In the trade union department of the Paris district executive there were comrades who were not very active, and therefore one may say that the fractions had to carry on their work almost entirely by themselves. However, of late the trade union department of the Paris district executive has become quite energetic and has also begun to control the activity of the fractions.

### Comrade Knoflicek (Org. Department):

In the Czecho-Slovakian trade unions the conditions for our work are very complicated. First of all there are very many different trade union organisations, and therefore not only trade union federations of various tendencies, but also a splitting up of the trade union movement even in the factories.

Another circumstance is the existence of comparatively strong Red trade union organisations, most of which are affiliated to the R.I.L.U. The membership of these Red trade unions is over 200,000 and they have sections in nearly every town. When dealing with the question of the Red trade union movement we must draw attention to an important phenomenon: — many comrades, especially those active in trade union organisations, fail to understand the distinction between the Party and the trade union organisation. There is much confusion of ideas in this respect. On many occasions, for instance, at a conference of the Railwaymen's Section, questions were discussed which fall exclusively within the competence of the Party. This failure to distinguish between the role of the Party and that of the trade unions is a characteristic and serious feature which impedes correct activity on the part of the Red trade unions as well as on the part of the Party.

A study of the speeches of the representatives of the Red trade unions at organisation conferences, or at the C. C. Plenum, shows that the officials of the Red trade unions fight shy of the organisation of nuclei and endeavour to frustrate Party leadership of the Red trade unions.

These defects must certainly be remedied.

In connection with trade union work I should also like to say that in Czecho-Slovakia one cannot remain indifferent to the organisations existing in the factories — the factory councils. Almost everywhere there are factory councils and in them the influence of the Red trade unions is considerable.

Factory councils stand closer to factory nuclei. This offers an opportunity to combine the work of the Party in its lowest organisations with trade union work. In some places it has happened that, thanks to the factory councils, we have succeeded in getting large numbers of unorganised workers to support us.

In the factory councils Communists have brought to fruition a practical plan of work by which the unorganised as well as the members of the other trade unions have rallied around our Party.

The necessity of building up and developing fractions was discussed at the last Party Congress. On that occasion, with respect to the connection between the fractions and the Party, one came to the conclusion that Party executives are to play a leading role in the work of the executive. However, trade union fractions must be given an opportunity to convene conferences of Communists of the subordinate organisations subject to the consent of the respective Party executive.

In Czechoslovakia there are in addition to the trade unions also various peasant organisations. The most important and strongest among them are under the influence of the Agrarian Party. There are also Clerical and Social-Democratic unions of small peasants. Lately there have been formed peasant unions which are under Communist influence. The central committee of the "Moravian Poor Peasants Union" has its seat in Brünn. Important tasks are confronting these organisations, because they are agrarian mass organisations which represent the economic interests of the large sections of the population. There are also connections with co-operatives, which are for the most part under Communist influence. There is, for instance, a big co-operative society in Prague, in the committee of which there are several Communists.

It should be stated that the comrades active in the co-operatives carry on hardly any Communist work. This resulted in a number of wrong moves in the practical work of these organisations.

With regard to sport organisations their position is similar to that of the trade unions. Sport organisations are split up. There are Social-Democratic organisations, and also organisations under Communist influence. But in the eyes of some comrades even Red sport organisations are a kind of Party organisation and with respect to their relations with the Party there is a similar confusion of ideas as in the trade unions. Thus the main task in connection with organisations outside the Party consists at present in paying more attention to trade unions, in carrying on ideological work on a large scale, and in enlightening functionaries and members alike on the role of the Party towards the trade unions.

We must also increase our influence in the mass organisations (co-operatives, sport and other organisations), consolidating it organisationally by means of fractions.

### ITALY.

#### Comrade Bianchi (Italy):

At present the trade unions in Italy are in a very difficult position as a result of the well-known fascist laws.

Already after the congress of the C. P. I. in Leghorn (1926) a trade union department was formed in the C. C.

The structure of the fractions is as follows: there is a central trade union department, fraction executives for the various unions, and fractions in trades councils. In the main the structure of the fractions corresponds to the structure of the trade unions. In every union the central fraction executive is connected up with the local fractions.

A number of provincial workers' conferences, and subsequently of regional congresses, were held. Two national congresses were also organised by the central trade union department. As to work in the trade unions, we held congresses of the metal workers, textile workers and building trade workers. At all these congresses Communist fractions were very active. In this connection it should be stated that the Y. C. L. also held two congresses and carried out two agitation campaigns.

The fact that fascist organisations had to appeal for legislation in their favour shows that after three years of governmental activity they were unable to capture any workers. Under duress they were able to organise a certain number of peasants.

#### Comrade Piccolini (Italy):

In Italy trade unions have to contend with great difficulties. Our work is made very difficult through fascist terror and reformist sabotage.

Our influence in the trade unions has grown considerably, especially during last year. This is best shown by the following election results: In the textile workers' union, in April 1925, the Reformists polled 45% of the votes (as against their former 70%), the Maximalists 23% (as against their former 19%) and the Communists 31% (as against their former 11%). At the elections to the Milan metal workers' section in June 1925, the Reformists polled 25%, (formerly 33%) the Maximalists 36% (formerly 37%) and the Communists 39% of the total vote (formerly 30%).

From the numerical viewpoint the bonafide trade unions have certainly slumped severely during the past year. In the autumn of 1925 there were still about 130,000 members in the trade unions, whilst at present there are probably not more than

40 to 50,000. Of these 7,000 can be reckoned as under **Communist leadership**, about 8—10,000 under **Maximalist**, and about 20—30,000 under **Reformist leadership**. The real influence of the Communists is, however, much greater, in any case greater than that of the two other tendencies.

The C. P. must wage its struggle in the trade unions on two fronts: against the **fascist offensive** which seeks the complete destruction of the class struggle trade unions, and against **reformist sabotage** which endeavours to manoeuvre the trade unions into the hands of the fascists and which aims at the complete elimination of the influence of the trade union membership on the executive.

In order to defend the **bona-fide trade unions** and to reconstruct the **Trade Councils** and unions dissolved by the fascists the Party has initiated a campaign for the formation of **agitation committees in the factories**. In Milan such agitation committees were dissolved by the fascists, who arrested all the committee members. **Reformists** and **Maximalists** do not allow their members to participate in these agitation committees. Nevertheless, in **Milan** and **Turin** such committees were formed, composed of **Maximalist, Reformist, non-Party and Communist workers**.

The **fraction work** of the Party was under the guidance of the "**National Trade Union Committee**" (Trade Union dept.) of the Party. The **fraction work** in the various **trade unions** is carried on by the **central fraction executives** of the respective unions. The latter are directly connected with their **local fractions**. There are also fractions in the **trades councils**, which are subordinate to the respective **trade union department of the district Party executive**. There are fractions in the **lower trade union organisations and executives** but the direction of the fraction is not in the hands of the Communist comrades in the respective trade union executive.

**Fascist unions** (cooperations) were able to bring up their "membership" to about 1.5 millions through their terrorist methods. In some categories (**railwaymen, tramway workers, sailors, etc.**) the workers are compelled to accept the fascist union membership card if they are to find any employment at all. There is **no organisational life** there as in the trade unions. The executive autocratically decides everything over the head of the "members". Communists too have to join the fascist union in order to hold their jobs.

The most important question is the **defense of the trade unions**, which must be **numerically strengthened**, and the **elimination of the reformist sabotage** of the economic struggles of the working class. To the extent of the Party's success in bringing the workers into the trade unions the reformist sabotage will be broken down and the Party will succeed in winning the leadership of the Italian trade union movement.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

### Comrade Robson (England):

I will first report on the work of the communists in the **Textile industries**. In the **Lancashire cotton industry**, the workers are well organised from a numerical point of view, 88% being members of Trade Unions. The **Yorkshire Woollen industry** is not so well placed, the percentage of workers in the trade unions being about 60%. The **Jute industry of Dundee** shows similar figures.

There are over 100 different unions in the **Cotton Textile Industry in Lancashire**. What few members we have are isolated and spread over all these unions. The **day to day work of the unions** is carried on by the functionaries with monthly E. C. meetings — full membership meetings being called only half-yearly or in some cases annually. **Party fractions do not exist in an organised manner**. Preceding the general members' meetings, Communists hold a meeting and decide what each one must do in his or her **own local meeting**. Up to the present the activities have been confined to popularising a programme of immediate demands, developing a **Cotton Textile Workers' Minority Movement**, etc.

This means that our primary task lies in the factories. The **Manchester D. P. C.** clearly recognising this gives special attention to its factory group organisational work. In 7 of the largest factories we have lately succeeded in organising **Communist groups (nuclei)**, whilst concentration groups are operating in

8 others. Six factory papers have been established and others are projected. **The papers and groups (nuclei) carry on a strong campaign in favour of 100% trade unionism**, more frequent meetings, and the building up of a **Minority Movement** in the Unions.

Much more success has attended our **work in the woolen unions of West Yorkshire**. Here there are 29 unions but all are subject to the central leadership of the **Textile Unions' Federation** which is composed of representatives from all the unions.

In all cases the Party fraction commands the support of a larger body of **Left-wingers and sympathisers**. Prior to the quarterly meetings the **District Industrial (trade union) Department**, in consultation with important fraction members, discusses lines of policy and gives a lead to all Party fractions which meet beforehand, discuss the lead, appoint speakers and movers of resolutions (in many cases from amongst supporters and sympathisers). Success has attended these efforts.

The most important union in the textile industry from a strategical point of view is the **Woolcombers' Union**. This is the first process Union and in the event of a stoppage of work by this union the whole industry can be held up. The **delegate board** is composed of 72 delegates. On the E. C. of the Union there are two Communists and 5 sympathisers which gives the **Left Wing** the majority. This majority of committeemen is often defeated by the **Minority** of five plus the three officials.

It was the work of the Communists (especially in the **Woolcombers**) which was responsible for the propaganda and agitation which resulted in the **Textile Unions refusing to agree to the proposed reductions in July 1925**. A **lockout of 250,000 workers** was the result.

The **District Industrial Department** gave the correct lead. Our comrades demanded that the 29 unions should agree to the negotiations being conducted by a **Council of Action** — not drawn from any union representatives as such, but elected by the local Council of Action which in turn had been elected in the factories. This proposal was rejected by the reactionary majorities on the 29 union Executives with the exception of the **Woolcombers**. But the Party fractions called for unity of all the workers involved and the **Local Councils of Action came into being in every district**.

Now the work of the Communists is to get all the "live" elements from the "Council of Action" organised in the **Minority Movement**. For this purpose two all-in conference have been arranged during February.

Secondly, I will report on the work in the **mining industry**. The officials of the **Miners Federation of Great Britain** admitted that over 300,000 miners are **unemployed** throughout the various coalfields. The unemployed problem, gradually increasing for the above reasons, creates ever greater discontent among the **British miners**.

In the coalfields the number of branches, or **Lodges** as they are generally termed, of the **M. F. G. B.** varies. In some centres one Lodge embraces all miners, although they may be engaged at different pits; in other centres there is a lodge for the workers employed at each pit. Meetings of the Lodge membership are held at short intervals and a special meeting when required is fairly easily arranged. Lodges in a certain area (for example, **South Wales**) constitute a **district**, and a **District Committee** is elected by ballot of the district membership.

Districts in turn, within a given coalfield area, constitute a **Federation** and a **Federation Executive Committee** is elected from the members of the respective districts.

A given number of Lodges, through their **District Committees**, can demand that a **delegate Conference** of the Federation be called. **Thirteen Federations constitute what is known as the Miners' Federation of Great Britain**.

The **Party work** in the respective coalfields vary considerably. In some of the coalfield areas there is no organised communist trade union work. In this connection it is generally agreed that our Party works best in the Lodges of the **South Wales Miners' Federation**, which is one of the strongest Federations comprising the **M. F. G. B.**

Prior to general meetings of the Lodge membership, **Party members meet and take decisions** regarding the chief items on the agenda for the meetings; speakers are selected to put the Party case on matters of importance, resolutions are prepared in advance, and when an election of Lodge officers is about to take place candidates are chosen.

As a result of the work of our comrades considerable success has been achieved in South Wales by getting Party members elected to **Lodge Committees**, or comrades appointed as Checkweighmen, or delegates to Conferences.

Our comrades endeavour to secure and have been successful in getting the support of **Left Wing elements** and sympathisers. In this connection Party fractions have consistently endeavoured to organise the Left wingers and sympathisers within the **Miners Minority Movement**, on the basis of **Minority Movement Pit Groups**.

As a result of our organised work 16 Lodges of the M. F. G. B. embracing 14,554 members are affiliated to the **Miners Minority Movement**. There are, however, taking the respective coalfield areas, approximately 100 miners minority movement groups, of these 35 are in the South Wales coalfield, 15 in Durham, 16 in Yorkshire, etc.

All our experience in the trade union field clearly indicates that the urgent task of the Party organisationally is to force the pace for the speedy and complete transference of the Party membership to the factory and pit basis. This work proceeds steadily, and as the task approaches completion and factory and pit groups (nuclei) become firmly established, and the members experienced in responding effectively to the Party leads, it should be possible to strengthen the Party membership, increase our influence, and thus influence the development of the **Miners Minority Movement** and generally exercise an ever increasing influence among the miners in the various coalfields.

Where there are **Minority Movement Groups** in any T. U. organisation, the Party members co-operate with these groups, meeting previously to discuss procedure.

The organised communist work within the **Trades Councils** is under the supervision of the **Trades Council Department** of the **London District Party Committee**.

Within the **Trades Councils** in the London district we are working and exercise our influence. In each **Trades Council** we have a leader whose duty it is to convene the meetings and pass the lead received from the **District Party Committee** to the Party members.

Instructions are also sent to the **Local Party organisations**.

The most important work controlled by this Department is that of the **London Trades Council** consisting of 47 Communist delegates; these comrades meet monthly, one week previous to the regular meetings of the **London Trades Council** which is a federal body composed of delegates from **Trades Councils** and **trade unions** in the London area.

On the executive committee of the **London Trades Council**, 12 in number, are 5 Communists who also meet each week, previous to the meeting of the E. C. of the **London Trades Council**.

Each leader reports on results to the **District Party Committee** stating the attendance at meetings of party members and also the attendance of Party members at the meetings of the bodies within which they work.

In the **London District Council** of the **National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement** and in 17 local branches of the unemployed organisation throughout London our party has a strong influence. This work of our comrades is also supervised by an appointed member of the **District Party Committee**, from which they regularly receive instructions, and to which they report results of their work and difficulties met with or any information of use to the Party.

Communist work in all the bodies above mentioned is very closely connected and for this reason the comrade in charge of work among the unemployed is a member of the **district industrial departmental committee** in order that contact with this department which supervises the work in the trade unions, may be achieved.

Communist activity in the **co-operative movement** is as yet in its elementary stage, but already some success has been achieved. Inside four **co-operative guilds** in London systematic work is carried on. The **Departmental Committees** send instructions to Party members regarding the line to be followed at the quarterly meetings of the **Co-operative Societies** as well as pushing ahead the work inside the **Co-operative Guilds**, a large number of which as a result of these efforts have sent in requests for Communist speakers to address the guilds on the Party programme.

U. S. S. R.

## Comrade Murashov

(Representative of the Communist Fraction of the Moscow District Committee of the Textile Workers' Union):

I should like to draw your attention to the structure of our trade unions and to the methods of trade union leadership through our Communist Party, particularly to the forms of this leadership as well as to the whole substance of fraction activity.

The Russian Communist Party always paid considerable attention to questions concerning influence over the masses and the leadership of the masses. The reports to which I listened here have given me the impression that on the whole a number of brother Parties have a clear conception of the importance of the leadership of the masses through the Party. But, comrades, a mere understanding of this question is not enough. A much more important, but also much more difficult task is **anchoring ourselves organisationally in the masses, active participation by our Party members in mass organisations, painstaking every-day work by our comrades in these organisations** in order to consolidate there our influence organisationally and to win organisations outside the Party, first and foremost the trade unions, for the tactics and slogans of our Party. It is not enough when the rank and file in the organisations outside the Party follow our slogans and ideas, it is also essential that our Party comrades should win the confidence of the members of all these organisations by dint of steady every-day work and that they should be elected to the leading bodies of these organisations from the highest to the lowest.

Our trade unions have a number of peculiarities. In the main they are as follows:

1. Our trade unions have two-fold tasks to fulfil: the first task consists in representing the economic and juridical interests of the workers; but another and no less important task of our trade unions under proletarian dictatorship is the development of our industry and participation in the constructive work of our Socialist State, an active and manifold participation of our trade unions in the building up of the new Socialist society.

2. Our trade unions, as big mass organisations, came into being later than the Party. As strong mass organisations embracing the entire working class (which with us is actually the case for in our country at most only 5% of wage earners are outside the trade unions) they came into being only after the October revolution when our Party was already strong and had been active for 25 years. Therefore, we found it much easier than the West European parties to capture influence over the trade unions.

3. With the third peculiarity everyone is familiar: it consists in our trade unions being **industrial unions**. For instance in a textile enterprise all the trade unionists in it belong to the **Textile Workers' Unions**, etc. Thus our trade unions are industrial unions, their basis is in the factory, the lowest trade union organisation is in the factory and not in the residential district.

The basic elective trade union organisation in every enterprise is in the **factory council**. In other respects the structure of our trade unions is as follows: the **district trade union**, for instance, the textile workers' union, embraces the trade unionists of all the textile enterprises of the district. The boundaries of the trade union district coincide with the administrative districts of the country and with the boundaries of the Party districts. An intervening grade between the trade union organisation in the factory and the district trade union are the **subdistrict unions**. The district trade unions are amalgamated in the **All-Russian Textile Workers' Federation**. This is the structure of all our industrial unions.

Then we also have **inter-trade union organisations (trades councils)** the construction of which is as follows: up to quite recently the primary inter-trade union organisation was the **sub-district trades council** which had to superintend the entire trade union work in the sub-district. Thus every sub-district trade union of a federation, for instance, the textile workers' union, is under the leadership of **two authorities**: on the one hand under the direct leadership of the **district committee of its union** and on the other hand under the leadership of the **sub-district trades council**. The **district unit** of the **Textile Workers' Union** is on the one hand under the leadership of the **central committee**

of its union and on the other hand under the leadership of the **district trades council** in which all the trade unions of the respective district are amalgamated. The same is the case on a U. S. S. R. scale: the **V. C. S. P. S. (General Trade Union Council of the U. S. S. R.)** superintends the **central committees** of the various trade unions and the **district trades councils**. Thus the **V. C. S. P. S.** superintends the **central committees** of the trade unions and the **district trades councils**; the **district trades council** superintends the various **district trade unions** and the **sub-district trades councils**. Such is the structure of our trade unions. It is much simpler than that of the trade unions of the capitalist countries.

The fourth peculiarity of our conditions consists in that the **leading role** in the trade union movement and the trade union organisations is entirely in the hands of the **C. P. of the U. S. S. R.** — from the factory councils up to the **U. S. S. R. trade union council**. There was a time when our factory councils consisted entirely of **Communists**, the same being true in the trade union **district committees** and all the more so in the **U. S. S. R. trade union council**. But of late more and more **non-Party workers** are being elected to the leading trade union organs. For instance at the last factory council elections (committee of the basic trade union organisation) in the **Moscow gubernia** we witnessed that **42% of the factory council members were Party comrades** (members and candidates of the **C. P.**) and **10.3% members of the Y. C. L., 47.7% of the factory council members thus being non-Party workers**. Thus with respect to mass influence and Communist activity in the leading trade union organs we are far in advance of the Party comrades in the capitalist countries and in the reformist trade unions.

In what way does the Party exercise its influence over the mass organisations? Exclusively through the respective **Communist fractions**. **Communists form a fraction at a congress or conference**. **Communist members of the factory council constitute themselves into a Communist factory council fraction**. **Communist members of the plenary meeting of the District committees of the trade unions organise a fraction, etc.** There is **no fraction executive in the factory councils**. In broader organs, for instance in the **plenum of the district committee**, which consists of 50 to 70 members and in which there are many **Communists**, a **fraction executive** is elected which is identical with the **Communist fraction of the bureau of the district committee**. The **Communist fractions in the bureaux of the trade union district committees are at the same time fraction executives for the corresponding trade union district committees**. These **Communist fractions are subordinate to the corresponding executives**.

**How do the Party executives direct the trade union fractions?** The **C. C. of our Party directs the Communist fraction of the U. S. S. R. general trades union council**. The latter directs the fractions of the **central committees of the various trade unions**. The **district Party executive directs the Communist fractions in the committees of the district trades councils and the fractions in the committees of the various trade unions**. The **sub-district Party executive directs the fractions of the committees of the sub-district trades councils**. Finally the **factory nucleus executive directs the fraction in the factory council**. Leadership of a lower fraction through the fraction just above it is no longer practiced by us. But formerly, when our Party was weaker, a connection always existed between the fractions of the higher and lower organisations. Lately, since our Party has become very strong organisationally, we have come to the conclusion that under our trade union and Party conditions it is expedient to subordinate the fractions of non-Party organisations to the **Party committees** and to abolish leadership of one fraction through another fraction. With respect to this the last Party congress adopted a statute according to which there must be no organisational connection between the upper and lower fractions in the non-Party organisations.

I will deal now with the **character of fraction activity**. The tasks of the fractions, as formulated in our Party statute, consists in that the fraction exercises Party influence in the non-Party mass organisations and serves as an organ for Party control over the activity of these organisations.

I will give an example: the **textile workers' district congress** was held here recently. Of the delegates, 45% were non-Party and 55% were Party and **Y. C. L.** members. During the trade union congress the **Communist fraction met twice**. At the

first fraction session the following questions were up for discussion: 1. Election of a bureau of the trade union congress fraction whose business was to direct the current work of the Congress on Party lines, 2. the agenda, the standing orders, etc., of the trade union congress, 3. nominating candidates for the congress presidium, members of the credentials commission, etc., 4. an instructive report by the **Moscow Party executive** on the activity of the Communist fractions, 5. the general draft resolutions of the Congress, 6. since the work of our **Central Committee** showed certain shortcomings, the resolution to be adopted at the congress on the report of the **Central Committee**, apart from general approval of the activity of the **C. C.**, was also to point out all the weak points of the work. This resolution had to be discussed by the fraction in order to enable us to follow a definite line at the plenary session. This is in brief the character of the activity of fractions at trade union congresses, at conferences, congresses, etc.

To a certain extent I have already mentioned how a fraction of the plenum of elected organs comes into being. For instance: our district congress elected a district committee of 67 members and 12 candidates. As already mentioned 35% of them were non-Party. We convened a session of the **Communist members of this district committee** and we made decisions with respect to the election of the district committee bureau and consequently also the election of the fraction executive. With respect to the current work of the Plenum, the fraction discusses first of all the directions of the respective Party executive, in this case the **Moscow Party Executive**. We must carry them out and we do so, hence our discussion confines itself to the manner in which these Party directions can be transformed into the decision of a non-Party organisation and how they can be applied in the leading trade union organs. This is our foremost practical task. Secondly: there arises the question of whether we discuss, at the fraction sessions, measures concerning the development and improvement of trade union work. Most certainly. Because we are the vanguard of the working class it behoves us to take the initiative and to develop trade union work in all its branches. At the fraction sessions we review past activities and discuss future measures.

Fractions make a careful study of all Party directions and endeavour to elaborate them into trade union measures. The fractions sum up the work done and make proposals for the remedying of prevailing shortcomings in trade union work.

**How are fraction decisions carried out in the leading organ of the trade union?** For a time there was among us an inclination towards high handed measures: once we are in the majority, we put the matter to the vote, and there is an end to it. We consider such an attitude utterly wrong and even where the **entire leading organ consists of Communists we carry on fraction work**. Every question is first discussed in the fraction before being placed on the agenda of the committee session, and a corresponding decision is arrived at. Proposals are not always made in the name of the fraction, frequently there is no need for this and individual comrades simply come forward with a motion of this kind. Comrades, what we consider most important and essential is that fraction activity should on no account stifle the initiative and self-activity of the leading trade union organs. On the contrary: even when a question has been thoroughly discussed in the fraction and is quite clear to Party members, we participate in the discussion in the leading trade union organ, where there are of course non-Party members, other-wise there would be no sense in drawing non-Party workers into the various organs.

The last question with which I propose to deal is the **method the Party executive employs in its direction of trade union fractions**. In the practice of the last but one period of activity, especially in the factories, we witnessed the following phenomenon: the Party nucleus and the nucleus executive discussed questions of trade union work and the decisions arrived at were carried out with the help of the **Communists in the trade union organ in a purely mechanical manner without discussing the question in the trade union**. However, the Party soon realised that such procedure is wrong, as 1. it practically eliminates the Communist fraction of the factory council, the committee of the trade union organisation, 2. it stifles the initiative of the **Communists in the factory council**, and 3. it substitutes fraction work for the work of the trade union organi-



sation. For instance, there came up for discussion the question of whether special clothes were to be given to a certain group of factory workers. This question was discussed by the nucleus executive and not by the trade union organisation. This was utterly wrong. The Party came to the conclusion that the everyday work must be carried on with the help of the factory fractions and that the Party organisations should only issue general instructions to them. The methods adopted by the Party executive aim at giving the fraction only general directions so that they can develop more independence and initiative within their limits, in order to be able to carry on practical work. On the other hand, whenever a fraction lays its proposals before a non-Party organisation it must take care not to stifle the initiative and self-activity of the non-Party section of that organisation. Formerly the mode of procedure was as follows: the standpoint of the fraction was explained, a resolution was proposed and adopted because it expressed the interests of the workers and yet the non-Party workers did not even know a thing about that particular question. But our new mode of procedure is as follows: although the fraction has discussed the question a report must be presented on it at the Plenum. It must be discussed and the proposed resolution, namely, the decision of the fraction, must be a result of this discussion.

## Discussion.

### Comrade Vilatte (France):

I should like to make the following remarks concerning the two questions raised by the Org. Department of the C. I.:

The first question is: Does the fraction executive of the metal workers' union in Paris receive its instructions directly from the Party Executive (trade union department) of the Paris district, or through the medium of the fraction in the executive of the Paris district trades council? In France we work as follows: all trade union fractions (and all other fractions) are directly subordinate to the corresponding Party executive and therefore the Communist fraction of the metal workers' union of the Paris district is subordinate to the trade union department of the Paris district executive and receives its instructions directly from the latter. Fractions are not connected with one another, connection is kept up through the Party apparatus only.

The second question is: Why are fraction meetings, although badly attended, convened as general meetings in the Paris district, why do they not take place in the various sub-districts? Our commission to investigate the fraction in the metal workers union of the Paris district has spent a whole year on the systematic reorganisation of that union from a territorial basis to a factory group basis. Therefore, I must say that whilst our Party was very remiss in trade union work during 1925, the metal workers' union was busy forming trade union factory groups. It is for these reasons that we neglected fraction work.

We will now make a beginning with this work in order to build up our fractions in accordance with the new structure of the trade union organisations. It goes without saying that one must not convene general fraction meetings for the entire Paris district metal workers' union, as they cannot be well attended.

### Comrade Piatnitsky (Org. Department):

At the first Org. Conference we elaborated theses for the fractions, we dealt with them in the commissions and I do not remember that anyone had anything to say against the theses. In explanation of this question I wrote an article on the work of Communist fractions in trade unions to which no exception was taken. Therefore, one might assume that everybody was in agreement with this article and the theses. But as we see, this is not the case. Considering that comrades are now making this question the main issue of our deliberations, representing it even as the only contentious question, this is a proof that the Parties have begun to work in the trade unions; to form fractions and to be really active. It would be well for all the comrades to participate in the discussion and to tell us whether the theses which we have now elaborated can be applied or not.

Just a few words on the activity of the Communists in the factory itself. Trade union work in the factory is not limited to the fraction of the factory council. We have also delegate meetings (body of functionaries) in the factory. Delegates are elected by the workers, one delegate per 10 to 15 workers. At the factory delegate meetings not the current questions of factory work but the most important questions are discussed.

What are the tasks which we impose on our Party nuclei, our Communists who, all of them, are organised in trade unions?

Their task consists in taking an active part in trade union work in their capacity of trade union members; if they are delegates they must attend delegate meetings regularly, they must take an active part in the work of these meetings and must carry out the directions of the nucleus and the Party. At general factory meetings too, Party members and candidates have to be present and defend the standpoint of the nucleus on all questions discussed in the latter.

In conclusion I should like to say that clarity in the matter of the forms and methods of the Party executive, particularly in this question, is the most important premise for spreading Communist influence among the masses. The conference, which aims to solve this question, will do us a great service and its decisions will give a stimulus to our further activity.

What then should be the work of the fractions what Executives shall they have, what comrades are to be in the executive and what connection must there be between trade union fractions and party organisations, between fraction and fraction? These are the questions with which I propose to deal. Hitherto not all Party members eligible to trade unions have joined them. This must be admitted. I have received from the German Party a list on which districts are named where only a small percentage of Party members is organised in trade unions: Upper Silesia 42%, Silesia 48%, the Ruhr District 35%, whilst the other districts fluctuate between 60 and 80%. And the whole in Germany about 60,000 of the Party membership is organised in trade unions.

Matters are even worse in America where we have only 40% of our Party members in trade unions, in Czecho-Slovakia 50 to 60%, and in France not more than 50%. This cannot be allowed to continue. Our Parties must carry on a big ideological struggle so that every Party member, without fail, joins a trade union. I speak with emphasis of the ideological struggle, because in Germany the procedure was as follows: after the Frankfurt Party Congress a "decree" was issued, a date was fixed and whoever was not a member of a trade union before the expiration of this date was to be expelled from the Party. In this manner about 400 comrades were lost to the Party.

At present there are more opportunities for work in the trade unions than hitherto. Why? Firstly, we have now a fulcrum in the factories: nuclei can carry on an ideological struggle and exert pressure to bring all our comrades into trade unions. Secondly, the centre of gravity of trade union work can be transferred to the factories. This is not a theoretical argument, we have already experience in this respect which must be utilised. I will give you a few citations. The following statement about a motor works nucleus is contained in the report of the German Party:

"We started at the beginning of 1925. Only two of the 32 delegates were Party members. When a meeting of the workers of the shop was convened one of our two comrades was informed, that he should be there as a member of the section Executive. He then made a report and explained the attitude of the respective shop delegate. The consequence was, always, a vote of censure and the election of a comrade into the section Executive. In this manner we gained 11 delegates within half a year and now we have 13 comrades in the section Executive."

A nucleus of 12 comrades in Battersea (London) writes, as follows:

"The workers were about 75% organised. The group (nucleus) altered that.

One strike was against non-unionists. There was bickering between the A. S. L. E. & F. and N. U. R. and E. E. U. and other unions. The group made it its object to break this down and an

all inclusive workers' committee was formed. When the company tried to break down the factory paper the men stood by it, until to-day we have reached a position where the men are willing to follow any reasonable lead given by the Party. They are not exactly revolutionary; but any working class lead on current economic questions will get their support."

In this manner the nucleus achieved a great success. Many workers joined trade unions. What is the result of such tactics? Firstly more members are added to the trade unions and new trade union officials are also elected in the factories. Since we are the ones who brought the workers into the trade unions, Communists are elected. Communists consolidate their position and are able to get into their hands the minor official posts in the trade unions.

I should also like to emphasise that our comrades must carry on the small everyday work in the factory as well as in the trade unions, and must not limit themselves to high politics. It is only by steady everyday work that our comrades can get influence in the trade unions and can capture them. One more thing: Communist workers must also be active in Christian, National-Socialist, fascist and other trade unions. I have only a few figures about Christian trade unions. One can safely say that there are a couple of million of Christian trade unionists throughout the world. In Belgium the general Christian trade unions have 200,000 members, in Poland 160,000 in France 125,000, in Hungary 133,000, in Germany they had once as many as 900,000 but have now only 600,000 members. They are represented in the metal and building industry and everywhere. Hitherto, we have not been active among these workers. How can we expect to get the majority if we do not work among all workers, even though they be Christian or National-Socialist?

In Germany and France, fractions were formed in two different ways. In Germany we have a certain amount of influence in the lower trade union organisations. On the other hand, only very few of our comrades are in the leading trade union organs. Matters are different in France. We have a Communist majority in the Central Committees and we have also Communists in the lower organs, but no fractions in the lower organisations and also in the leading trade union organs.

The reports of the German Party show that there are 1,226 trade union fractions in 14 districts, 50 of which can be considered active fractions. Six districts report that together they control 81 local administrations. In one district 25 trades councils are in our hands.

As to France let us take up the Central Committees. The Central Committees of the metal workers and agricultural labourers unions are composed entirely of Communists. The committees of the chemical and transport workers' unions consist almost entirely of Communists. The Central Committee of the foodworkers union has 18 Communists among its 26 members. In the dockers union four of the six members of the Central Committee belong to the Communist Party.

Actually, what is a fraction? It is the amalgamation of the Communists in all non-party organisations (Trade Union, Co-operative, Sportorganisation etc.). It must be the group of the organisation which is best equipped with knowledge and who works the most actively and consequently and thus gains the confidence and the following of the entire membership. Thus fraction work is only part of Party work. Can a fraction concern itself with all Party questions? Certainly not. The fraction must always deal with questions which come up for discussion in the respective non-party organisation. All other questions must be dealt with in the Party organisations.

If we consider this necessary condition — and it cannot be otherwise — then a fraction in the trade unions cannot deal with all manner of questions which are within the competence of the Party. According to material received the German Party has Communist fractions in the lower trade union organisations. I cannot tell if these fractions are really active. We have received statistics from the Party in Thuringia. There they have 52 fractions in the metal workers union, but only 15 of them are active. There are 15 fractions in the builders masons, and carpenters' unions, but only one of them is active. There are 45 fractions among woodworkers of which only 4 are active. Among the miners there are 16 fractions of which only 1 is active. Among the miners there are 16 fractions of which only 1 is active: among railwaymen, 30 fractions, of which 4 are active etc. As yet the work of the fractions is very inadequate. Why? Firstly because there are no fraction executives; secondly, because at

regular fraction sessions Party questions are also dealt with, this is detrimental to the work of the Party organisation as well as to that of the fraction alike; thirdly, the fractions had a wrong political conception of the trade union question, the tactics of the Party in the trade unions were wrong in that they consisted in too much indulgence in "high" politics by the fractions in the trade unions, to the detriment of everyday questions. If fractions had carried on daily everywhere in the factory and in the trade unions, the necessary everyday work, we could have reported better progress in the trade unions.

Fraction work in France has been tackled in a quite different manner than in Germany. In France there are many Communists in the Executive, but the idea prevails that to have Communists in the Executive is sufficient to secure Communist influence even when fractions and fraction work are lacking. We once had the case when a Party declared it had the support of the entire railwaymen's union since the entire Central Committee was in the hands of the Communists. But when the Government arrested the Central Committee, the entire trade union did not join in the railwaymen's strike which had been declared. I very much fear that something similar might happen in France because no fraction work is done in the trade unions from the bottom to the top.

One more thing: in France some comrades are of the opinion that there must be a fraction in the elected organs, but not in the lower organisations. Comrade Sauvage said for instance:

"I am an opponent of permanent fractions, namely, fractions in the lower organisations which as a rule wind up as trade union parties or co-operative parties parallel to the Party. Our entire work must be conducted on a nucleus basis and it is only by putting life into this work that we will be able to work in all the organisations to which we must extend our influence. Our experiences in the metal and chemical industry are typical. There is also another argument, namely that the numerous nucleus and fraction meetings which the Party members are compelled to attend prevent their doing justice to Party work."

I do not think that Comrade Sauvage is right when he says that only Party organisations should have the right to call together, for instance, the metal workers, at a time when a campaign is in progress. This is the task of fractions which have to be formed in the lower organisations. I have perused some reliable material on the position of fraction work in the lower organisations in France. This material shows that in 60% of the cases there are no fractions in the Red trade unions and no fraction executives on the spot.

I will now deal with the question of executives. I have material from Germany, a report of the Berlin metal workers on the composition of the fraction executive. There are 35 branches in the Berlin metal workers' union. They elect 6 comrades to the Executive, 23 urban divisions of the German metal workers union send five comrades, the General Electrical Company district—1, the Siemens-district also 1, seven factory council main groups—2, women—1, the youth—1, office workers union—1, and the literature and agitprop departments and the "Rote Fahne" one representative each into the fraction executive. This makes 21 members altogether and another member is added from the trade union department of the C. C. The report of the trade union department of the Berlin-Brandenburg district contains the following statement:

"We built the fractions in the following manner. All metal workers belonging to the Party are first of all amalgamated centrally into a fraction of the whole. Besides this 35 branch fractions are formed and in addition our comrades are amalgamated into fractions according to the districts in 25 metal workers urban divisions. The composition of the fraction executive is as follows:

1. A managing committee of five comrades.
2. The fraction executive consisting of representatives of branches, districts and factory council groups, one representative of the General Electrical Company district, and one from the Siemens concern district, one treasurer, one literature agent, one from the union employees, one from the district executive of the Party, and one from the "Rote Fahne".
3. The enlarged fraction committee consists of one representative from each of the 35 branches and 25 districts and factory council groups; also all union employees, the entire narrower fraction committee (bureau)".

What work are the fractions actually to do? We gather from the report of the **glass workers' union in Wittenberg** that: "The leadership of the fraction is in the hands of the trade union secretary of the local section executive of Wittenberg because the factory workers' union is the biggest and most important organisation of the local industrial area. He has the support of the comrades who are in the administration of the local union office."

Thus it is not the fraction which works and is responsible for this work, but the trade union secretary of the Party with the support of the Communist members of the managing committee.

Apart from these two cases where the executive is either numerically too strong and therefore unable to do active work or where the fraction executive is replaced by the Party executive, I will give you an example of another type of fraction executive, that of the **bootmakers' union in Cologne**.

"The fraction executive is composed of the best delegates from every factory. We have formed a leading body of five out of these functionaries. Comrade X is the head of the fraction."

Comrades, I do not think that we can carry on fraction work with such executives. What is actually a fraction executive? What are its tasks? Is it to elaborate draft legislation? Certainly not, it is to direct the everyday trade union work.

Who can best direct the every-day work of the Communists in the trade unions? Those comrades who are active in that body which directs daily the trade union work.

If we now carry on trade union work, our fractions must utilise this material to show all those who are in the branches how the trade unions work. Who can arrange this material? Who can supply all this material to our fractions except those in the trade union executive who make all the proposals there.

Can those who come from the factories or the "Rote Fahne" or the agitprop know all the details of trade union work? Of course not.

I do not want this to be misunderstood. I am not opposed to having representatives from the factories also elected to the fraction executive, because in Germany, for instance, the comrades who are to form the executive are not always disciplined. They do not always carry on Party policy. Sometimes they vote with the Social Democrats. How can this be remedied? We must find a way out. This way out we indicated in our theses. If the comrades in the fraction executive are no good, efficient Party comrades must be co-opted who are capable of influencing them and showing them how the work is to be done. But if we have efficient comrades in the trade union executives who carry out faithfully the policy of the Party then it must be left to them to lead the fractions.

What do we see in France? I do not know who is to blame for the neglect of fraction work. But we must admit the fact that our comrades in the trade unions are not organised and that they do not carry on fraction work.

I will endeavour later on to deal more fully with this question. My opinion is that the fraction executive should consist of those who are in the trade union executives, and if they are bad Communists, a few good comrades should be co-opted.

\*

Now as to the question of **connection between the fractions**.

On the whole at present conditions in all the Parties are sure that no connection exists between the fractions. The lower fractions receive no directions nor material from the fractions above them. We Bolsheviks were never believers in a set organisation plan or certain organisational methods. We always adopted our organisational work to existing conditions. This applies also to the liaison system. There were times when we had direct connection between fractions in the Russian trade unions. Today this system no longer exists. In future and as Party organisations grow stronger, this connection can also be done away with in the capitalist countries. But at present it must be developed.

I have heard all the reports and I must say that on no other field of Party work is the state of affairs as lamentable as on the field of fraction work. Communists in the non-Party mass organisations are as yet inactive. They do show no initiative in everyday work either and wait for the Party authorities to intervene directly. Such a state of affairs must cease. With us in the Russian Party we had a time when no fraction directions were issued at all by the C. C. Nevertheless Communist work in trade unions was not neglected, our comrades worked

on their own and soon found means by which the Party got the upper hand in all organs. And only then, in the process of work, directions were gradually elaborated for the fractions. But even without direction Communists carried on work in the mass organisations and this enabled us to get a majority everywhere. The same must be the case in other parties. Communists must everywhere develop initiative, they must show that they belong to the Party which is the general staff of the working class.

Now as to the trade union departments of the Party executives.

What is the work of trade union departments to be? Are they to do fraction work, as this was done in France, where there is, first a trade union department, and, second, a trade union commission in the C. C. Certainly not. The trade union department of the Party is only to superintend the work, to give instructions, to call the comrades in the fraction executives together to consultations and to discuss all questions with them. The Party is to issue general instructions on Communist trade union work to the fraction executives, but the everyday work itself must be done by the fraction which knows conditions in the trade union and has every opportunity to carry out the work as the Party wishes it to be carried out. The Party of course has the right to intervene at any moment. It has been said that in our theses not enough stress is laid on the rights of Party executives with respect to fractions. Such is not the case. We are of course prepared to emphasise these rights, but I should like to impress upon you that the Party should not intervene where this is not necessary. It shall only remedy any shortcomings of the work, but on no account exercise petty tutelage.

I will deal now separately with the countries and will endeavour to give an outline of the main tasks.

#### GERMANY:

One must give up the former practice of casual and manifold composition of fraction executives, and adopt instead a uniform and correct course. First of all in trade union organisations in which we have a majority the Party organisation and the trade union department must watch carefully over the activity, helping the comrades to utilise to the full the already acquired positions for the development of trade union work in this union. Then the abolition of special trade union days as well as fraction dues wherever they had been introduced. Attention should be paid to the trade unions in which we are working, and efforts must be made to win over the majority of the trade unionists employed in the factories. The German Party has all the premises for truly successful trade union work.

#### FRANCE:

Matters are utterly different in France, where old traditions exist which are making themselves felt to this day. The Party must do its utmost to overcome the existing difficulties in trade union work by a steady ideological struggle, and must not endeavour to capture the trade unions by disciplinary measures and mechanical decisions. Collaboration between the Red trade Unions and the Party is still inadequate.

The French comrades are faced with another great task; they must reorganise all the Red Trade Unions on a factory basis. The territorial form of organisation of the Trade Unions is inefficient. The worker must have the possibility, as soon as he enters a factory, to join the union in which all the workers of the factory are organised. The Trade Union work must be carried on in the factory. We can only beat the reformists if we start at once to work in the shops (factories). The Red Trade Unions must be built up in the same manner as the Party. Then we shall create a good connection between the Party and the Unions. The French comrades must furthermore develop the connections between the fractions in the higher organs of the Trade Unions and the fractions in the basic organisations.

#### CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

In Czecho-Slovakia the trade unions are stronger than the Party and therefore the latter must exercise stricter control of trade union work than this is necessary in Germany and France. It must not happen that candidates' lists for factory councils elections are drawn up by the trade unions without control and confirmation by the Party. That factory councils in some cases

have the upper hand over factory nuclei is impermissible. The Party must follow definite tactics and must establish correct relations between Party and trade union, firmly yet not dictatorially. If this is done it will be possible to improve our trade union work.

#### ITALY:

We must show that the Communist Party is the only Party which fights for the interest of the working class by defending the trade unions.

Through a systematic fraction work in the Unions it can still more increase its influence and prevent that the Reformists turn the Communists out of the Unions. In its Trade Union work the Party must concentrate its chief activity towards winning new masses of workers for the Trade Unions. By this it will on the one hand break the fascist offensive against the Trade Unions who stand on the ground of the class struggle and on the other hand they will overcome the reformist sabotage of the forthcoming economic struggles of the proletariat.

But the Party must at the same time go into the fascist unions, for not only fascist workers are organised there. Workers enter these unions because pressure is exercised. They must have a fascist union membership card if they are to get employment.

#### GREAT BRITAIN:

The British Party is very small but it has shown now trade union work should be carried on. We must profit by the experiences of the British Party which has achieved its successes by steady everyday work. It has taken deep root in the trade unions. Its task consists in strengthening its communist work in the unions.

#### AMERICA:

As to America, the possibilities there are much greater than in Germany. There are 17 million unorganised workers there. Only 3 million workers are organised in trade unions. If the Party succeed in bringing the unorganised masses into the trade unions and in forming new trade union organisations, the trade unions will be in its hands. The Party must above all begin with this recruiting campaign and pledge all members of the Party eligible for the unions to join them, as up till now only about 40% of the Party members are organised in the unions.

\* \* \*

The theses we have proposed are nothing new. We already proposed and adopted directions in this sense for fraction work last year. But there was then no reality in them and the comrades did not pay sufficient attention to them. They thought that it was quite a fine resolution which might be adopted but which it was not necessary to carry out. I think that matters are different now. Trade union work is the main work. We can do trade union work if we have fractions. To build up fractions we must have policies and the policies are here before us. May be comrades imagine that the time has not yet come for the theses to be put into practice. Very well. Try to give us for every country an adaptation of these theses. We have no objection to this. But one principle must be laid down, fundamentally, namely, the line of the connection between the fractions and the composition of the fraction executives.

With respect to the Party organisation and its relation to the fraction, the Party organisation has of course the higher rights. It is empowered to do everything, it can carry out re-organisations whenever it deems this necessary. I believe, however, that our Parties are now strong enough to cease doing the work for organisations which should carry it out themselves.

#### Comrade Merker (Germany):

When the German Delegation first saw the theses there was doubt concerning one question, namely: whether these theses are immediately to be carried out in lieu of those now in Germany. This shows that there is a great difference between these theses and present conditions in Germany. The theses before us are fundamentally correct and since Comrade Piatnitsky and other comrades have been assuring us that there is to be no schematic application of the theses, we can express our agreement with them. We will adapt them to Germany.

With respect to the Trade Union Day: I wish to say that the Trade Union Day will continue to be necessary during the next few months in order to make Party comrades in the various towns take up fraction work. After that we will abolish it. With respect to the executives: in the past our difficulties in this connection were very great. Here a schematic application of the theses would be a mistake at this time because to carry them out a very strong Party is required. However, where the prerequisites exist we can already begin to apply them. Our work in the different unions and in the various towns is in varying stages of development. Yet it will be possible to apply the theses to a certain extent in some towns and in some of the unions. There are, however, towns where it will be hardly possible to take even the first steps. In such towns the trade union department will have to take the necessary steps.

#### Comrade Schumann (Germany):

I will say first of all that I agree with Comrade Piatnitsky's preliminary remarks. But I should like to state quite precisely in what I differ from the draft theses before us.

The difference begins from that part of the theses which deals with fraction executives. It is stated there that the Communists in trade union organs, in the managing committees, the executives, etc. form a fraction and that the Communist fractions of the local administrative organs of a trade union at the same time form the executive of the Communist fractions in the said trade union.

All our experiences have shown that this is a mistake. Every comrade who carried on trade union work in Germany during the last two years will certainly rejoice with me that at last we have got rid of the wrong conception that every comrade occupying a post in the trade unions must be looked upon as an opportunist. But we must not spill out the child with the bath by forgetting the kind of opportunist deviations we had to deal with formerly, and not only during the ultra-Left era.

I think that it is a mistake to put the leadership of the fraction into the hands of a Communist official. Of course nobody favours the exclusion of the Communist official from the Executive. He should belong to the Executive but not as its chairman. But here, according to the formulation of the draft theses, it is provided that the leadership of the fraction is in the hands of the Communist members of the local administration and according to Comrade Piatnitsky's arguments it is clear: who else will do the work? It will not be the worker from the factory, but the official who sits all day long in the office, who has the telephone at his disposal and who reads the newspapers: he will practically be the head of the fraction and throughout the whole locality.

I am coming now to the question of connections. Although we were and are of the opinion that the draft theses before us are very much adapted to the Russian trade union movement, there is one thing which surprises me very much indeed. The comrade from the Russian Textile Workers' Union has told us that there are no trade union departments in the Party, that the fraction receives instructions direct from the Party Executive.

With us a trade union department is essential, but in these draft theses Comrade Piatnitsky wants to add to the already cumbersome connection (i. e. Party Executive, trade union department, of the Party Executive, fractions) another intervening link, namely, the fractions of the trades councils committees. The A. D. G. B. local trades council is a purely voluntary institution. The tasks before the trades council of the free trade unions are utterly different from those of the unions, and therefore, the formulation adopted here: that the fraction in the local trades council at the same time wields the leadership of all the local union fractions is not practicable. It means making connection between Party and fractions more difficult.

Moreover there is talk of a local trade union department, which is to be composed of trustworthy comrades. This narrower trade union department holds regular conferences with the leaders of the various trade union fractions, including the fraction of the local trades council. Thus it intervenes between the most important fractions which embrace most of the workers. A trade council fraction further intervenes between these fractions and the Party, and if we do not have the majority in the council, this will only impede our work and will take up time for more sessions.

I am coming now to the question of fraction executives on a national scale. The theses deal in a surprisingly brief manner with this question. Only 7 lines are devoted to it, plus a little note of 5 lines.

It is not stated where the national fraction executive is to have its headquarters, if at the seat of the C. C. of the various trade unions, or at the seat of the Party C. C. I am of the opinion that the central trade union department should be very closely connected with the national fractions. When a Communist is in the central organ of these organisations he must belong to this national fraction executive. But it must have its seat at the seat of the Party Executive, otherwise the Party will not be able to issue its instructions and exercise its control.

No one wishes to minimise or make light of the experiences of the Russian trade unions and Russian comrades. All of us hold them in great esteem. But I think that this question of the Executives is too Russian. We must know in what our own tasks differ from the tasks here. If we are in power naturally the official will do the work and if he does not do it properly we can transfer him somewhere else without detriment to the Party. But we are not in power in Germany. We want to get into power and we must not spin schemes, but must adapt ourselves the best we can.

### Comrade Zelle (Germany):

Comrade Schumann has represented here a certain fatalism, a certain trend of thought which I would like to formulate as follows. Communists who are trade union officials are doomed sooner or later to become opportunists and to go over to the Social Democrats.

To me the only explanation of such a trend of thought can only be Comrade Schumann's lack of faith in the growing strength of our Party. This is the difference which separates us, the German delegation to the Org Conference from him on this proposal.

Whose fault was it that, for instance, so many factory councillors have also gone over to the Social Democrats? Partly the fault of the Party which left factory councils to themselves. This was also due to the fact that our Party was formerly built up on a residential basis. But now that the Party has been reorganised on a factory basis the conditions for trade union work have become different.

It is quite true that on our return to Germany we will not be able to carry out these theses 100% — far from it. We will, however, base our instructions on fractions structure on these theses, adapting them to the present situation in Germany, our final aim being a fraction structure as proposed in the theses.

When 2 years ago the question of the reorganisation of the Party was raised, Comrade Schumann was on our side, he was an adherent of reorganisation on a factory nucleus basis. I fail to understand how he comes to declare today that we cannot work for the achievement of these aims, that this plan cannot come into question for the West European parties. We have overcome the difficulties of reorganising the Party on a nucleus basis, and will also overcome them with respect to this question provided that we transfer the centre of gravity of our work to the factories. As decided by our last Party congress, 75% of our entire Party work in Germany is to be concentrated on trade union work, which with us means factory work. We will create good capable fraction executives. In the course of the further development we will liquidate the general trade union days which were introduced upon the decision of our last national Party conference. These general trade union days were necessary during the transition stage, when it was a question of making a beginning in trade union work.

We will of course now have to form strong trade union departments in Germany for a whole transition stage, in order to guide and control the work, to concern ourselves not only with the fractions as a whole, but also with the comrades in the executives.

The German delegation to the Org Conference has instructed me to declare that in principle it is in agreement with these theses. I have to make this declaration also on behalf of the German comrades who have already arrived for the Enlarged Executive. We will elaborate practical directions in accordance with concrete conditions in Germany and with the aim laid down here.

### Comrade Robson (England):

Comrade Schumann in his remarks has displayed a fundamental distrust of work in the trade unions.

I wish to say that we have not been meeting with this experience in England, it is rather on the parliamentary field that we fear opportunism.

With reference to this question of the leadership of the fractions in the trade unions. During the reports comrades, many comrades mentioned the difficulties and the obstacles placed on the path of Communist fractions because of the rules and regulations, for example, existing in the trade union bodies. Therefore I say, comrades that the fractions of the higher organs of the trade unions should certainly have the leadership of the lower organs, controlled of course, always by the Party.

So, comrades, I hope that it will be agreed that it is essential for fractions in the lower organs of the trade unions to be guided in their work by the Party fractions in the higher organs. I am not here claiming that we are right in England but the practical experiences in the trade unions show that these rules will be very useful and in fact are essential.

### Comrade Thorez (France):

During the last year trade union work in general and the reorganisation of fractions in particular were a very weak point in the French Party.

There are various reasons for this. Relations between our Communist Party and the C. G. T. U. (Red Trade Unions) showed that some of our best Party workers constantly underestimated the importance of trade union work. Our young comrades were generally of the opinion that work in the trade unions is merely a side issue. On the other hand in the C. G. T. U. relics of the old anarcho-syndicalist trend of thought are still to be found even among very active comrades.

An example will give a good illustration of the weakness of our trade union work and of the magnitude of the task which is before us: in the Paris district there are nearly 250,000 metal workers, but the Red Trade Union has only 6,000 members, 1,000 of whom form the actual core of the trade union.

In the reformist trade union Federation our work is weaker still. After the trade union split our comrades left the reformist trade unions entirely, and thus almost all our Communist elements are in the Red Trade Unions.

During the last year we witnessed the birth of a Left movement within the old reformist C. G. T. At the last reformist trade union congress 118 trade unions voted for the first time for the unity resolution. However, we were unable to get hold of these 118 trade unions, in three-fourths of which there are active Communist minorities, in order to form them into a truly solid bloc.

I am coming now to the theses of the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. concerning fractions. What was actually said in the theses of the Party conference in Ivry and in Comrade Victorin's pamphlet?

"Only Communists elected to the trade union council form the fraction in the respective organisation."

This conception was erroneous. We condemned it. We were of the opinion that fraction work must be carried on by all Communist trade unionists and that the fraction should consist of all the members of the organisation. Consequently all Communists belonging to trade unions form the Communist fraction on the basis of the territorial section. After preliminary agreement with the respective Party executive, the thus formed fraction appoints itself the fraction executive. If there are Communists in the trade union committee they also form part of this fraction executive. In one of the "Cahier du Bolchévisme" we published an article which contains the following statement:

"When Communists belong to the trade union committee they are members of the fraction executive."

To this we have already added that the fraction secretary shall not be, wherever this is possible, a member of the trade union executive, (but this is not a hard and fast rule).

However, all Communists, in the Executive as well as in the trade union organisation, form altogether only one fraction. On the other hand the theses mention two fractions: a fraction for the trade union organisation and another fraction for the trade union organ — the trade union executive.

Then there is the question of our **fraction executive** and the transmission of directions. We want our fractions in all stages to be directly subordinate to the competent Party executive. But this certainly does not mean that the Party executive must always concern itself with all petty fraction affairs. We say in the article:

"The trade union fraction is not autonomous, it carries on its work under the direct control of the Section or subsection committee which directs Communist work in the trade unions."

It goes without saying that in the application of general directions the trade union fraction must be allowed greater initiative in order to be able to adapt these directions to the conditions prevailing in the trade unions.

**How is the transmission of directions to be effected?** We have already begun to see the advantage of what we call in France unified leadership of the labour movement. Two secretaries of the Red Trade Union Federation belong to the political bureau of our Party.

The decisions of the Polbureau state the role of the trade union in the carrying out of decisions. The C. E. C. trade union department transmits directions for the various fractions to the Party executives of all grades. At the same time the executive of the C. G. T. U. transmits trade union directions to its lower organs (craft unions, district unions, locals).

It goes without saying that in urgent cases we allow fractions of the higher organs to transmit instructions directly to their lower fractions in the same trade union organisation, a copy of these instructions being forwarded directly to the respective Party organs.

Comrades, our practice diverges widely from the conception laid down in these theses. In them the fractions in the executives form the executive of the fraction as a whole. It is also stated in the theses that the fraction of the lower trade union executive is subordinate to the fraction of the higher executive. This is just the opposite to our practice. It is essential that directions be always transmitted through the Party committees.

Perhaps there is some good in the proposed theses; however, one must first of all take into consideration the peculiarities of every trade union movement and bring them into harmony with the general directions of the Org Conference.

### **Comrade Sauvage (France):**

I wish to rectify a few remarks which were wrongly made by our comrades.

Firstly, it is said in the report which you have received that in France trade union fractions exist only in the executive organs. This is an error. In France there are trade union fractions only in the lowest organisations.

Secondly, I have been made to declare in one of the Org Bureau minutes that fractions should only exist in elected organs. What I said was — that only the fractions of the elected organs are permanent, whilst we have temporary fractions which embrace the entire membership of the trade union organisations.

We made a beginning with fraction construction in 1924, when no fractions existed at all. The term was not known, our trade union commissions were called study-commissions and our fractions did not emerge until the resolution of the executive was published in the papers.

### **Comrade Kohn (Czecho-Slovakia):**

Comrade Schumann pointed out here the peril of a fraction executive whose members are at the same time members of the trade union committee.

Does such a peril exist? It does. But we as Communists must not evade such a peril but must grapple with it in order to master it. Our recent experiences have shown that the Party grows in strength in the struggle against this peril. I also think that the necessity to carry out such struggles demands a reinforcement of the trade union department which should be sufficiently authoritative to wield effective control over the work of fraction executives. But on the other hand it goes without

saying that the fraction executive, and not the trade union department of the Party executive, has to superintend and control fraction work in the union.

### **Comrade Viola (Italy):**

We must point out here the drawbacks and difficulties we would have to contend with if we were to apply everyone of the paragraphs of the proposed theses. It is a question of technical and political difficulties which we must mention here. We fully agree that comrades who are members of the trade union Executive must form a Communist fraction. This is not a contentious question, neither does it present any difficulties. Nor are any difficulties created for us by the formulation of the thesis which says that in the local unions the Communist members of the executive boards must at the same time form the fraction executive of the Communist fraction of this trade union. This is already the case with us and therefore does not cause us any difficulties. But conditions in the **trades councils**, in the trade unions and in the **general trade union federation** are not the same. If we apply these theses, the representative of our trade union fraction in the trades council, the trade unions and the C. G. T. is more likely to be elected by the reformists than by the Communists.

I will explain this. The election of the leading organs in these organisations takes place in the **trades councils** in a democratic manner. At the election of the **Milan trades council** we had the experience that the reformists did not vote for our most able Communist candidates on the list, but for less able Party comrades who were in fact elected.

In the **trade unions** the national congress elects the union executive. The executive is composed proportionally of representatives of various tendencies. Can the Communist fraction elect its members if reformists are in the majority? Certainly not. Under these circumstances the reformists themselves elect our future fraction executives from among the Communist delegates. We cannot influence this election as the reformists do not elect the comrades whom we would like to have as members of the committee. This is even customary at the Congress of the C. G. T. when the executive is elected.

Then there also arises another question. The leading members of the C. G. T. are not elected from the town where the C. G. T. has its seat. These members come from various districts and towns of Italy, and even if our minority has been elected to the C. G. T. these comrades do not all of them remain in Milan. They cannot guide and control in a coordinated manner the work of a whole fraction as stipulated by the theses. For these reasons it would not be expedient to apply these theses in our country.

### **Comrade Schumann (Germany):**

Comrade Zelle said that we advocate a different principle. I do not agree that the Communist functionaries of a local administration have the leadership of the fraction in their hands, they should have a seat in the executive, but another comrade, not a member of the committee, should have the leadership of the fraction.

I am of the opinion that as a rule no trade union functionary should be fraction leader. But I do not mean to insist that under no circumstances whatever can a trade union functionary be fraction leader. I am merely of the opinion that such cases should be the exception.

### **Comrade Gyptner (Y. C. I.):**

Our standpoint with respect to fractions is not based on any considerable experience on this field on the part of the Y. C. I. We have no members in the local administration of the trade unions, etc. and the presence of a member of the Y. C. I. in the trade union executive is an exception. We have arrived at our standpoint on the strength of the discussions in the Plenum and of the speeches made yesterday, and we are of the opinion that in principle we can give our fullest support to the resolutions before us.

With respect to the question of **leadership in fraction work**, we must say that the resolution does not contain everything brought forward here yesterday by Comrade Piatnitsky. We think that it should certainly be included into the resolution that the connection between upper and lower fraction can be effected only through the Party.

With respect to Y. C. L. fractions, we are not in full agreement with the passage in the resolution concerning the question of **special youth fractions** parallel with Party fractions. We think that there must be separate youth fractions. Relations between these two fractions is not in any way different from the relations between Party and youth organisations in general.

Another formulation which seems to us not quite correct is:

"The Communist Youth fraction receives on the one hand instructions from the competent executive of the Y. C. L. through the Communist fraction executive, and on the other hand from the Communist fraction executive."

This would mean that the local group of the Y. C. L. has to direct all instructions to the Party fraction, the latter transmitting it to the Y. C. L. fraction. There must be a separate Y. C. L. fraction which receives its instructions direct through the competent Y. C. L. organ.

We would also like to lay stress on the fact that all Party fractions should give practical support to the youth fractions and should also appoint special comrades for collaboration within the youth fraction.

### Comrade Lesch (Sport-Intern.):

I will lay before you a few facts from the fraction work in sport organisations. On a world scale there are 30,000,000 organised sportsmen, 25,000,000 in **bourgeois sport organisations** and only 5,000,000 in the **workers' own organisations**. At least 80% of the sportsmen organised in bourgeois organisations belong to the working class. The workers' sport organisations, with their total membership of 5,000,000 are divided into the **Red Sportintern** and the **Lucerne Sportintern**. The Lucerne Sportintern embraces about two million and the remainder are organised in the Red Sportintern.

In the various Parties revolutionary sentiment after the war was strongest in the workers' sport organisations and our influence prevailed in the sport movement. Already at that time fractions were formed, but they were not concentrated and had no connection with the Party.

The fact that the Frankfurt Olympiade was sabotaged by important sections of the German working class sport movement, shows better than anything else the necessity for a closer contact between Party and fraction, in order to combat such sabotage.

We are only at the beginning of our fraction work in the sport organisations and must pay much more attention to this work than heretofore.

### Comrade Mandel (Switzerland):

With respect to **fraction structure** I should like to make the following remarks: the head of the central fraction in the woodworkers' union, is for instance, not a member of the central committee of the union, in which there are 6 Communists and 7 non-Party and Social Democrats. Nevertheless, a **non-member** of the Central Committee is chairman of the central fraction executive and for the simple reason that this comrade is an active trade unionist who has gained the confidence of the workers. We are of the opinion that in a practical way he achieves there much more than any other comrade would achieve who had been made fraction chairman mechanically.

I want to say a few more words on the work of our comrades in the **sport organisations** of Switzerland. The Swiss sport organisation is a real mass organisation. You know that the Sport International has its seat in Lucerne. This International of the workers' sport movement was a virulent opponent of the united front with the Russian sport organisations. It was against inviting the Russians to the Frankfurt Olympiade. But our comrades worked very energetically for a rapprochement to the Russian organisations. It must be stated that the fractions in the sport organisations have done excellent work. Thereby they compelled the Lucerne International, through pressure from its rank and file members, to advocate closer contact with the Russian sport organisations. The Lucerne Sport International, it must be said, has suddenly become an energetic advocate of such a rapprochement.

### Comrade Bittel (Co-oper. Section of the E.C.C.I.):

Three facts come inevitably to the forefront whenever the subject of the importance of **cooperative work** on the part of Communist Parties is brought up. Firstly, the cooperative movement is, on an international scale, the greatest existing mass movement. It embraces 60 to 70 million members as compared with the 30 to 40 million organised trade unionists. Secondly, in almost all countries, these cooperative organisations are the strongest organisational and material basis for the Social Democratic Parties. Thirdly, they are the broadest avenue to masses which cannot be reached in any other way: to the **housewives**, **minor civil servants** and particularly to the **small peasantry**. With respect to the latter, cooperatives are frequently the Party's only avenue of approach.

I want to make a few remarks about some of the reports from the various countries. Comrade Oberdörster described very graphically the state of **fraction work in the German cooperatives**. Many shortcomings still exist. We witness the first steps towards organised Communist cooperative work. All Party executives, from factory and street nuclei upwards, should appoint a cooperative organiser to see to it that the decisions concerning cooperative work are carried out by Party members and that our comrades really become members of cooperatives. For the present only 15 to 30% of our members belong to cooperatives. This state of affairs must not be allowed to continue.

In France we have 4000 consumer's cooperatives with two and a half million members. This is a favourable opportunity for the Party to approach the masses. A number of consumers' cooperatives are under Communist influence. But the Party has no fractions either in these consumers' cooperative or in those under reformist influence. On the contrary the Party has adopted the wrong method of limiting itself to the formation of **revolutionary cooperative circles**, which cannot possibly establish connection with the masses and which have even amalgamated into a revolutionary circle federation instead of working fractionally and systematically among the members of the cooperatives.

On the whole, it must be said that the most successful work is done by the cooperative fraction in **Great Britain**. The Party there knows how to get into touch with the masses and particularly with the women's guilds, enlarging the sphere of its activity.

A necessary condition for fruitful activity in the cooperative organisations is a maximum percentage of C. P. members in cooperative organisations as bona fide members. I think that nothing will be left to the Parties but fixing a **definite date** by which all Party members will have to join cooperatives. Secondly, it is essential to form fractions according to **shopping districts**, or separate **distributing centres**. Thirdly, the cooperative question must be generally considered as an organic part of Party work. Functionaries, the Party press and the central committee of the Parties must first of all come to recognise the importance of this question before it can be put on a broader basis.

### Comrade Olsen (Sweden):

In Sweden there are three different groups of trade union organisations. There is the **reformist national organisation** with 360,000 members, the **syndicalist organisation** with 40,000 members, and in addition 35 **independent unions not belonging to any federation**, with 80,000 members.

The structure of the trade union varies. In view of the multiplicity of organisational forms the organising of fraction work is particularly difficult.

During the Höglund period no fractions were formed. What might have been termed fractions were the **Communist clubs** within the trade union organisations. Thanks to these clubs we had various kinds of Communists: metal worker Communists, saw-mill Communists, etc. We did not dissolve these clubs, but transformed them into trade union fractions in which all the Communists are amalgamated.

The members of these clubs were organised in **Party factory nuclei**. Thus we have no more clubs and the members of these clubs constitute the fractions in the trade unions, and the factory nuclei in the factories.

As to the questions of fraction executives, the comrades in the narrow bureaux of the **urban trade council committees** constitute the **local fraction executive**. Local sub-section executives are the controlling organs over the fractions in the trade unions organisations. The same applies also to the fraction in

the trades council. For the district fraction the Party district executive is the controlling organ. There is a trade union department in the Central Committee of the Party consisting of 7 comrades, all of them practical trade unionists.

We had to carry on many campaigns last year. Fraction activity was energetic.

When, during the lockout of 30,000 workers, armed strike-breakers corps were formed, the Party was confronted with the question of struggle against fascists and strikebreakers. The Technical Workers' Union issued a programme of action. This programme found an echo in various unions and when the trade union federation refused to convene a joint trade union conference with the syndicalists, the Götheburg Metal Workers Union organised a conference on its own accord. There were represented at this conference: 151 delegates, 166 trade unions, and 16 urban trades councils representing 58,000 workers. At this conference Communists were elected into trade union departments in which Social Democrats still had the majority. We now have some idea of how fraction work has had good results this year. During the last months we won the majority on the executive board of the biggest Stockholm union, the Factory Workers' Union, which has 5000 members. We also control the committee of the Transport Workers' Union, which has 2400 members. At the Factory Workers' Congress our proposal on trade union unity was adopted. The Agricultural Labourer's Union has also adopted a resolution for trade union unity. All this on the motion of the Communist fraction. There are of course still many shortcomings in our fraction work. We will do our utmost to develop our fractions, to organise the fraction executives, and to make them more active.

### Comrade Ulbricht (Org. Department E. C. C. I.):

With respect to the fraction question the following four points are up for discussion: 1) Party executives and fractions, 2) inadequate trade union adherence of Communist Party members, 3) work of the trade union fractions, 4) fraction structure.

As to the first question, regarding the relationship between Party executives and fractions, it must be stated that Party executives have not paid sufficient attention to fraction work, have not given adequate instructions to the Communist fractions and have not controlled their work. A report on the district conference of Beauce and Perche (France), for instance, contains the following statement:

"The strike was very inadequately prepared and the result was nil.

The Communist trade unions still fail to understand the role of the Party with respect to the trade union movement. The best trade union elements refuse to accept posts in the Party. Many excellent comrades still resent any mention of the leading role of the Party in the Labour Movement. While they recognise it in theory, they do not follow it in practice."

In this one quotation we see the main shortcomings of trade union fraction work: 1) that Communists in the trade union executives do not receive adequate instructions from the Party executives, 2) that there is a considerable number of Communists in influential trade union positions who limit themselves to trade union work but refuse either to take up any functions in the Party or represent the policy of the Party in the trade unions. The report shows very clearly that both these tendencies exist.

I will deal now with the question of the trade union adherence of Communists. In connection with the first item on the agenda, the Czech comrades have told us that in an important industrial district of Prague only 40% of the Party membership are organised in trade unions. I realise that there are in the C. P. C. z. many housewives and comrades who cannot be organised in trade unions. This of course must be taken into consideration. However, it does not speak well of organisational work that only 40% of the membership are organised in trade unions. The Czech Party must absolutely exercise stricter control over the trade union adherence of its members. It should initiate a systematic and energetic campaign with the object of bringing into the trade unions all the Comrades who can be organised in them. The same applies to all the Sections of the C. I.

I will give you a few examples of how some Communist fractions or factory nuclei have worked in order to bring about

an improvement in this respect. In some German organisations comrades proposed at trade union meetings, that there be formed special recruiting committees on which Communists, Social-Democrats and non-Party workers would be represented, for the purpose of a more energetic agitation for the trade union organisation of the workers. For instance, the Erfurt German Metal Workers Union, on the motion of the Communists, decided to wage a recruiting campaign for the purpose of bringing 50,000 metal workers into the organisation. Such methods should also be adopted in other countries. Another method — that of factory committees whose business it is to bring all the workers in the factory into the trade unions, has also given good results.

Now to the question of fraction work. Of particular interest are the examples given in the reports of the C. P. F. The Party Conference of the C. P. F. has record that the slogans against the Morocco war were carried out by the nuclei, and that the Party nuclei endeavoured to form unity committees; but these slogans were not supported by all the Communist members in trade union organisations and organs, the Communists heading the unions in many cases failing to take the initiative in this question. The Party conference openly and correctly recognised this shortcoming. This shows that the Party Executive had not done enough to draw Communist members of the trade union executives into this work, there was lack of support and control on the part of the Party Executive. This again shows how necessary it is to form truly active fraction executives for the various trade unions, in which Communist members of the trade union committees must also be represented.

Here is another example from Limoges (France):

"The Tramway Workers' Union, the Secretary of which promised participation in the strike, did not take part in the strike. The members were ready to go on strike, but the Secretary — a Party comrade — did not issue the strike order."

This led to the failure of the strike in Limoges.

Comrades, in my opinion this is a characteristic example of the extreme necessity of fraction work and proof that one cannot make one Communist trade union functionary solely responsible for the carrying out of Party directions. Strong fraction executives must be formed.

A considerable change has taken place lately in Germany with respect to fraction work. This change consists in that fraction work is no longer carried on in the trade union meetings but, instead, primarily in the factories. Some of the Party members' reports from the factories say that trade union work has been put on a solid foundation since the Party transferred its trade union work to the factories. Comrades have recognised that the most important thing for us is to capture the cadre of trade union functionaries in the factory.

One more remark on the work of the C. P. of Czecho-Slovakia. In the Prague report on the work of one of the sections it was said that the Russia-campaign was carried out in Prague by means of public meetings. We put the question of how the reports where put to an organisational use for trade union unity. We gathered from the replies that there were no speakers available for factory meetings. This raises the question: if speakers were available in Prague for public meetings how is it that one cannot find speakers for meetings in big enterprises? A factory meeting is such more important than a public meeting. At factory meetings our ideological influence can make itself felt much more than this is generally the case at public meetings. Moreover, in the former case we can make secure our success organisationally and can increase it by forming factory unity committees. I am under the impression that Czecho-Slovakian comrades do not adequately connect factory nucleus work, as well as trade union work, with the concrete campaigns of the Party.

I am coming now to the last point, namely, the question of the structure of fractions. The theses before us indicate the basic lines on which the construction of fractions must be carried out. We must of course adapt these theses to the concrete conditions of our work commensurate with the various experiences of our sections.

We can speak chiefly of two fundamental tendencies in Germany: The first originated in 1923 when the Party had built up a very strong fraction apparatus which worked more or less parallel to the Party. We had just the opposite phenomenon in 1924—25 when the Party neglected the formation of fractions and imagined that they were after



all not so very necessary. The result of this policy, which is naturally connected with the general political lines of the Party at the time of the Ruth Fischer C.C., is the Party's loss of influence in the trade unions. It is just because of these two main errors that it is necessary to lay down definite lines for further work in the trade unions.

I have already pointed out that formerly the German Party attached great importance to fraction meetings, which were frequently held every four weeks or even fortnightly. Because of these regular fraction meetings many general Party questions were discussed at them, although the proper place to discuss them were the membership meetings. The Party has corrected this. It is now convening fraction meetings when necessity arises — before trade union meetings, in connection with campaigns, etc. The Party has also limited the sphere of the questions to be dealt with at these meetings.

With respect to the composition of fraction executives we may observe two extremes. One report emphasises the fact that the fraction executive of the metal workers' union consists of comrades not belonging to the local administration, the reason for this being that these comrades are very much influenced by the peculiarities of the trade union movement and that among them deviations from Party policy are very strong.

As an example of the other extreme I should like to mention Comrade Victorin's French pamphlet. It is said in this pamphlet that fractions are only to be formed in trade union organs, executives, etc. If we have no Communists in the organs we must do our utmost to remedy this and to bring Communists into them. This looks very well on paper, but how are we to bring the Communists into the leading organs? Only through nucleus work? True enough, thus, but also through the formation of fractions in the organisations and fraction executives, to carry on the entire fraction work in a systematic manner.

I will now sum up the most important shortcomings of past work and will indicate our most important immediate tasks.

### I. The Shortcomings.

1. Trade union fraction work was neglected by Party executives and by a large part of the Party membership.
2. Not all Party members eligible for trade union membership are actually organised there. Party organisations have not exercised adequate control over the trade union adherence of Party members and have not been energetic enough in their ideological campaigns for entry into trade unions.
3. Frequently trade union fraction work was not brought into vital contact with the political tasks of the Party.
4. Fraction work showed a tendency to become independent or separate departmental work. (In several cases we registered the existence of a separate agitprop apparatus, the levying of special trade union fraction dues, tendencies to form an independent fraction apparatus dealing not only with special fraction questions, but also with other Party questions, an independent distribution of forces, for instance getting speakers, nominating candidates, etc., without preliminary agreement with the Party Executive).
5. Disinclination on the part of trade union Party members to carry on everyday trade union work in the factory, to occupy trade union official posts, and also refusal on their part to work for the winning over of non-Party and Social Democratic trade union members for the Party as sympathisers or members.
6. There are comrades who limit themselves to trade union work, who because of alleged "lack of time" do not work in the nuclei, who do not advocate Communist policy in the trade unions or represent it very inadequately and who even violate Party decisions.
7. Fractions in the organisations frequently had the tendency to exercise the function of a lower Party organisation, to deal with questions not directly connected with their tasks and to hold fraction meetings at regular intervals and too frequently, even if the exigencies of trade union work do not require this. This is detrimental to the actual work of the fractions, moreover it is also detrimental to attendance at other Party functions and impedes Party work.

On the other hand there are tendencies directed against fractional amalgamation and meetings of all the Communists of a lower trade union organisation. This is frequently the case in organisations with a Communist majority.

8. The importance of fraction executives for the various trade unions on a national and district scale is frequently underestimated. In many cases there is failure to understand that it

is the Communist trade union members who carry on fraction work, and not the Party apparatus. On the other hand, it was customary for trade union departments of the Party executives to do the work of fraction executives, frequently actually replacing the latter.

Communist fractions in trade union organs are often left to themselves, they do not receive directions from the competent Party executive, their activity is not controlled and they do not belong to the fraction executive.

9. In many cases the preparation for delegate elections in the trade unions and elections to trade union conferences and congresses is very inadequate. The Party Executives do not exercise sufficient influence on the nomination of candidates.

### II. Immediate Tasks.

1. Party Executives are to issue instructions for the building of trade union fractions and are to control fraction work through the trade union department and on the basis of the general lines decided upon. Trade union fraction work must not be looked upon as special departmental work which has nothing to do with the other Party work. It must, on the contrary, be one of the most important tasks of the Party, and carried on from the viewpoint of and in connection with the general political tasks of the Party.

2. Nuclei are to carry on an ideological campaign for the entry of all Communists into trade unions and are to exercise regular control over the Party members' trade union adherence. At the same time nuclei and fractions should carry on systematic recruiting work for the trade union organisation of all workers. (Formation of factory recruiting committees, proposals at trade union meetings re special recruiting campaigns.)

3. The basis of trade union work is the factory. Therefore it behoves Party executives to enlighten the factory nuclei first and foremost on the importance of trade union work, to take upon themselves trade union functions and to endeavour to capture for the Party the non-Party and Social Democratic trade union functionaries.

4. Fraction building in the organisations is to be carried on according to plan, the main forces being concentrated on the most important trade unions. All fraction members are to be drawn into fraction work, because only rank and file Party members and rank and file Communist trade union members can influence their fellow workers in the factory, at trade union meetings and other functions. General fraction meetings are not to be held regularly but only as occasion arises (as a rule before trade union meetings and other meetings and in connection with campaigns). They must likewise be carefully prepared by the fraction executive. These meetings are to concern themselves with special trade union questions.

5. It is essential to form fraction executives on a local, district and national scale. Party executives should concentrate more than heretofore on giving instructions for the work of the fractions in trade union organs. They must support and control this work, for the peculiar nature of leading trade union work might result in the comrades taking erroneous measures if their connection with the Party executive is inadequate. This educational work is particularly important with respect to the Communist trade union officials. Therefore, formation of active fraction executives, consisting of experienced Communist trade union functionaries, is one of the most important tasks of the Party Executives. The Communist fraction of the trade union executive must at the same time serve as the executive of the fraction as a whole.

6. In order to enable trade union fraction executives to function satisfactorily, they should be directly connected with each other in every trade union vertically from the top to the bottom. (From the C.C. via the district down to the local organisation.) Direct connection from the national fraction executive of a trade union down to the local fraction executive is as a rule not admissible. With respect to the application of these directions concerning direct connection, the conditions prevailing within the Party as well as the development of fraction work must be taken into consideration, in order to avoid the application of mechanical measures.

7. Party executives (trade union departments) must make thorough, timely, preparations, jointly with the fraction executive, for the delegate election to conferences and congresses. They have also to see to it that the Communist candidates are care-

fully selected from the ranks of the most capable and trustworthy trade union officials.

8. Fraction executives must report regularly to the competent Party executives and higher trade union fraction executives.

### Comrade Langseth (Norway):

I think that the discussion here on the various problems of fraction work has made it clear that the **most important problem** is that of **real fraction executives**, from the top to the bottom and of **liaison between the fractions**. There have been many examples in which the absence of a fraction executive has had a detrimental effect on our work. Objections were raised here to the fraction in the trade union executive forming at the same time the fraction executive. In our country we have managed to bring it about that the Communist fraction of the local administration of a trade union at the same time constitutes the executive of the Communist fraction in the respective trade union organisation.

### Comrade Walcher (Germany):

I have doubts concerning the draft theses before us, which I have already submitted, in writing, to the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. As a goal they are absolutely correct and usable. But the question that concerns us today is: What must the Party do, what organisational measures must it take, in order to achieve the aim propounded here? The draft theses do not give any definite answer to this question. This was also confirmed by speakers who spoke in favour of the draft theses. The only speaker who advocated in their favour from a practical point of view was comrade **Kohn of Czechoslovakia**. But his arguments in favour of the draft theses are absolutely in harmony with what we have proposed in our draft. We also are of the opinion that these principles are necessary for an **I. A. V. (R. I. L. U.) Union in Czechoslovakia**. It is self-evident that there our comrades are called upon to take a lead also in fraction work in these organisations. If hitherto this was not adequately done, it is the fault of the organisation there. It is self-evident, and we have emphasised this in our draft theses, that comrades working in a trade union must be drawn into activity. We oppose only this practically putting the fraction executives into their hands.

We have great faith in the growing strength of the Party and I believe that these comrades are the ones to wield the necessary control over the functionaries in the respective trade union. But we must not leave out of account that the growth of Communist influence in the trade unions is bound to be accompanied by the growth of difficulties. As long as the German labour movement has existed we had differences between the Social Democratic elements in the trade union movement and those in the political movement.

If we were to act according to the provisions of the draft theses we would practically arrive at the negation of the role of the Communist Party. Instead of the Communist Party controlling and guiding the trade union fractions and the work of the Communists in the trade unions, we would arrive at an opposite state of affairs when trade union fractions, the Communists in the trade unions, would lead the Party. It is wrong to assume that decisive control could be exercised over fraction executives through the organs of the Party. We must take the comrades from the Party organisation, they must form the fraction executives, and the comrades from the trade union committees must be drawn into the work in a consultative capacity, but must not have a decisive voice in the fraction executive.

If we make a decision we must demand that it be carried out. But what is proposed here we cannot carry out. Therefore I make an urgent appeal that the question be once more examined in the commission.

### Comrade Piatnitsky (Org. Depart. of the E. C. C. I.):

Comrade Schumann said that at present trades councils do not play an important enough role to warrant handing over to the trades council fractions the leadership and control of the fractions in the trades council area. I think that this statement is not correct. What is in reality a trades council? It is the amalgamation of all trade unions in one locality or district. Here are the representatives of all trade unions. We have in the trades council an opportunity to utilise the experiences of all trade

unions, we can review here their entire work. Who after all, can be the better leader of fractions — a comrade from a union who at his disposal has only the experiences of one union or all the comrades of the trades council committee who represent and know many unions? Such comrades certainly have more experience and can utilise it in a more effective manner. Therefore, it is essential for the fraction of the trades council committee to turn its attention to all trade union questions cropping up in this locality or district and to constitute at the same time the executive for the fractions in the trades council area.

With respect to the question of **connection between Party or Party organisations and the trades council fractions**: Comrade Schumann said there was no necessity to push the trades council fraction into the various unions as a connecting link between the Party and the fraction, that it would be better if the Party executive were directly connected with all the trade union fractions. In principle he is quite right, but with respect to expediency the question assumes a different aspect. Suppose in an urban Party organisation we have three comrades holding paid posts, including a comrade specially appointed for trade union work. Can such a comrade keep up direct connection with the fraction executives in all the trade unions or not? I think that he cannot, that this is physically impossible. But the same comrade can superintend the entire trade union work in the locality, he can keep up a connection with the trades council committee fraction and can control its work. This will be easier and more expedient. Comrade Schumann also has apprehensions with respect to the adaptation of these theses. This is a serious question which requires a reply. How then are these theses to be adapted to the various countries? This is work for the central committees of the various sections.

Comrade Schumann quoted here what Lenin said at the IV Congress about the resolution of the Org Conference at the III Congress, namely that it was "too Russian". As you can see the resolution was "too Russian" only for a couple of years, until our comrades began to put it into practice. Once they really started, it turned out not to be at all "too Russian".

Are these theses perhaps "too Russian"? Of course not. There are fractions already in many countries and we have also fractions where the Communists in the committees are at the same time the fraction executives. You heard that this is so in Sweden and Norway. Is that also "Russian"? But we have also examples from Germany that fractions exist without executives, and that this was the reason for the inactivity of these fractions. We have heard that trade union days were arranged in Germany, that even dues are levied and that no fraction work is done. Why? Because they have no executives.

All this imparts very considerable importance to the question of the **composition and establishment of capable executives**. I think that with regard to this question the Org Conference will pass a decision in the spirit of the proposed theses. There upon each Party will adapt the theses to the concrete conditions of its country. It seems to me that Comrade Schumann was also wrong with respect to the question of the adaptation of the theses.

I will deal now with Comrade Thorez' arguments. I did not quite understand whether he favours convening fraction meetings only with the help of the Party organisations. Our standpoint is that it is precisely the fraction executive which must call together, in agreement with the Party organisation, the Party comrades in a non-Party mass organisation, and which should discuss this or that fraction question. If Comrade Thorez thinks that such convocation on the part of the fraction executive is impossible, I must say that this is a wrong conception, as it would lead in practice to the negation of the necessity of fractions in all lower trade union organisations. Thorez said that before a trade union congress, fractions have the right to establish direct connection between one another from the top to the bottom, to elaborate theses, to issue instructions to subordinate fractions, etc. But if Comrade Thorez admits that such connection is necessary, why does he think that it must be established only before a congress and that directions must be issued? Why is this connection limited solely to the period preceding the trade union congress? One should be logical and make another step forward and say: **connection is always necessary and desirable**.

As to the practical application of these theses, I do not at all assume that all their implications could be immediately carried out in France. However, the Party must have a policy which

corresponds with that proposed in our theses, particularly with respect to the **connection between the Party and the trade union fraction**. It is in the spirit of this general policy that we will examine and decide the possibilities of its immediate application in France, that we will consider what can be immediately carried out and in what manner. It seems to me that in France too the committee fraction of the local and district trades councils has a role to play. Under normal conditions the Party executive is to be connected with the trades council committee fraction which guides and controls the work of all the local fractions. But wherever this or that trade union fraction works ineffectively or wherever there are failings in the work of the trades council committee fraction, it goes without saying that it is the duty of the trade union department of the Party executive to intervene directly. The Party organisation has the right to negotiate with all comrades, with the entire fraction or with part of it, with the fraction executive or with its chairman, and has also the right to issue instructions. This goes without saying. But this is not always possible, neither is it always necessary. Under normal conditions connection between the Party executive and the various fractions is to be kept up through the trades council committee fraction.

Comrade Merker said that we should not discontinue the **trade union day in Germany**. I think that we will not decide here if the trade union day is to be abolished or not. The question before us is what should comrades turn their attention to at these trade union days, to the expression of general views on the Dawes Plan, Locarno, or the Party discussion? Certainly not. They must turn their attention mainly to the everyday work of the trade unions. If trade union days turn their attention to other questions then there is no need for them and they should be abolished.

Comrade Viola spoke very well, but I have not quite understood who is to have the leadership. If our proposal is bad and cannot be applied to Italy, then we should like to ask the Italian comrades what they propose instead. Or do they perhaps want no executives at all?

Two more remarks on our theses. In conclusion I should like to say this: we are not against, on the contrary, we shall welcome it if our theses are adapted to local conditions. If it is thought necessary these theses can be adapted to every district, but there is one thing which must not be rejected — **the fundamental principle of the theses: connection among the fractions**. The question of the **composition of the fraction executive** and all the rest in the theses can be altered. But we must have an unequivocal answer to the questions: are general directions for fraction structure in the trade unions necessary or not? If the opinion prevails that one can do without them, a decision in this sense must be made. We will then endeavour to elaborate theses for every separate Party. But if you find that one must have general directions common to all the Parties, then one must come to a decision concerning fundamental principles, namely, one must decide if our proposal is to be adopted as a basis.

\* \* \*

The theses of the Org Department for fraction construction were adopted unanimously as a basis and were referred to the fraction commission.

## Concluding Session.

Previous to Comrade Piatnitsky's concluding speech the chairmen of the appointed commissions: Kramer (nucleus commission), Walz (Party apparatus commission) and Ulbricht (fraction commission) reported on the work of the commissions. The reports as well as the amendments to the draft resolutions proposed by the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. were unanimously approved by the conference and were referred to the Org Bureau of the E. C. C. I. for endorsement.

## Comrade Piatnitsky:

We have now come to the end of our work, and I should like to say just a few words:

Last year, by reorganising the Parties on a factory nucleus basis we succeeded in making Party members take a more active part in Party work than this was formerly the case. In some nuclei 60% of the membership participate in the work. This is also the case in the bigger nuclei. Through the nuclei and the re-

organisation of the Party quite new elements were brought into it recently and the numerical strength of the Party has also grown. Our Party literature and our entire Party press have now a much greater circulation among the masses than before. As to **factory newspapers**, they have attracted quite a new section of workers who are becoming acquainted with our Party through our newspapers. Practice has made clear the enormous importance of factory newspapers. It has been realised that only through factory newspapers it is possible to influence conflicts, conduct strikes and above all bring the masses into touch with our Party.

Through nucleus work we have made **contact with the masses**, as shown by last year's demonstrations. Moreover, through the activity of our nuclei **new members were brought into the trade unions** in many countries. Through our nucleus work we have come into closer contact with the workers who follow the Social Democrats and in many factories the **united front** has been established. As yet the work of the nuclei is inadequate, but what they have achieved is very significant and important. This we must certainly record. When subsection and section executives will be constructed in such a manner as to pay more attention to the nuclei, nucleus work will continue to improve and gain in importance.

But what is to be done now? How is the work to be taken in hand when the comrades return to their respective countries? First and foremost there must be **coordinated leadership in the district, section and sub-section executives**. The **Org- and Pol-Secretariats** in the district, section and sub-section executives must be **abolished** and there must be a united executive with one responsible secretary. The executive must carry on the organisational and also the political work, as org and pol work must go together. Moreover, one must take in hand the formation of the **special departments** which are to carry on Party work on the various fields of activity. There must no longer be a state of affairs as hitherto in **Germany** where there was one Pol-Org-Agit-Propaganda secretary, or as in **Italy** where there was a political and an administrative secretary. One cannot divide Party work into political and organisational work, for these two kinds of work are closely connected with one another. This work cannot be divided except in the central committees of big Parties where matters are different than in the lower executives. Another task consists in carrying out the **registration of the Party membership**. The best Party comrades must be **registered from the top to the bottom** in order to be able to have a **proper distribution of forces** in the Party. This registration of Party forces will give an opportunity to make a serious beginning with the education of functionaries capable of adequately carrying on Party work. We have found that frequently the old functionaries are unable to work properly under the new organisational conditions. **It behoves us to draw into Party work new forces from the factories, to educate these forces, and to make well trained functionaries of them.**

The next task is that **trade union fractions must be further developed**. I am not very satisfied with our discussions concerning trade union fraction work. It is true, our theses were adopted unanimously, but I must say quite openly that there is no full clarity with respect to this question. Conceptions were expressed which perhaps would have figured the situation of five years ago, but are not correct at the present juncture when the Party has every opportunity to become a mass Party. Some comrades think that all the branches of Party work must be carried on by the Party executive and not by the fractions which form part of the Party. They think that Party executives must carry out themselves even the smallest details of Party work, that the role of the Party Executive does not consist in issuing directions and instructions and in exercising control, but in doing the entire work itself. This is a **wrong** and a **very harmful** conception. The whole discussion here on the question of trade union fractions showed that there is still much confusion of ideas on this question.

Comrades must do their utmost to bring ideological clarity into this question, they must write articles on it in the Party press, etc. I am sure that when we meet again the comrades will say that our theses on the fraction question are right and adequate. The Parties will adapt these theses to the concrete conditions in the various countries. But I think that at the same time the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. must endeavour to control the manner of the adaption, in order that it should not

prove an obstacle instead of a help to fraction work in the trade unions.

All theses, resolutions, etc., proposed by the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. were adopted at the conference as a basis and were referred to the commissions. I am glad that the commissions have been energetic and have introduced amendments to the draft resolutions. I can also say with the greatest satisfaction that the basis of the resolutions is the old one. This was achieved only because the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. has of late had a comparatively good connection with the Parties. If there is really the wish that the Org Department of the E. C. C. I. should adapt its work to concrete conditions, **the Parties must send in material regularly in order that we can be informed about the experiences of the Party and can utilise them.** There is one more thing which is essential, namely, that **probationers be sent from the big sections of the C. I. to the Org Department of the E. C. C. I.** These probationers will return after a few months to their respective countries their minds improved by the international experiences in organisational work.

At this conference we have been able to establish very definitely the need for these international experiences. What was it that came to light in the discussion on trade union fractions? The **French** comrades could only see and dwell on **French** conditions, the **German** comrades on **German** and the **Italian** comrades only on **Italian** conditions. Our task was a much broader one, it consisted in adopting a **standpoint based on principles applicable to all Parties.** But unfortunately this was not the case in our discussions, and this can be remedied to a certain extent by the Parties' dispatch of probationers to the Org Department to study the experiences of all Parties, to utilise them in the best possible manner, and to acquire international experience.

As to the question of whether the Org Conference has brought to light something **new**, I must say that it has. We heard here about many new matters on which we were utterly ignorant before, we were given much new material and we have had an exchange of new experiences. I think that we can be well satisfied with the result of the Org Conference.